From: Jess Fox
To: Public Comments
Subject: Budget Notes
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 3:54:44 PM

Hello!

My name is Jessica Fox and I live in East Asheville. I'd like to demand that commissioners amend their budget by defunding the County Sheriff's office and detention center by at least 50% as soon as possible. The Coronavirus is harming our fellow citizens beyond repair, so to start, please reinvest funds taken from the Sheriff and jail in ways that effectively address this pandemic locally. This plan should involve putting a stop to the reopening. Only essential businesses should be open, with a requirement that these businesses provide their workers with protective gear and that the mask policy is upheld. All city and county schools should choose Plan C and refuse to return to in-person learning. Educators must be provided extra support and materials for at-home schooling. The county must provide accessible, free testing. Increased pay and support should be provided for frontline medical and emergency workers. The county must shut down all leisure travel and abolish the TDA and its advertising. The county must open hotels for the unhoused community to prioritize their health and wellbeing. The Buncombe County Sheriff must also halt enforcing evictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Durham County's Sheriff has made this commitment! Buncombe's must, too! The pandemic response must direct funds towards communities hit hardest and most at risk, especially immigrant communities and communities of color. Going forward, the county must invest in the economic wellbeing of Black, brown, and indigenous residents, commit resources to eliminate the racial opportunity gap, and provide deeply affordable housing, land provisions, mental health services, rent subsidies and eviction diversion, free public transportation, and restorative justice services for all. We have the abilities to do all of these great things for our fellow human. It is up to you to prove that you genuinely work for the people. Please do not let us down. These demands will prove a phenomenal start to make for a better, safer, and happier city all around.

Thank you very much for your attention.