

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF McDOWELL
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – APRIL 12, 2010**

ASSEMBLY

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 5:00 P.M. on Monday, April 12, 2010, in the Commissioners' Board Room, the usual place of meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT

David N. Walker, Chairman; Dean Buff; Michael Lavender; and Andrew K. Webb

THOSE ABSENT

Barry E. McPeters, Vice-Chairman

OTHERS PRESENT

Charles R. Abernathy, County Manager; Carrie Padgett, Clerk to the Board; Ashley Wooten, Assistant to the County Manager (Video); and reporters Mike Conley, for THE McDOWELL NEWS, and Steve Irish, for THE NEWS BULLETIN OF McDOWELL COUNTY.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman David Walker called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Commissioner Webb, followed by the pledge of allegiance, led by County Manager Chuck Abernathy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the March 8, 2010 meeting were not quite ready for approval at this time.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were two additions to the agenda. First was a Proclamation for Telecommunicator Week in McDowell County. The second was a first reading on a board appointment for the Region C Workforce Development Board.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to add the two items to the agenda and to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Lavender seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

PRESENTATION OF NCACC ANNUAL AWARD

Chairman Walker recognized David Nicholson from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, who came before the Board for an award presentation.

Mr. Nicholson said this was the second year in a row that he had come to McDowell County to present an “outstanding County award”, and this speaks well for the County. This awards program, started in 1991, is the highest award the Association gives and is for program ideas that can be shared among all 100 counties, not something that is unique to one particular community. The award being presented was for the Work First Community Garden Project. Mr. Nicholson asked DSS Director Phillip Hardin to give a brief overview of the project.

Mr. Hardin said the Community Garden had truly been a “community project”, noting that when the community partners were asked to be involved, everyone was eager and willing to participate. He said the project gave those involved in the Work First Program the opportunity to meet the required number of hours and that a lot of food was provided for the Senior Center as well as to those who worked in the garden. Steven Edwards was overseer of the garden for a number of months and kept people on task. The Cooperative Extension Service gave several DSS staff members master gardening training. In the coming year, their goal is to have those individuals who receive food and nutrition benefits to buy seeds and plants with some of their funds and use part of the garden to grow their own food.

Chairman Walker noted there were more than 30 entries, there were 12 winners selected, and McDowell County was one of 4 winners in the public information category.

Commissioner Webb, who was also involved in this project, stated Mr. Hardin had done an outstanding job coordinating this project and is open to ideas and willing to try something different. Commissioner Webb said in his entire life he believed this was the most cooperative thing in which he had taken part because everyone had said yes, whether in providing services or giving something from their inventory. He mentioned Denise Pruitt and Shaneah McCauley from DSS who were involved.

Mr. Nicholson presented the Outstanding Program Award for the Community Garden Project and Commissioner Webb accepted the award along with Steven Edwards.

RECOGNITION OF JEAN KRAUSE (RETIREMENT)

Chairman Walker stated the Board would now recognize a retiring department head, Library Director Jean Krause, and asked her to come forward. He noted her accomplishments included:

- Adult Programs – Book discussions, gardening programs, job resource center, outreach to homebound, participation in Make a Difference Day and Operation Backpack, large print book section, and created a Friends of the Library group at Old Fort.
- Technology – Grant to improve network infrastructure, grant to replace servers, grant for laptop lab including digital projectors, implemented a print management system, set up wireless networks in Marion and Old Fort.
- Children’s Programs – Began programs and collection for teens, began programs for 7-11 year olds.
- Began using a collection agency to collect fines and materials.

Chairman Walker thanked Jean for her service and commitment to the Library and said she would be missed.

Mrs. Krause said she had enjoyed working in McDowell County, that it had been a pleasure just about every day. She said the economy situation was unfortunate but they had come through it just fine and it had been a pleasure working with Mr. Abernathy. She plans to stay in McDowell County.

Mr. Abernathy stated Jean is one of the best at motivating employees and noted her efforts with technology, but he credits her most on being a communicator. He mentioned the response in Madison County when he announced that she was hired here.

In comments from the Board, Commissioner Buff noted that he always read her articles in the newspaper. Commissioner Lavender thanked Jean for her leadership and mentioned her efforts in working with exchange students. Commissioner Webb noted that she always made the Library and our staff “look good”, and said as he looked over her list of accomplishments, it made him think of her as being real young because she knows so much about technology.

