

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF McDOWELL
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – OCTOBER 12, 2009**

ASSEMBLY

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, October 12, 2009, at Historic Carson House, 1805 Highway 70 West in Marion. The Commissioners had agreed at its September meeting to continue the tradition of holding the October meeting at Historic Carson House.

MEMBERS PRESENT

David N. Walker, Chairman; Barry E. McPeters, Vice- Chairman; Andrew K. Webb; Dean Buff; and Michael Lavender

OTHERS PRESENT

Charles R. Abernathy, County Manager; Carrie Padgett, Clerk to the Board; Fred Coats, County Attorney; Ashley Wooten, Assistant to the County Manager (Video); and Reporters Mike Conley of THE McDOWELL NEWS and Wendy McAnally of THE NEWS BULLETIN OF McDOWELL COUNTY.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman David Walker called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. He thanked the Carson House Board of Directors for hosting the meeting again this year. He then asked County Manager Chuck Abernathy to lead in the pledge of allegiance and Commissioner Buff to give the invocation.

On behalf of the Board, Chairman Walker expressed condolences to Commissioner Buff and his family as a result of the passing of Commissioner Buff's brother, Mr. Jack Buff.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Walker advised there was one addition to the agenda under New Business and asked the County Manager to present this item. Mr. Abernathy advised the addition was the ARC Resolution and, if not a problem, that he would suggest handling it along with item "B. Highway 221 South Widening Update". By consent, Chairman Walker stated the ARC Resolution would be added under New Business with item "B" as noted.

Upon motion by Commissioner Lavender and a second by Commissioner McPeters, the agenda was unanimously approved as amended.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the July 13, 2009 and August 10, 2009 regular sessions were presented for approval. Regarding the July 13th minutes, Chairman Walker noted a change to the “Marion Area Advisory Committee” Resolution which should read *Marion Area Fire Advisory Board of Directors*.

Upon motion by Commissioner McPeters and a second by Commissioner Webb, the minutes of July 13, 2009 were unanimously approved as amended and those of August 10, 2009 were unanimously approved as recorded.

CHAMP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Chairman Walker introduced Dr. Vicki Mercer, Associate Professor at UNC Chapel Hill, Division of Physical Therapy, for a presentation on the Community Health and Mobility Partnership (CHAMP) Program. Dr. Mercer gave an overview of the program, advising it is designed to improve balance and mobility and to prevent falls among older adults and people with disabilities. She stated falls are a major problem with one out of three people over age 65 falling every year and one out of two people falling after the age of 80 and over. She pointed out that once an individual begins falling, this starts a spiraling effect into other problems and the associated costs in terms of health care, quality of life issues, etc. are quite large. The program is designed to reduce some of those problems. Dr. Mercer stated McDowell County is an excellent place to implement the program due to the large population of people over the age of 65 (15.5% which is higher than the national and state average).

Dr. Mercer addressed the commitment among community partners for the program, the screening events that had already occurred, the fact that there is a waiting list of participants for future screenings, and what individuals can expect when they enter the program as far as getting their needs met. She explained this is accomplished through collaborative efforts among the various agencies, with therapy, exercises, etc. and with a follow-up letter to the individual’s personal physician saying they have been seen by CHAMP. Further, those people are sent follow-up letters for subsequent screening events to make sure that all recommendations made are being addressed in some way.

Dr. Mercer said she was excited about the program and thought it would make a difference. She noted that EMS Director William Kehler had reported that their falls with injury calls were 90-100 per month which is higher than what was predicted by the literature. She stated that hopefully the CHAMP program would assist EMS in decreasing those calls.

As far as support, Dr. Mercer pointed out they had received a grant from the Baxter International Foundation that covered a major portion of the program but they

have a policy that they are not willing to fund people that are full time employed, therefore, she was requesting support for her time on the project.

In a brief discussion, Dr. Mercer advised the grant from Baxter's would be from August 2009 to August 2011. Based on the population of older adults in the County, the predicted number of falls with injury, and the estimated cost of \$6,700 per fall, it is expected the number of falls with injury can be decreased to the extent that a saving of around \$260,000 can be realized.

