

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF McDOWELL
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – JUNE 10, 2013**

ASSEMBLY

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, June 10, 2013, at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Board Room of the County Administration Building, 60 East Court Street, Marion, North Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT

David N. Walker, Chairman; Barry E. McPeters, Vice Chairman; Michael K. Lavender; Van Randy Hollifield; and Joseph L. Kaylor

OTHERS PRESENT

Charles R. Abernathy, County Manager; Carrie Padgett, Clerk to the Board; Ashley Wooten, Assistant to the County Manager (Filming); and Mike Conley, Reporter for THE McDOWELL NEWS

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman David Walker called the meeting to order. Commissioner Lavender gave the invocation, followed by the pledge of allegiance, led by Commissioner Randy Hollifield.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the May 8, 2013 special session, the May 9, 2013 adjourned session, the May 13, 2013 regular session, and the May 14, 2013, May 16, 2013, May 21, 2013, and May, 24, 2013 adjourned sessions were presented for approval.

Commissioner McPeters made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kaylor to approve the minutes as presented. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

With no additions or deletions to the agenda, Commissioner Hollifield made a motion to approve the agenda as prepared. Commissioner McPeters seconded the motion and by unanimous approval, the motion carried.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS AND FINANCE MATTERS/ DONATION OF PROPERTY

The County Manager suggested having a discussion as far as how the year will be ending, noting there will be other amendments for the ending of the year although those might be done when the budget is adopted.

Finance Officer Alison Morgan then reviewed the budget amendments for approval as follows:

GF 67 – Receives donations in the 4-H Program.

GF 68 – Receives an EMS grant, donations and transfers funds into the medical supplies and fuel line items.

GF 69 – Involves Finance Department and relates to transferring the cost for the EMS forced collections (staff amends after receiving the payments) and the related supplies.

GF 70 – Relates to a series of HVAC related expenses at different buildings:

- 1) Replacement of a HVAC compressor for the Gymnastics area at McDowell Recreation (\$1,806.00)
- 2) Replacement of old hear pump with new gas tack HVAC unit at Department of Social Services (\$9,553.00)
- 3) Replacement of exhaust fan units for Mental Health on Spaulding Road (\$2,873.00)
- 4) Remediation to McDowell Hospital for office repairs at Senior Center (\$2,134.00)

GF 71 – Transfers \$850.00 in the Waste Collection budget

GF 72 – Allocates funds from the tax departments forced collections efforts of the Attorney that we have under contract. Again, staff amends after receiving the funds.

GF 73 – Relates to the Sheriff's Department. Several of the items are "in and out" amendments including the concealed weapons item and the canteen fund.

GF 74 – Involves the DSS budget and concerns juvenile placement.

GF 75 – Amendment is necessary due to our efforts to keeping the Tax Department operational and costs related to GIS.

GF 76 – Receives the restricted TDA funds estimated through June 30th.

- GF 77 – Amendment is necessary to pay overages in the utilities costs in Recreation.
- GF 78 – Receives federal DSS related funds and transfers between line items.
- GF 79 – Transfers funds in tax collections to pay for the new cable, computer related installation.
- GF 80 – Receives additional grant funds.
- GF 81 – Is the large amendment done each year related to County’s self-insurance fund. It transfers all remaining funds in all salary and benefit line items to pay expected claims. An additional \$34,425 was needed. County experienced a very high claim month in May and hopes this covers expected claims for June.
- GF 82 – Involves the enterprise fund and is necessary because the expense for the recently purchased front-end loader was booked in fiscal year 2013 and funds were received in fiscal year 2012.
- FD 1 – Recognizes estimated fire tax proceeds.
- DS1 – Amendment is necessary due to additional bank charges on debt. The Funds come from accumulated debt funds in hand.
- ENT5 – Transfers funds in the enterprise fund under \$3,000.
- ENT 6 – Off-sets amendment GF 82.
- NWENT2 – Transfers funds in the Nebo Water fund.
- NWENT 3 – Pays for the damage to the sprinkler system.
- S11 – Off-sets GF 81.
- Project Budget Ordinance – Since there will be budget activity out of the KBR Grant for Recreation, it is necessary to create this ordinance in this fiscal year. The other two will occur in the next fiscal year.
- Four Resolutions that close out completed projects:
- 1) Renewable Energy Project for solar panels installation on County owned buildings
 - 2) Catawba Falls Restroom Project located at the Catawba Falls Recreation Area
 - 3) Rural Center Project Tilson Grant
 - 4) Energy Efficiency Block Grant for the replacement of lighting

in County owned facilities

Commissioner Lavender made a motion to approve budget amendments GF 67 – GF 82, FD 1, DS1, ENT5, ENT6, NWENT2, NWENT3, and S11 as presented, as well as the Project Budget Ordinance for Recreation and the four Resolutions to close out completed projects. Commissioner McPeters seconded the motion and by unanimous approval, the motion carried.