Mrs. Krause invited the Board and others to the Library for dedication of the quilt block at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 13th.

Chairman Walker asked Commissioner Lavender to read the plaque prepared for Mrs. Krause. It read:

Presented to

Jean Krause

**For 3 years and 11 months of dedicated service
as Director of the
McDowell County Public Library**

May 16, 2006 – April 30, 2010

On behalf of the Board, Chairman Walker presented the plaque to Mrs. Krause and wished her well in the years ahead.

RECOGNITION OF DANIEL SMITH (PROMOTION)

Next, the Board recognized Dr. Daniel Smith for his promotion as District Director for the West District with the NC State Cooperative Extension Service.

Dr. Smith advised he would be District Director over 18 counties in Western North Carolina and would miss McDowell County and its people. He said he would especially miss hosting “*Your County*”, better known as the “Dan Smith Show”.

The County Manager said he had worked with Dan for 15 years and that it had been a good working relationship. He said Dan had done an excellent job while in McDowell County. Each Commissioner in turn expressed his appreciation for Dan’s work, his leadership role on various committees, etc., saying they were proud of him and wished him well in the days ahead.

Dr. Smith noted the good staff he had to assist him here and that he appreciated the boards of the extension programs. He also mentioned the various partnerships that he had been involved with such as Keep McDowell Beautiful, the Public Works Department, the City of Marion, the Downtown Business Association, the Community College, etc. He said they would be naming a replacement as soon as possible, noting that Chad Ray would be the interim Director until then.

At Chairman Walker’s request and on behalf of the Board, Commissioner Buff presented a plaque to Dr. Smith which read:

Presented to

Dr. Daniel B. Smith

For 15 years and nine months of dedicated service

**as Director of the
North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service
McDowell County Center**

July 1, 1994 – March 31, 2010

BUDGET UPDATE AND AMENDMENTS

The County Manager advised he and staff had taken the direction of the County's auditor and had been trying to keep them up to date by doing monthly instead of quarterly budget amendments. The Finance Officer then presented budget amendments #36 – 43 and REC 3 as follows for the Board's consideration:

- #36 – Transfers funds between line items that are under \$3,000 in amount (as previously authorized for County Manager to handle)
- #37 – Recognizes additional donated funds for the 4-H Program
- #38 – Recognizes donations for the EMS
- #39 – Recognizes donations for the Library
- #40 – Recognizes fees passed by the General Assembly effective October 1, 2009 imposed on Register of Deeds activity. The collected funds are remitted to the State.
- #41 – Appropriates funds for equipment in the Sheriff's Department
- #42 – Recognizes additional revenues in the Crisis Energy Prevention Program
- #43 – Recognizes funds received for the McDowell House Master Plan
- REC 3 – Provides additional funding for the painting and repair of the swimming pools. The funds are derived from various line items in the Recreation operations fund.

Upon motion by Commissioner Lavender and a second by Commissioner Buff, budget amendments #36-43 and REC 3 were unanimously approved as presented.

Adjustments were requested for two accounts with the Nebo Water System. Upon motion by Commissioner Webb and a second by Commissioner Lavender, adjustments were unanimously approved for the two accounts as presented.

The County Manager then presented a request from Blue Ridge Realty & Associates, Inc. for a waiver of penalties imposed for late payment of occupancy tax. Mr. Abernathy noted the sincerity of this request and the fact that payments had previously been made on time. He said he felt it was a legitimate request.

Commissioner Buff made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Webb, to approve the waiver of penalties as requested. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

In his monthly budget update, the County Manager pointed out that expenditures were “on track” while some revenues were not. He reviewed sales tax figures for February which came in lower than the previous month, and property tax collections which are about 45% of the County’s budget and were running over a percent behind. He pointed out that while some revenues are running in the red, the good news is the County is financially strong as an organization. He noted that for the first time since he became County Manager, the Board had appropriated from fund balance this current year to balance the budget. He mentioned other things that had impacted the budget after it was adopted. These included the loss of jail reimbursement, the probation offices that became the County’s responsibility, and the console that was needed.

Mr. Abernathy advised the Forest Service project is finally over, the landfill scales are installed, and progress continues to be made, with a new budget to be presented in about 30 days. He pointed out, for us and for government in general, the economic situation is happening, noting that the NCACC is cautiously hopeful but is predicting that next year will be the fearful year.