The County Manager advised there were two items for the Board's consideration. First was a resolution of support for the CHAMP program with related statistical data; the other was the \$12,000 gap that needed to be funded in order to match the two other funding sources. Although it was not budgeted, he suggested having \$4,000 come from this fiscal year, and \$4,000 in July of 2010 and 2011, noting that the funding source would be from a combination of donations and income from renting of the two facilities.

EMS Director William Kehler said he was excited to be a part of this project and that Dr. Mercer was great person with whom to work. He pointed out that on the morning of the first screening session with CHAMP, during the first two and a half hours his workers were on duty, they had responded to four calls for service involving a fall prior to the screening session. He stated this is a substantial problem in the County with the financial impacts, the burdens on families, etc., and he feels that prevention and education is the key to reducing costs and increasing the quality of life for the citizens.

Senior Center Director Weyland Prebor advised there had been two sessions at the Senior Center since the project started and the response had been 100% positive. He said the senior citizens and their families are excited about the project and that he hopes the project will not only reduce costs but will bring about a renewed confidence among the senior population.

Commissioner Lavender pointed out that in addition to EMS, the nursing students at the Community College, the McDowell Hospital, fire departments, DSS and others are involved.

Commissioner McPeters proceeded to read as follows the list of partners around the area that are involved in the CHAMP program:

Appalachian State University School of Nursing
Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute
Elon University Dept. of Physical Therapy Education
McDowell County Dept. of Social Services
McDowell County Emergency Medical Services
McDowell Hospital
McDowell Senior Center
McDowell Technical Community College

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Division of Physical Therapy and
School of Nursing
Western Carolina University Dept. of Physical Therapy

The County Manager requested the Board's approval of the Resolution and authorization on the funding commitment and the execution of any documents related to the project.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion to approve the Resolution in Support of the CHAMP Program and to make a commitment of \$4,000 in three different payments over the next two and one half years and to authorize staff to sign the related documents. Commissioner McPeters seconded the motion and the vote of unanimous, with the Resolution adopted as follows:

Resolution Supporting the Implementation of the CHAMP Program and Senior Citizen Programs in McDowell County

WHEREAS, the McDowell County senior population over the age of sixty-five is currently 15.5%, well above the national average of 12.1%; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2000 United States Census, 84.4% of McDowell County citizens over the age of sixty-five are homeowners and in need of services that will enable them to remain in the home; and

WHEREAS, according to the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services, approximately 54% of the senior population over the age of sixty-five report having at least one physical disability; and

WHEREAS, in 2006 persons reaching the age of sixty-five had an additional life expectancy of nineteen years and this trend continues to increase; and

WHEREAS, more than one-third of adults over the age of sixty-five fall each year in the United States; and

WHEREAS, among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths and are the most common cause of non-fatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma. The McDowell County EMS Director estimates that 90 to 100 EMS emergency response calls per month (fully 10% of the total) are for Senior Citizen accidents and injuries caused by falls.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the McDowell County Board of Commissioners endorse the activities of the McDowell County Senior Center and the implementation of the CHAMP Program and encourages all citizens to participate in the valuable insights and health enhancement that will certainly result.

ADOPTED, this the 12th day of October 2009.

In discussion, Dr. Mercer addressed the sustainability of the program, advising she was totally committed to helping with continuation of the program after the third year period. Mr. Abernathy pointed out that although this was not the first time the program had been implemented, it is very early and may be the first time in the west, and that it would be duplicated. Commissioner Webb made reference to the \$85,000 grant donation from the Baxter International Foundation for the CHAMP Program. He said this is rather significant and very much appreciated.

WELLNESS INITIATIVE UPDATE

Chairman Walker recognized EMS Director William Kehler, Operations Officer Eugene Edwards, and Personnel Officer Robbin Silvers who were present for this item. He asked the County Manager to lead the discussion. Mr. Abernathy stated the Board had worked very hard in the spring during budget sessions on various insurance related issues, and had found it difficult to make adjustments due to the County's self-insurance status and of operating in the red for a number of years. However, there had been some major changes with the County sponsoring a wellness clinic, agreeing to implement a second insurance plan for new hires, and also agreeing to do a series of paramedic-led physicals of County employees. He said all of these items had either taken place or were underway and he wanted to follow up with the Board, noting that he felt each of these events had been a success.

