



## Legislation Text

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**Item:**

**Approval of Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 21BCC000096 Allocating \$75,325 of Contingency Set Aside Funds to Support the Durham Recovery and Renewal Task Force's (RRTF) Back on the Bull Communications Plan Phase 4**

**Date of BOCC Meeting: March 8, 2021**

**Request for Board Action:**

The Board is requested to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No 21BCCC000096 appropriating \$75,325 of contingency set aside funds budgeted in Nondepartmental hiring freeze funding to the County Manager's budget to support the Back on the Bull Communications Plan Phase 4. Funding will support half of the proposal submitted by RRTF's Communications Team (included as an attachment) that would fund four months of a broad-based communications campaign through our local Back on the Bull campaign that encourages vaccination and the continuation of practices that can mitigate community spread.

The plan has been designed to complement and bolster other communications efforts by partners including Duke Health and Public Health. The proposal calls for a total investment of \$150,650 that RRTF recommends be split between the City and County (\$75,325 each). The City Council approved their \$75,325 portion on February 15. The County previously approved \$132,000 in campaign funds, which was matched by the City, to fund the first 3 phases of the Back on the Bull Public Health Communications Campaign. This request was presented and discussed during the March 1, 2021 work session.

The funding supports a strategic communications campaign that:

- Provides weighted targeting of messaging to historically marginalized communities who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.
- Recruits and regularly highlights trusted messengers and influencers in Durham who have either gotten the vaccine or pledge to get it when it becomes available and who can educate and inform residents about the safety, efficacy, and critical importance of receiving the vaccine as early as permitted.
- Develops and promotes a local Back on the Bull pledge campaign that asks people to commit to get the vaccine as they become eligible, to keep wearing masks, and to support local businesses. The benefit of a pledge is that it provides a vehicle for trusted messengers in later eligibility phases to express their commitment to be vaccinated.
- Co-designs some materials through 2 - 3 community design workshops with residents from historically marginalized communities who reside in census tracts with higher rates of COVID-19 cases.
- Drives home the connection to getting vaccinated and returning to a new normal that includes our children returning to in-person instruction.
- Further empowers trusted messengers (like, for example, faith leaders) to champion vaccination by providing them with a communications toolkit and specific ways to use it. RRTF's Places of Worship Roundtable has already requested assistance in developing strategies to champion the vaccine among their faith communities.

- Encourages residents to stay home, but when they need to venture out, to stay safe by practicing the 3Ws - even after getting vaccinated -- and using resources like Back on the Bull list of businesses who have completed the health and safety checklist.
- Provides “I got vaccinated” buttons to everyone getting vaccinated at Duke Health or Public Health that create greater awareness in the community of others getting the vaccine and give people a quick, easy way to help champion the vaccine to the friends and neighbors (this is similar to why we provide “I voted” stickers, but we need something more durable than a sticker given how long it will take us to widely distribute the vaccine).
- Provides clear, user-friendly guidance to residents on how to register for the vaccine, when to register (what phase we are in), and what to expect.
- If new initiatives develop (for example, vaccine navigators as envisioned by Greenlight Durham), promote and raise awareness of these new resources so residents are aware of them and know how to access them.
- Shares and disseminates recordings of townhalls occurring in Durham so that they can be viewed by wider audiences. The campaign will continue to rely on significant pro bono work from members of the Communications Team and represented organizations. In light of the ongoing resource requirements to plan, execute, track and report on the campaign, Discover Durham has built in a 15% fee that will partially offset the resources devoted to the effort. The RRTF Communications Team have estimated the pro bono time donated for the first three phases of the campaign (July-December) at 2,500-3,000 hours, involving more than 10 staff members in content and creative development, media planning and buying, video production, PR, accounting, and general management, and anticipate that the ongoing efforts required to support phase 4 will be similar.

This request is not a FEMA reimbursable expense. While a Budget Amendment is not required by ordinance, to increase transparency and visibility of these set aside funds, one is being requested. The actual budget action taking place is all within a single functional area, a subtraction of funds from the non-departmental Business Area and adding of funds to the County Manager’s Office. The Legal form reflects a net change of \$0.00 to the General Government Functional Area.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:** This item aligns with the County’s Strategic Goal 2: Health and Well-being and Goal 3: Safe Community

**Resource Persons:** Susan Amey, President & CEO, Discover Durham, RRTF Communications Committee Chair; Katie Galbraith, President, Duke Regional Hospital, RRTF Co-chair.

**County Manager’s Recommendation:** The County Manager recommends that the Board approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No 21BCCC000096 appropriating \$75,325 of contingency set aside funds budgeted in nondepartmental hiring freeze funding to the County Manager’s budget to support the Durham Recovery and Renewal Task Force (RRTF)’s Back on the Bull Communications Plan Phase 4.

County Manager: \_\_\_\_\_