In conclusion, Mr. Abernathy mentioned that staff will cut off budgets and try to manage the rest of the way through the budget, noting that he and the Finance Officer would make every effort to handle things appropriately in order to balance.

DISPOSAL OF TRANSFER STATION SCALES RESOLUTION

The Chairman next recognized the County Manager for the information regarding the disposal of the old transfer station scales that had been replaced. Mr. Abernathy explained that the Board had previously authorized the purchase and implementation of new transfer station scales at the transfer station. The disposal of the existing scales was overlooked and not addressed. During the delivery of the new scales, it was noted that the old scales had not been addressed. The company installing the scales offered \$2,500 for the old scales. The County Manager noted that the Public Works Director compared the offer with the value of the metal, the cost to haul the scales and the challenge of disposal and determined that the best decision was to sell the scales to the company. The County Manager noted that he called members of the Board to confer on the matter and it was agreed that a Resolution to dispose of the scales for \$2,500 was acceptable. The County Manager expressed his regret for this not being handled at the previous meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lavender and seconded by Commissioner Webb to approve the *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SALE OF PERSONAL*

PROPERTY, for disposal of the old scales. The motion passed by a unanimous vote and the resolution was adopted as follows:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

WHEREAS, the County of McDowell desires to sell (1) used Solid Waste Scale System; and

WHEREAS, property is located at the McDowell County Landfill for weighing of solid waste; and

WHEREAS, the sale of (1) used Solid Waste Scale System per G.S. 160A-266 is recommended for the sale of this property; and

WHEREAS, the buyer of property will be responsible for all costs associated with the removal and transportation of scale system.

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

The County of McDowell desires to sell personal property to Self Scales for the amount of \$2,500.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this the 12th day of April, 2010.

EARTH DAY AND HOUSING INITIATIVE UPDATE

Gloria Burrow, Director of the Volunteer Center, provided information on a number of activities involving the Volunteer Center and Keep McDowell Beautiful as well as the Housing Coalition. These activities included:

- Earthday Celebration on Saturday, April 24th, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Wal-Mart “on the green”
- Lake James Clean-Up on Saturday, May 15th, 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Black Bear Access
- Volunteer Awards Reception on Friday, May 21st, 6:00 p.m. at the Senior Center – Speaker will be Sylvia Hatchell, Head Coach for the Women’s Basketball Team at the University of North Carolina, leading her team to win a Gold Medal in 1994 and she was elected to the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame in 2004.
- National Volunteer Week – April 18-24 – This year the Volunteer Center is proud to celebrate the launch of the McDowell Housing Coalition with

the theme of “Neighbors Helping Neighbors”.

A “Volunteer Application” was provided for any one wishing to volunteer his or her services.

Ms. Burrow then provided an update on their meetings, citizen response to their public announcement, the number of qualified applicants (nearly 100), and their database.

The County Manager commented briefly on the number of projects received and explained that a building permit would be required for some of the projects and should be issued; however, they did not want to charge the homeowner those fees. He asked when a permit requirement occurs, if those fees could be waived, with a report given on those particular fees. Mr. Abernathy recommended either drafting a resolution for the Board’s approval or that a motion be made regarding those fees.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Buff, to authorize waiving building inspection fees for those projects in the housing coalition that need inspection. In discussion, the County Manager explained the process of when the inspection goes on site, his report of verification as to what items are needed for the particular project, etc.

When put to a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST

At this time, the County Manager introduced Yandisa Majozini, an Environmental Engineer from South Africa, who would be here for about three weeks through an exchange program with Appalachian State University to learn about County Government. Plans are for her to spend a good deal of time at Public Works with Mike Gladden since solid waste is of particular interest to her.

ANNUAL REPORT PRESENTATION CHILD SUPPORT

Chairman Walker welcomed DSS Director Phillip Hardin and Child Support Supervisor Roger Elliott for a presentation on Child Support. In a brief introduction, Mr. Hardin said this program is very “goal driven” by state and federal goals. He said their report would show McDowell County’s status and how it compares with other counties in the State.

Mr. Elliott stated his department gets cases from other units of DSS such as Work First and Medicaid referrals, and Foster Care referrals, as well as their services being available to the general public.

As Mr. Hardin had stated, the report showed State incentive and collection goals and State self-assessment goals, Medicaid cost avoidance of \$115,932 (2006), \$44,998 (2007), \$72,178 (2008), \$109,380 (2009) and \$48,194 (2010), caseload size, cost

effectiveness (ranging from low of 8.20 in 2010 to high of 9.54 in 2007), and the County ranking (11th in 2006 and 2007; 20th in 2008; 24th in 2009, and 10th in 2010).