Robbin Silvers reported that of the 259 full time employees, 253 are on the County's insurance and 6 are not. A total of 15 new employees are being placed on the new health insurance program. She addressed the upcoming Health Fair for which approximately 32 vendors are scheduled, and pointed out that as a preliminary step prior to the Fair, EMS was conducting wellness checks with 80 employees having been seen this morning. The next screening session will be at the Senior Center the following Wednesday for the remaining employees.

The County Manager said there were two employees who had chosen not to participate in the screening conducted by EMS. In accordance with County policy, those individuals will pay a percentage of the County share of insurance. Concerning new hires, Mr. Abernathy pointed out the Board had adopted an insurance schedule that more reflects the market, but with benefits being deferred for six months. He said as the process moves forward and other employees transition into the new plan, it is hoped that through time and attrition, more of the County's insurance problems will be solved.

A brief discussion followed.

The EMS Director advised that of the 253 employees that were screened, 26% were referred to their personal physician or advised to seek further evaluation due to health conditions that were found. He addressed the screening process and how this was accomplished.

Major Edwards gave an overview of the costs associated with the health screening program, noting that savings to the County's insurance were \$45,720 as opposed to what the cost would have been had the screenings been performed at another facility. He said hopefully more problems had been avoided for the County's employees through this process.

The Board expressed appreciation for efforts of the staff in assisting with changes being made to the County's insurance program which has been beneficial cost wise to the County but more importantly to employees and their overall health. The comment was made that perhaps they should take some of the County staff to Washington to show Congress how, through a simple approach, preventive medicine and education can work with a few pages as opposed to the 1,000 + pages they are using. Chairman Walker stated early detection is the key and he asked Mr. Kehler to convey to his staff the Board's appreciation of how they had assisted the County in this effort.

TAX SETTLEMENT AND RETIREMENT

Chairman Walker called Tax Collector Pam Sain forward to present her final tax settlement before retiring.

County Manager Chuck Abernathy advised that a tax settlement is presented not only at the completion of the fiscal year but also for the additional period of time the person is Tax Collector. In this case, the time period is July 1 to September 30, at which time the new Tax Collector, Phyllis Ryan, will pick up for the remainder of the fiscal year, having assumed that role on October 1st. Mr. Abernathy said this had been a smooth transition and that Mrs. Sain would leave as a County employee on October 31st.

Mrs. Sain then gave an overview of her tax settlement showing a total amount collected of \$8,202,530.93 (51.32%) from July 1, 2009 to September 30, 2009, leaving an outstanding balance as of 9/30/09 of \$7,850,619.48. The report included a summary of regular tax and motor vehicle tax collections, prior year delinquent collections, collections for both the City of Marion and the Town of Old Fort, and fire district tax for all fire districts and the Rescue Squad. She advised everything was balanced through September 30th.

Mrs. Sain thanked the Board of Commissioners, the Administration and other County staff for their assistance during her tenure as County Tax Collector.

Each Commissioner expressed his appreciation for Mrs. Sain's dedication and professionalism, and her kind demeanor as Tax Collector, with each one commenting on her helpfulness to them over the years.

Chairman Walker then presented a plaque to Pam on behalf of the Board.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the tax settlement as presented. Commissioner Buff seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

McDOWELL HOUSE LEASE

Chairman Walker welcomed Mrs. Linda Hollifield to the meeting and asked the County Manager to elaborate on the McDowell County Lease Agreement.

In an overview, Mr. Abernathy stated Mrs. Hollifield wished to lease a section of the McDowell House and part of the back yard area in order to open a tea room and an herbal sales business. He pointed out this type of business obviously creates quite a bit of public interest and that Mrs. Hollifield sees this as an opportunity to spark some interest with those passing through. He advised there had been two meetings with the McDowell House Committee concerning the requested rental space and they had unanimously agreed to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to proceed with a lease agreement. He stated there had been a few slight variations to the lease agreement since it was drafted approximately five weeks ago, and that more changes might be necessary as the document is reviewed.

