



## **Buncombe County Board of Commissioners**

### **Request for Board Action**

**Meeting Date: 4/6/2021**

#### **Old Business**

**Department: County Manager's Office**

**Presenter(s): DK Wesley, Assistant County Manager**

**Contact (s): Jennifer Barnette, Budget Director  
DK Wesley, Assistant County Manager**

**Subject: Vance Monument - Space Visioning Effort & Cost Share with the City of Asheville**

#### **Brief Summary:**

On June 9 and June 16, 2020, the Asheville City Council (Council) and Buncombe County Board of Commissioners (Board), respectively, passed a joint resolution to remove two confederate statues located at the Buncombe County Courthouse and Pack Square Park, and to establish a jointly appointed task force to recommend action regarding the removal, relocation or repurposing of the Vance monument.

The Joint Vance Monument Task Force (JVMTF) consisted of 12 members whose appointments were made in equal numbers by the two governing boards. It was the intent of the governing boards of the City of Asheville and Buncombe County that the Vance monument is replaced or altered in such a manner, as to honor the local history of African-Americans. The JVMTF was tasked with gathering citizen input, particularly from those most impacted by the monuments, participate in public dialogue, and present the governing boards a final recommendation within three months of the completion of all membership appointments. After 12 weeks of information gathering and deliberation, the work was completed and at its November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting the JVMTF voted to remove the Vance Monument. The taskforce co-chairs presented the final recommendation and requested that the Board accept this recommendation on December 7, 2020.

The Board voted to accept the recommendation and directed the County Manager to work with the Asheville City Manager to develop the execution plan and determine next steps. The first phase of this plan has been completed. This included the release of a request for bids to demolish and remove the Vance Monument. City staff presented a bid recommendation at the estimated cost of \$139,685 (\$114,150 – demolition & removal; \$25,535 – site restoration) to the Council on March 23, 2021. The Council voted to approve the recommendation and authorized City Manager Campbell to move forward with the removal and demolition of the Vance Monument. Additionally, the Council authorized the City Manager to move forward with the visioning effort to create a comprehensive Community Vision Document that guides the future repurposing of the site. This visioning effort is estimated to cost up to \$70K.

Accordingly and in line with the Board's intent to partner on this effort, this is a request to share the cost of and provide for the visioning effort in the form of a reimbursement to the City of Asheville at an amount not to exceed \$35,000 (50% of the total estimated cost of the visioning effort).

**Recommended Motion & Requested Action:**

Authorize the County Manager to execute a cost-share arrangement up to \$35K with the Asheville City Manager to fund consultant services to facilitate a visioning effort to create a comprehensive Community Vision Document that guides the future repurposing of the site.

Approve a budget amendment to appropriate \$35K from the General Fund fund balance.

**County Manager's comments and Recommendation:**

County Manager recommends approval.