Child Support's accomplishments included:

- Adding agency attorney
- Reorganization within the unit to provide more specialized caseloads
- Moving up state rankings for all child support units
- Established a lead agent within the unit
- Maintaining collections throughout economic turmoil
- Acquired access to Accurrant Investigations to assist with location

TELECOMMUNICATOR WEEK PROCLAMATION

At this time, Chairman Walker called Terry Young, McDowell County's Emergency Management Director, forward in regard to the first of two items added to the agenda. Mr. Young requested the Board's approval of a proclamation for "Telecommunicator Week" in McDowell County. He explained the designation for "Telecommunicator Week" was established in 1991 and this year it was designated for the week of April 11-17.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lavender and seconded by Commissioner Buff to declare the week of April 1-17, 2010 as "Telecommunicator Week" in McDowell County. By a unanimous vote, the motion passed and the Proclamation was adopted as follows:

TELECOMMUNICATOR WEEK

WHEREAS, Telecommunicator Week is celebrated annually in the second week of April and dedicated to the men and women who serve as public safety telecommunicators; and

WHEREAS, these highly trained professionals are more than anonymous voices on the telephone line and radio, they are extremely dedicated and deeply motivated people who serve the citizens of McDowell County at some of the most critical times in their lives; and

WHEREAS, their service as the "unseen" first responders is invaluable in emergency situations where time is critical and accuracy is vital; and

WHEREAS, McDowell County is proud to have professional telecommunicators who improve the emergency response capabilities of our public safety personnel by continuing to sharpen skills and talents through training and leadership programs and activities; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of McDowell County place their trust in these individuals, not just this week, but every day of the year.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, David N. Walker, Chairman, McDowell County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim the week of April 11-17, 2010 as **TELECOMMUNICATOR WEEK** and urge all residents to recognize the important role they have in our community.

McDowell County
Board of Commissioners

David N. Walker, Chairman

Commissioner Webb asked Mr. Young to convey the Board's thanks to all the telecommunicators for their work.

QUILT BLOCK PRESENTATION

Jill and Mike Lucas came before the Board representing the McDowell Quilt Trail Committee. Mrs. Lucas first thanked the Board for the use of the McDowell House for their work studio, noting the space is large enough to work on multi blocks at a time, to use volunteers to construct the blocks, for hosts to be met with and for meetings to be held. Mrs. Lucas said they had recently opened the building for Over Mountain Victory Trail to use and they were excited about seeing it in its present state. Mrs. Lucas said the Quilt Trail Committee was willing to share the space any time the County might need to use it. She mentioned the Tea Room with servers in period costumes that are appropriate for the era. The back portion of the building is used by another group producing quilt blocks.

Mrs. Lucas advised they would install four new blocks this week. One (#26) will be at the Public Library with a ceremony on Tuesday (April 13th) at 5:00 p.m. The Quilt Committee would hold a drop-in Open House and Tea to show appreciation and honor to both their host and their supporter on Friday, April 30th, from 3-6 p.m. at the McDowell House. The Tea Room will also hold an Open House that day.

Mrs. Lucas stated the Quilt Trail Committee would like to donate a 4 x 4 block to the people of McDowell County to be placed at a location of the Board's choice. They recommended that this block be placed on the County Administration Building. The block will be to simply honor the old Courthouse and will be one of the Board's choosing. Several block designs were provided for its review. Mrs. Lucas said the Committee was excited about the donation of the block and looked forward to its installation.

Chairman Walker thanked the Quilt Trail Committee for what they are doing, noting that he had recently seen evidence of the Quilt Trail in Madison County and on into Tennessee where he had visited.

In discussion, Mrs. Lucas said they had installed their very first block on September 11th and had installed the first one on Lake James at the boat dock. She said they would like to install more on Lake James which would be one way of separating their trail from other trails, with the possibility of some one starting a small business of having boat tours similar to those on Lake Lure and other lakes.

The County Manager thanked Mrs. Lucas for the presentation, including the update on the Tea Room. Concerning the block for the Administration Building, Mr. Abernathy said there had been some discussion as to where the block should be placed. The Board then reviewed the block designs with Mr. Lucas and agreed by consensus to make their choice soon. Chairman Walker thanked the Quilt Trail Committee for the donation of the block.