Mr. Abernathy addressed an idea the McDowell House Committee is pursuing of having the Over the Mountain Victory Trail headquarters at this location, a topic scheduled for discussion later tonight and that the federal government will hold a hearing at different locations as they deliberate on where the OMVT headquarters will be located. He pointed out there are different communities in 3 or 4 states vying for that honor, and the McDowell House Committee, as well as the Board of Commissioners, is interested in that being the end result. He said it should be made clear, with all parties involved, that nothing is done to interfere with this idea or that would limit its end result. Therefore, the County would have to reserve the right to prevent a situation if that becomes necessary. He said while this will be a first order of business for the federal government in 2011, a decision is not anticipated for about fifteen months. This gives quite a space of time prior to anything being finalized but, once a decision is made, it becomes clear that another process would begin. For now though, the House is empty and he felt everyone agrees it would be nice to make use of it.

Concerning the proposed lease, Mr. Abernathy said the area to be leased is approximately 1,300 square feet at the rate is \$7.00 per foot and would generate slightly less than \$9,000 per year. He pointed out the Committee had asked that once expenses are paid, any funds remaining be put in a separate fund for future activities, etc. He said discussion had been for a two-year lease with option to renew and the tenant has agreed to maintain grounds, to bring in her own soil for the herb garden, and to enhance the facility through improvements, etc.

Mrs. Hollifield, an herbalist, briefly explained her plans for use of the leased space, noting some of the teas, crèmes, etc. that she will have available. She said she was excited about this venture and hoped the Board would agree to approve the lease.

A general discussion followed on Mrs. Hollifield's plans for renovation of the House to make it handicap accessible, etc. Concerning the lease and the future of her

business should the space be needed, Mrs. Hollifield stated she would be willing to move elsewhere in the event that happens. She also agreed to a “hold harmless” agreement with the County concerning renovation costs, etc.

Mr. Abernathy requested that the Board authorize the staff to proceed with lease agreement and to authorize funds being used separately.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lavender to authorize County staff to prepare a lease for Mrs. Hollifield for a two-year term, with the financial “hold harmless clause” to which reference was made as well as those items in the summary that Mr. Abernathy provided. Further, that we set aside the funds generated to be used for McDowell House projects and that a copy of the lease agreement be provided to the Board when prepared. Commissioner McPeters seconded the motion and a brief discussion followed. When put to a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Walker wished Mrs. Hollifield the best as she opens for business.

McDOWELL HOUSE GRANT

The County Manager advised the National Parks Service had agreed to provide \$15,200 for production of a master plan for the McDowell House. He said he thought the funds had already been received, but the agreement for receipt of the funds needed to be executed by the Board and there was no match associated with it.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion to approve the contract as requested. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous for approval.

QUILT TRAIL PRESENTATION

Jill Lucas and Susan Pyatt, members of the McDowell Quilt Trail Committee, came before the Board to give an overview of this program. Ms. Lucas stated the McDowell Quilt Trail Committee is a non-profit, grassroots effort to promote tourism, preserve history, and to help provide economic development to McDowell County. The Quilt Trail is a self-supporting program under the umbrella of McDowell Arts and Crafts Association. It is funded by the fees that the host participants pay and sell the Quilt Trail promotional items.

Ms. Lucas advised the program is not the “hanging of grandmother’s quilt on the wall” but rather is hanging blocks that are representation of the grandmother’s quilt in public art form. Each block is a unique design that will identify a particular business or site. Examples are two circular saws on the Old Fort Woodworking Shop, in Burnsville at a dentist office the block of toothbrushes, the Caterpillar Tractor Company one of bulldozers, and one at the MACA building informs the public that handcrafted items are found there. The Committee had installed one at the Historic Carson House that represents the quilt on the National Registry. The blocks are not company logos and are not meant to be, but rather are symbols of a business.

