WAKE COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

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MEMORANDUM

To: Gerald Baker, Wake County Sheriff

From: David Ellis, County Manager

Date: September 18, 2019

Re: **Joint County Staff/Sheriff's Office Staff Meeting Summary**

This memo summarizes the discussion and action steps arising from a meeting between Wake County staff and staff of the Wake County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) that took place on September 5, 2019.

Requested Personnel Changes in the WCSO

County and WCSO staff summarized events related to three personnel change requests (reclasses) for Detention positions. WCSO expressed they were continuing to restructure the department, that changes were being made quickly, and they were unaware that the approval for these changes should come from both Human Resources and Budget & Management Services.

County staff expressed concerns about these current requests:

- Hiring or placing employees in positions prior to approval of a change creates a wage liability, requires unnecessary steps in payroll processing, and adds risks when employees are placed in positions they are not qualified to hold.
- Converting these Detention positions to senior positions requires higher compensation and benefits, leaves less budget available for overtime, and is counter to requests expressed earlier in the year that the WCSO needs more detention officers.
- Personnel change forms were completed but did not provide enough justification without further research and understanding.
- Placing unqualified employees in credentialed positions creates potential legal liabilities for the County.

The following steps summarize how personnel change requests will be handled in the future:

- Personnel changes, including reclasses, should be requested before employees are hired in positions or are notified of position and salary changes.
- Both County Human Resources and Budget and Management Services reviews and approves personnel change requests. These departments will coordinate a response back to the requesting department.
- As part of any personnel change request, the requesting department should be able to demonstrate how the requested change will:
    - be accommodated in the department's existing budget, and
    - improve service delivery or operations.
- Non-credentialed employees should not be placed in to credentialed positions.

Motor Vehicle Records

WCSO brought all outstanding Motor Vehicle Record forms (MVRs) to the meeting. Finance requested that these forms be delivered to Finance or emailed to MVR administration.

Procurement Transactions

County staff expressed concern about the timeliness and accuracy of contract processing. Delayed contract processing creates liabilities for the County when vendors are performing services without an executed contract or a service cannot be delivered on time. Additionally, County staff expressed the need to follow County procurement and contract policies and procedures.

All agreed that the WCSO contracts processed at the beginning of the fiscal year presented challenges because WCSO was unaware of various requirements and the steps in the contract approval process.

WCSO staff expressed concern that their inquiries and emails were not responded to timely, creating some of the backlog on their department's contracts. County staff explained that Finance processes around 2,000 contracts per year, a majority of which are processed near the beginning of the fiscal year. Contracts are processed in the order they are received, and if contracts are submitted at the last minute and without all necessary supporting information, there will be delays in processing.

WCSO staff also informed the group that they were creating a list of all known service contracts and their expiration/renewal date and would share the list with County staff.

All agreed that recurring meetings would add value to understanding the WCSO business plan and goals and to identify issues early on that may slow down the procurement and contract process.

Memorandum of Understanding

To ensure a clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities, the County Attorney and County Manager recommend a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County and the WCSO. Previous Sheriffs also have utilized MOUs (see attached).

WCSO responded that they would review and consider a draft MOU from the County.

The County Manager requested that the MOU be drafted, reviewed, and presented to the Board of Commissioners within 45 days of receipt of this memo.

Summary

The County Manager shared expectations that WCSO will adhere to County policies and procedures going forward. County staff emphasized the need to have advance communications from WCSO so they can assist WCSO in carrying out their goals and objectives.

The Sheriff and WCSO staff stressed they are working to improve operations of the department, conditions for residents in their care, and opportunities for WCSO employees, and asked for cooperation and communication in carrying out their plans.

Both the County Manager and Sheriff expressed an interest in being able to achieve their goals and objectives in a collaborative manner.

Attachments:

1. MOU with Sheriff Donnie Harrison, 2017
2. MOU with Sheriff John Baker, 1986

cc: Karen Wallace, Executive Aide to the Sheriff
James Brown, Deputy County Attorney, WCSO
Scott Warren, County Attorney
Johnna Rogers, Chief Operating Officer
Emily Lucas, Chief Financial Officer