REVIEW MAPPING OFFICER RESOLUTION

Chairman Walker introduced the next item on the agenda which is an amendment to a Resolution adopted several years ago naming certain County employees as designees to sign off on deeds in relationship to the Watershed. The new Resolution changed the content to remove the names of employees and to simply designate the positions so authorized. The County Manager explained that this would simplify the process in the future so that when people change the Resolution would not have to be readopted.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lavender and seconded by Commissioner Webb to approve the amended Resolution as presented. The motion passed unanimously and the Resolution was adopted as follows:

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A REVIEW OFFICER FOR MAP LAW CHANGES

WHEREAS, the McDowell County Board of Commissioners on Monday, December 4, 2006, appointed per G.S. 40-30.2 review officers to review each plat before recording in the Register of Deeds; and

WHEREAS, the McDowell County Board of Commissioners has on said date appointed Keith Renfro, County Tax Assessor, Angie Randolph and Melissa Neally, Real Property Appraisers, and had reappointed Art Uphold, Mapper, and Deborah E. Godwin, Senior Mapper; however, Angie Randolph is no longer employed by McDowell County and therefore should be removed; and

WHEREAS, the McDowell County Board of Commissioners wishes to remove the names of employees and to simply designate the positions so authorized, those being the County Tax Assessor, Real Property Appraisers, and the G.I.S. Technician.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the McDowell County Board of Commissioners hereby establishes review officers for McDowell County under G.S. 40-30.2 as designated above by position.

ADOPTED this 12th day of April, 2010.

CONTRACT DOCUMENTS RURAL CENTER GRANT

The County Manager next provided an overview of a grant submitted on behalf of the McDowell Hospital to the NC Rural Center Health Initiative that was recently awarded. The grant was in the amount of \$120,000 and would be used to help construct a new medical facility on Sugar Hill Road. The facility will house a family practice and an ob-gyn practice. The City of Marion had previously agreed to provide the 3% match required by the Rural Center. McDowell County had agreed to administer the grant. Ashley Wooten, the County Manager's Assistant, provided additional information on the Rural Center grant.

A motion was made by Commissioner Webb and seconded by Commissioner Buff to approve the grant contracts and the 3% match. The motion passed unanimously.

REQUEST TO PURCHASE PROPERTY/NORTH COVE

The County Manager advised that Mr. Gibson had made an offer to purchase about two acres of property located in North Cove near the old North Cove School which he had previously purchased. Mr. Abernathy that Mr. Gibson's offer on the property was \$12,000 and the Board had asked staff to verify what seemed to be missing on the value and this was the fact that the property is in the flood plain as well as the floodway, the most restrictive example. He said as a result, the Tax Assessor had made an assessment of the property and had lowered the value to \$11,250. He recommended that the Board either accept or reject the offer made and direct the method of disposal.

Mr. Gibson verified that his offer was \$12,000 and that he had hoped any survey and closing costs would be handled by the County but he understood this would not be the case. He said he would like to revise his offer just to the appraised value (\$11,250).

A brief discussion followed.

Commissioner Buff made a motion to accept the offer made by Mr. Gibson and to proceed with the upset bid process by adoption of the *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SALE OF COUNTY OWNED PROPERTY*. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

In discussion, the County Manager said for clarification that the Board could still reject the offer, that they were not obligating themselves to sell the property at \$11,250, but is authorizing the upset bid process and the item will still come back to the Board.

When put to a vote, the motion carried unanimously and the resolution was adopted as follows:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SALE OF COUNTY OWNED
PROPERTY**

WHEREAS, the County of McDowell desires to sell property located on North Cove School Road; and

WHEREAS, property consists of 1,940 acres. Current tax value of property is \$11,250.00; and

WHEREAS, the Upset Bid process per G.S. 160A-269 is recommended for the sale of this property; and

WHEREAS, the buyer of property will be responsible for all costs association with the sale, including legal and advertising. The bidder will also submit a 5% bid deposit upon submitting their bid.

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

The County of McDowell desires to sell property located on North Cove School Road through an Upset Bid process and accepts the initial \$12,000 offer.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this the 12th day of April, 2010.

ALCOHOL AND DRUNKEN DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH

Chairman Walker introduced Marjorie Vestal, Health Promotion Coordinator for the McDowell County Health Department, for this item.

