



NEWS RELEASE

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Board Adopts \$1.47 Billion Budget for Fiscal Year 2021

The Wake County Board of Commissioners today adopted the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget, which runs from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. The \$1.47 billion budget does not include a property tax increase, but it bolsters funding for Wake County Public Schools and maintains funding for community organizations.

“COVID-19 has dramatically changed our financial picture for the coming year, reducing our projected revenue by \$29 million,” Board Chairman Greg Ford said. “However, by using creative funding options, we are able to continue to fund our public schools at historic levels and support community organizations that serve our most vulnerable residents during this challenging time.”

The \$1.47 billion proposal represents a \$1.78 million increase from County Manager David Ellis’ [FY21 Recommended Budget](#) and a \$7.9 million decrease from the [FY20 adopted budget](#).

Changes from FY21 Recommended Budget

The board voted today to make the following amendments to the recommended budget:

- Increase the county's operating investment in the Wake County Public School System by \$11.95 million to \$527.9 million. This brings our estimated per pupil spending to \$2,932, which ensures the county maintains the historic funding it provided to WCPSS in FY20;
- Increase funding to Emergency Medical Services by \$534,000, which enables the county to postpone the transition away from contracts with nonprofit EMS agencies – Eastern Wake EMS and Cary EMS – until the topic can be discussed further;
- Continue the county's investment in community organizations and nonprofit groups. The additional \$1.25 million in funding will support programs that benefit our most vulnerable residents and initiatives that enrich our community.

Funding these adjustments

The adjustments to the recommended budget that the board approved today total \$13.73 million. They will be funded by:

- Reducing transfers from the General Fund to the WCPSS FY21 Capital Improvement Program by \$11.95 million to offset the increase to the school system's operating budget; and
- Dedicating a one-time appropriation of \$1.78 million in committed ABC fund balance to several construction projects at county buildings where Human Services and Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization staff work, so those capital funds can be shifted to operating expenses.

Budget cuts

Due to the economic downturn, the FY21 budget does include cuts

like the ones identified below to create a balanced budget for FY21 while still maintaining core services:

- Eliminating more than 100 positions across the organization, as well as reducing professional development opportunities for staff;
- Removing two 12-hour ambulances and scaling back our successful EMT-to-paramedic education program, which provides a valuable workforce pipeline to help fill difficult-to-recruit paramedic positions;
- Opening all Wake County Public Libraries one hour later and closing them one hour earlier, which will eliminate 32 positions and impact programming for children and adults;
- Reducing part-time and temporary staffing at the Wake County Animal Center, which may require altering its public hours of operation; and
- Eliminating performance pay increases for county employees.

Tax and fee increases

The FY21 budget also includes a tax rate increase of .76 cents to the Fire Tax District. The additional funds would be used to replace essential equipment and create a reserve for future fire station construction. The rate increase would bring the total Fire Tax District rate to 9.10 cents.

The adopted budget also includes:

- Increasing the annual permit fee for swimming pools – which hasn't been raised in 17 years – from \$275 to \$300 for this essential public health service; and
- Increasing the fee for civil fingerprinting services – which hasn't been raised in more than 20 years – from \$15 to \$30.

CARES Act Funding

In addition to the \$527.9 million the board approved to support the Wake County Public School System's FY21 operating budget, the board also voted to direct \$14.1 million of the county's CARES Act funding to WCPSS to reimburse it for the purchase of technology devices and wireless access to support remote learning.

More information

To learn more about the adopted budget, visit wakegov.com/budget.

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