Ms. Lucas stated that since the first meeting of the Quilt Trail Committee in mid-June, they had installed seven blocks, the first one being on September 11th. Two are on the Tailgate Market, two on the Woodworking Shop in Old Fort, one on Bethel United Methodist Church on Roy Moore Road in Old Fort, one on MACA, and one on Historic Carson House. She said they feel this program is something for which the County can be very proud, and would ask the Board's support and would encourage them to place a block on the County Administration Building.

A general discussion followed on a possible location for the Quilt Trail Committee at the McDowell House.

Commissioner Webb said he would recommend, if not premature in doing so, for the Board to take action to allow the Quilt Trail Committee to work with County staff to try getting them into the McDowell House as soon as possible, being the other possibility does work out. Further, he said local government needs to be involved with a square and should make a recommendation for one being placed on the County Building.

Chairman Walker concurred with Commissioner Webb's statements, noting that he and Commissioner Lavender had conversation about participating as well.

A general discussion followed on what an appropriate design for a block might be.

The County Manager said he felt the Board should authorize to draft and execute a lease for the area on the left at the McDowell House.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to allow staff to draft a lease through MACA and ask staff to move forward in determining where the best first quilt block will be to represent local government. Commissioner McPeters seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

UPSET BID ON THREE POINT ROAD PROPERTY

The County Manager advised this was the third time for this item to be on the agenda where the Board authorized the possible sale of 0.8 of an acre of property on Three Point Road. He said Scottie Willis did submit a check in the amount of \$10,000, the proposed sale was advertised and there were no upset bids; therefore, his offer stands. Mr. Abernathy pointed out that as stated in the resolution previously adopted by the Board, the property owner will be responsible for all legal costs related to the transfer of the property, and action from the Board would be to approve the sale of property.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion to approve the sale. Commissioner Buff seconded the motion, noting the possibility of a liability issue. This was discussed, after which Commissioner Lavender agreed to include the liability issue in his motion. When put to a vote, the motion carried unanimously in favor of the motion.

CENSUS COMMITTEE UPDATE

As an update, the County Manager advised there had been a meeting of the Census Committee (Complete Count Committee) as it exists, noting the Board wanted to add members to it. He said one of the things discussed was where the “being counted sites” for questionnaire assistance centers would be placed. Discussion was the lobby of the County Administration Building, the Health Department, DSS, and both Libraries as County sites, with other sites obviously with other agencies. He pointed out there would be public service announcements all through this process to maximize efforts in getting questionnaires out, and that Census videos would be played as well. Mr. Abernathy stated everyone was aware of the importance of the Census, and he stressed the need for making sure everyone gets counted. He asked for input on how often updates would be received. Chairman Walker said periodic updates would be welcome and, by consensus, the others agreed.

A brief discussion followed.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Vacancies for the Marion Area Fire Advisory Board of Directors and for the Town of Montreat Board of Adjustment and Planning and Zoning Board were again noted but there were no applicants for either. However, there were three applicants (Robert E. Brendle, William Carroll, and Chris Revis) for the McDowell County Planning Board on second reading.

The Board voted and ballots were submitted to the Clerk for tabulation. Results were a unanimous vote for the reappointment of Robert E. Brendle to the Planning Board.

A brief discussion followed on terms for Planning Board members.

WATER PROJECTS UPDATE

The County Manager gave an update on the ongoing water projects in the Nebo area. He said the changeover of the operation has been fairly smooth with only a few problems. The bills have been mailed and folks that have come into pay have been very happy with the lower payments.

Mr. Abernathy reviewed pending water line extensions including South Creek Road and Harmony Grove Road. The South Creek Road extension will be funded through remaining funds from other grants and county funds. Mr. Abernathy recommended to the Board that an application be made to the North Carolina Rural Center for assistance in funding the extension on Harmony Grove Road. He asked the Board to approve the attached resolution in order to facilitate the application.