Mrs. Vestal advised April had been declared by the Governor as “Alcohol and Drunk Driving Awareness Month”. She said her program called “Voices in McDowell” is very focused on reducing crashes and fatalities. It is a community based program that is guided by a community advisory panel and they hold monthly meetings. Mrs. Vestal said the next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 13th, at 10:00 a.m. and invited the Board to attend any of their meetings.

Mrs. Vestal explained the Voices in McDowell program is primarily social marketing and their target audience is generally male. Their slogan is “Pass the Keys” and their literature is in both English and Spanish. Mrs. Vestal said they had been working with the ABC Board and had asked them to include their “low-risk consumption” guidelines in the bag for the sale of every bottle of alcohol beverage and they have agreed to do this. She said the State is aware of what they are doing and that several of the other counties across the State had shown an interest in this program as

well. She shared other training and educational events and activities they are doing that have been funded through the \$250,000 grant they had received.

Mrs. Vestal's presentation concluded with "Tyler's Story" that is currently being broadcast on the County's Government Channel. She asked for the Board's assistance in providing feedback

UPDATE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Chairman next introduced the topic of an update on the public hearing that was held in February on an economic development project. The County Manager explained that the hearing had been held on the project with a job number of 43 new employees. The employment number could be increased to over 80 and the request was made to increase the incentive from \$135,000 to \$235,000 if the additional jobs are added.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lavender and seconded by Commissioner Webb to approve the increase of the incentive amount to \$235,000 if needed per the hearing held in February. In discussion, Chairman Walker said again that he did not want funds to be provided until the project is started. The motion passed unanimously.

STATE ROAD MAINTENANCE TRANSFER RESOLUTION (SCOTT ROAD)

The County Manager advised that a request had been received by the Department of Transportation from the City of Marion to abandon maintenance of SR 1742, Scott Road, with maintenance being transferred to the City. Mr. Abernathy said the State was in agreement with this request.

Commissioner Webb made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Buff, to submit a resolution of approval in support of this request. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

TAX MATTERS

The usual listing of tax releases and refunds were reviewed and considered for approval. In summary, they were:

Releases Under \$100.00	Released amount of \$533.38
Releases Over \$100.00	Released amount of \$9,764.67
Motor Vehicle/Releases Under \$100.00	Released amount of \$614.79
Motor Vehicle/Releases Over \$100.00	Released amount of \$3,345.41
Release Refunds	Refunded amount of \$454.22

A motion was made by Commissioner Lavender and seconded by Commissioner Buff to approve the tax releases and refunds as presented. In discussion, a question was raised concerning the release for Fall Creek Land Company (\$3,360.13). When put to vote, the motion carried unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Walker noted there were still only three applicants for the Marion Area Fire Advisory Board. A vacancy on the Region C Workforce Development Board was presented on first reading with one applicant.

CEDS DOCUMENT

Concerning the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Document, the County Manager explained that he had considered asking Jim Edwards or someone else from Isothermal to be present for this item since it involves a difficult grant category.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Webb, to approve the CEDS document and to allow staff to make any changes deemed necessary. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

REVIEW MEETINGS AND SCHEDULE

The County Manager advised the Utility Committee meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 15th, was being cancelled and the City of Marion was in agreement. The NCACC District Meeting was being held on Wednesday, April 14th, in Shelby. Also noted was the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner for workers at the Senior Center on Thursday, April 22nd and the Volunteer Center Awards Reception, scheduled for Friday, May 21st, at the Senior Center. Mr. Abernathy said the Fire Commission wanted to meet in May. He asked that the Board adjourn today to a meeting on Secondary Roads with the Department of Transportation on May 10th at 3:30 p.m. He reminded the Board of the installation of the quilt block at the Public Library on April 13th at 5:00 p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Chairman Walker noted that Ms. Donna Edwards was signed up to speak and called her forward at this time.

With reference to the previous discussion of the economic development project, Ms. Edwards questioned the Board concerning the jobs this company would bring to McDowell County---whether they would be state jobs or some other type, the amount of funds that had been spent on these projects, why certain information could not be provided, etc.

Mr. Abernathy explained there are restrictions as to what information can be publicly shared and why this is necessary, when full disclosure of information can be made and by whom, etc.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be transacted, upon motion by Commissioner Lavender and second by Commissioner Webb, by unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned.

DAVID N. WALKER, CHAIRMAN

CARRIE PADGETT
CLERK TO THE BOARD