

RESOLUTION # _____

Resolution Supporting the Creation of a Domestic Violence Fatality
Review Team in Buncombe County

- Whereas, Buncombe County finds that it is important to this County to prevent domestic violence fatalities; and
- Whereas, Buncombe County further finds that the prevention of these fatalities is a community issue, and that professionals from disparate disciplines have expertise that can promote the safety and well-being of victims of domestic violence and that multidisciplinary reviews of these deaths can lead to a greater understanding of the causes and methods of preventing these deaths; and
- Whereas, according to the NC Department of Justice Report on Domestic Violence Related Homicides Occurring in 2013, Buncombe tied with Wake County, a jurisdiction nearly four times its size, for the second highest number of domestic violence homicides, losing 8 lives to domestic violence that year, 5 of which were killed by an intimate partner; and
- Whereas, in response, community leaders in Buncombe County came together to implement a coordinated response to domestic and sexual violence called Buncombe County's Coordinated Community Response, which brings together evidence based, best practice models from across the nation – working together, community partners are building a safer community; and
- Whereas, additionally, Buncombe County and community partners have opened the Buncombe County Family Justice Center, a safe place for victims of domestic and sexual violence to access services from non-profit advocacy agencies, health care providers, law enforcement and government agencies, making Buncombe County a leader throughout the State with its innovative domestic violence programming and services; and
- Whereas, despite these efforts, Buncombe County has experienced the tragedy of domestic violence related homicides; and
- Whereas, there is a need to increase the safety of citizens with one strategy mitigating the effect of abuse by increasing the safety of victims of domestic violence, exploring circumstances from a strengths perspective to allow professionals to gain clarity in the continued needs of the community; and
- Whereas, a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team is defined by the NC General Assembly in Session Laws 2009-52 and 2013-70 and, currently, only four North Carolina counties are authorized to establish a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team: Mecklenburg, Pitt, Wake, and Alamance; and
- Whereas, a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team includes a broad cross section of community service providers who meet quarterly to review domestic violence homicides that have occurred within the County and to improve cross-system communication. This process will improve coordination between community partners responding to domestic violence; and

Whereas, Buncombe County desires the opportunity to create a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team in Buncombe County; and

Whereas, precedence has been established in Buncombe County as it participates in similar programs, such as the North Carolina Child Fatality Prevention System, which outlines the course of action for a statewide disciplinary team to review child fatalities; and

Whereas, establishing a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team modeled after the North Carolina Child Fatality Prevention Team, would include potential members representing a cross section of community service providers, including health, mental health, social services, law enforcement, courts, school professionals, and other domestic violence service providers; and

Whereas, participating in this program would protect professionals with confidentiality in specific cases where domestic violence related homicides have occurred, the effectiveness of this project will be increased; and

Whereas, Designation as a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team County would provide Buncombe County the opportunity to identify systems issues that can be addressed to prevent future domestic violence homicides.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That it supports the creation of a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team in Buncombe County as defined by N.C. General Assembly Session Laws 2009-52 and 2013-70, which allow certain counties to establish Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams.
2. That it respectfully requests the North Carolina General Assembly grant Buncombe County the authority to establish a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team as described in N.C. General Assembly Session Laws 2009-52 and 2013-70.
3. That this resolution shall become effective upon its adoption.

This the 19th day of June, 2018.

ATTEST

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR
THE COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

Lamar Joyner, Clerk

By: _____
Brownie Newman, Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM

County Attorney