Upon motion by Commissioner Lavender and a second by Vice-Chairman McPeters, the Board voted unanimously to approve the resolution, reading as follows:

**SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAM
AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION
BY GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT**

WHEREAS, in the summer of 2007, the North Carolina General Assembly included a \$100 million appropriation to the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center in the FY 2007-2009 state budget, for the purpose of making grants to rural communities in need of water and wastewater infrastructure improvements; and

WHEREAS, the County of McDowell has need for and intends to construct water line extensions to serve residences on Harmony Grove Road in the Nebo area; and

WHEREAS, the County of McDowell intends to request grant assistance from the Supplemental Grants Program for the project;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE BOARD OF McDOWELL COUNTY:

That the County of McDowell will arrange financing for all remaining costs of the project, if approved for a grant;

That the County of McDowell will provide for efficient operation and maintenance of the project on completion of construction thereof.

That Charles Abernathy, County Manager, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized to execute and file an application on behalf of McDowell County with the NCREDC (Rural Center) for a grant to assist in the construction of the project described above.

That Charles Abernathy, County Manager, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the Rural Center may request in connection with such application or the project; to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required in connection with the application.

That McDowell County has substantially complied or will substantially comply with all Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances applicable to the project and to the grants pertaining thereto.

ADOPTED this 12th day of October, 2009 at McDowell County, North Carolina.

Mr. Wooten, the Assistant to the County Manager, gave an overview of the Harmony Grove Road water project. He stated that the line had been designed and permitted for quite some time. He added that the project was submitted for stimulus funding with DENR, but was not funded in either the first, second, or third rounds. Mr. Wooten said there were many submissions from across the State, but not enough funding

to cover all the need. He said that the Board had previously learned of quantity issues, but the water quality was unknown until recently. Tests performed by the Health Department showed a contamination rate of about forty percent.

In a related matter, Mr. Wooten presented materials from a recent workshop held in Valdese by the Rural Communities Assistance Project entitled “Responsible and Effective Oversight of Consulting Engineers”. He gave an overview of the workshop and explained what steps are important when evaluating consulting engineers. He stated that the workshop was very informative. He asked for any questions from the Board. With no questions, Chairman Walker continued with the meeting.

POINT LOOKOUT TRAIL GRANT CONTRACT/UPDATE

The County Manager noted the grant received from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the amount of \$2,000 to be used for construction of benches on Point Lookout Trail and the related grant contract that needed to be authorized. He advised staff did want to submit additional grants to be used for signage along the Trail.

Further, he advised there was discussion taking place with the Trails Association regarding parking and a walking trail from the top of Point Lookout to a parking lot at Ridgecrest. He said this would be on the next agenda, with a request for the Board’s approval.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion to authorize execution for the grant document with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

A brief discussion followed.

HIGHWAY 221 SOUTH WIDENING UPDATE

The County Manager advised the Utility Committee had discussed the pending decision by the Department of Transportation to move the Highway 221 South widening project back and, as the Board was aware, the State is revamping the TIP recognizing that they have more projects in the program than they have revenue to fund. He said McDowell did not fair well and was bumped back and is not listed as a future project, but that the Utility Committee had said they wanted to meet with the DOT Board member (Wanda Proffitt) to discuss the matter. He stated that once this occurs, he would report back in November.

In relationship to this, Mr. Abernathy advised the Region C Council of Government was requesting the Board’s support regarding the equity change and the need to request that we not be penalized. He introduced *A Resolution of McDowell County Board of Commissioners Requesting the North Carolina General Assembly to*

Exclude the Appalachian Development Highway System Funding From the NC DOT Equity Formula for the Board's approval.

Commissioner McPeters made a motion to approve the *Resolution of McDowell County Board of Commissioners Requesting the North Carolina General Assembly to Exclude the Appalachian Development Highway System Funding From the NC DOT Equity Formula*. Commissioner Lavender seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

LONG TOWN INSURANCE DISTRICT RESOLUTION

The County Manager advised the Board had previously approved the formation of a tax district for the Long Town Fire Department, since part of it extends into McDowell County. However, a resolution was needed to establish the district for insurance purposes.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the resolution as requested. Commissioner McPeters seconded the motion and by unanimous vote, the resolution was approved as follows:

RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL OF INSURANCE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

NORTH CAROLINA McDOWELL COUNTY

Upon motion by Commissioner Webb, seconded by Commissioner McPeters, **RESOLVED** that the Board of Commissioners of the County of McDowell approves the boundary lines of **Longtown** Fire Insurance District in accordance with the maps and description files this date with the Board of County Commissioners and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Said **Longtown** Fire Insurance District being described as noted in the attached map.

ADOPTED this 12th day of October, 2009.

TAX MATTERS

The usual listing of tax releases, refunds and rebills were presented for the Board's consideration. In summary they were:

Releases Under \$100.00	Released amount of \$781.16
Releases Over \$100.00	Released amount of \$8,304.00
Motor Vehicle Releases Under \$100.00	Released amount of \$979.37

Motor Vehicle Releases Over \$100.00	Released amount of \$623.07
Release Refunds	Refunded amount of \$2,083.87

Upon motion by Commissioner McPeters and a second by Commissioner Lavender, the tax releases, refunds and rebills were unanimously approved as presented.

RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING RADIO

The County Manager introduced a *Resolution Authorizing Donation of Personal Property to Non-Profit Organization* for the transfer of a mobile radio to the Sugar Hill Fire Department. The radio had been replaced some time ago and was no longer in use. The Emergency Management Director had agreed for the transfer to occur.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion to approve the Resolution as presented. Commissioner McPeters seconded the motion and by a unanimous vote, the Resolution was approved as follows:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DONATION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY TO NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

WHEREAS, the County of McDowell desires to donate personal property to Sugar Hill Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, G.S. 160A-279 permits the Board of Commissioners to donate personal property to non-profit organizations that carry out a public purpose; and

WHEREAS, records of all donated property will be maintained by the County; and

WHEREAS, all donated personal property will be returned to the County of McDowell if the Agency receiving the item ceases to continue to use for public purpose.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of McDowell County that:

The County of McDowell desires to donate (1) Midland VHF Mobile Radio, serial #1506076, model #70-4808 for public purpose.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this the 12th day of October, 2009.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The County Manager noted the Board's desire on returning to the traditional Employee Christmas Party, which is scheduled for Thursday, December 10th. Also, he mentioned the upcoming event for Make a Difference Day on Saturday, October 24th. This will be the Marion Tailgate Market in support of schools, scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENT

With no one having signed up to speak, the Chairman stated the Board would forego this item tonight.

CARSON HOUSE OVERVIEW AND UPDATE

Dr. Jim Haney gave an overview of the Historic Carson House activities for the past year, first noting the resignation of Anne Swann as a Board member and Chairman. He pointed out they had rewritten the job title and were pleased to have Sarah Poteat Bryant for the job. He said tours are excellent and that her expertise is appreciated.

Other changes made are more public time and extra hours open, which will make maintenance more expensive. They had done repairs and other work at the cottage in the back, completed the security system, and did repair work at the barn and installed an exhibition hall there as well as added a store room in the loft.

Dr. Haney mentioned various events held at the Carson House including quilt displays, exhibit of art and farm life, demonstrations for school children during tours, other exhibit and displays from the Carson Family during the two-day Gold Festival, and the Carson House Family Reunion. The usual events are scheduled for Christmas.

Dr. Haney addressed various contributors to the House, including the Carson House Society who are regular contributors, one volunteer who had spent 104 hours there, and a Carson House descendent who was allowing them to copy some documents in her possession. He mentioned the work of the Board members and the support of the Board of Commissioners, financial and otherwise.

The Carson House Board members were introduced, including Bunny Burgin, Richard Buchanan, Pat Brown, Arthur Campbell, Bill Greenlee, and Ann McNutt.

Dr. Haney invited the Board and other County staff to join them in the parlor for dinner. Chairman Walker expressed the Board's appreciation for Dr. Haney's and the Board of Directors hospitality.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to transact at this time, upon motion by Commissioner McPeters and a second by Commissioner Webb, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

DAVID N. WALKER, CHAIRMAN

CARRIE PADGETT
CLERK TO THE BOARD