Mr. Abernathy advised two adjustments were needed that were associated with the Nebo Water System due to meter reading errors (one in the amount of \$75,000; the other in the amount of \$77,011).

Commissioner McPeters made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Lavender, to approve the two Nebo Water System adjustments as presented. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

Next, Mr. Abernathy presented a request on an occupancy tax late fee waiver. The business owner had submitted his occupancy tax eight days late. Mr. Abernathy said the business owner is normally very punctual and is never late. The \$80.00 late fee is on taxes of \$36.34.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hollifield, to grant the occupancy tax late fee waiver as requested. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

Mr. Abernathy advised the auditors had recommended last December the adoption of two cash related policies, one being a *Fund Balance Reserve Policy*; the second one a *Revenue Spending Policy*. Mr. Abernathy said he had heard questions concerning both policies but noted both are being recommended across the State. He pointed out County policy is typically read twice, especially where they have impact to employees, which these do not.

Further, Mr. Abernathy addressed the question on the fund balance percentage being recommended, which is 18%, and higher than what he had found in looking at other counties. He said this is a little high, it is the Board's call, and is not binding, but it certainly does set an expectation and perhaps puts someone in the future in a bind that we do not know about or can anticipate.

Chairman Walker said both policies were accepted on first reading, and would be looked at again next month. Commissioner Lavender said his preference would be to check a little further into the percentage, especially since the State's suggestion is lower than that, and he would hate to put future boards in a bind. Mr. Abernathy said he understood, noting that he and the Finance Officer had gone back and forth, looking both lower and higher. Chairman Walker asked that everyone give his feedback to the County Manager between now and next month.

The last Finance related item was the donation of property with a resolution that would allow the donation of four laptops to the Good Samaritan Clinic. The laptops are no longer in use in DSS as they have been replaced.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hollifield, to approve the resolution authorizing the donation. By unanimous approval, the resolution was approved as follows:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DONATION OF PERSONAL
PROPERTY TO NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION**

WHEREAS, the County of McDowell desires to donate four (4) Laptops to Good Samaritan Clinic, a non-profit entity; 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.

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

The County of McDowell is authorized to donate four (4) Laptops to Good Samaritan Clinic, a non-profit entity:

Gateway E-265M Laptop S/N 0040281246
Gateway E-265M Laptop S/N 0040281247
Acer Extensa 4220-2555 Laptop S/N LXE9306005808
HP Compaq 6730 Laptop S/N CNU843120Y

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 10th day of June, 2013.

KATE B. REYNOLDS GRANT ITEMS

This item was presented last month but the Board had taken no action because the acceptance letters had not been finalized. Mr. Abernathy advised those letters had been received and actually had been signed and returned because there was a two-week turn-around. The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust grants were in the amount of \$223,304 on the DSS project, \$326,161 on the EMS project that was presented last month, and \$150,000 for upgrades to the Old Fort Recreation Department for which the Board had already established the project ordinance. There will be two other project ordinances for the Board's consideration in July or August for the other two projects as they are ready.

Mr. Abernathy asked that the Board accept the grants and to authorize the County to so participate.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion to accept all three grants and participate with Kate B. Reynolds on these projects. Commissioner McPeters seconded the motion and by unanimous approval, the motion carried.

Mr. Abernathy said on this same topic, there is a grant deadline for the next round toward the end of August. Staff is working on ideas, one of which has been mentioned to the Board (the after school idea for Recreation) although they are not far enough along with it to present anything. He pointed out if they could keep a short meeting in July, he would like at least to present other ideas and see what the Board might have on how County Government might specifically apply for Kate B. Reynolds grants to expand what the County is doing in the interest of wellness. He said staff is thinking of programs at the Main Recreation facility and maybe some programming with the public School System in relationship to sixth grade after school.

UNIVERSAL BUILDING UPDATE

The County Manager advised the Universal Training Center was out to bid, and the bid documents were on the Conference Table near his office if Board members wished to review them. He said the goal is to have as many contractors as possible to have good bids on this project. The bid opening will be on Thursday, June 27th at 2:30 p.m., and again the Board members are welcome to attend. Mr. Abernathy pointed out that a few years in the past, the Board had not met in July, but things are taking shape that will necessitate a meeting in July to have the Board act on those bids. He advised he had the Rural Center notice for the \$130,000 on the water line extension and would need the occurrence of job creation in order to process this. Work is underway on two projects that hopefully will happen to create additional jobs in this building in order qualify for the grant.

In discussion, Mr. Abernathy pointed out the aforementioned bids do not include renovation at the College, parking, or the access road, as these items will require separate bidding. He pointed out the College has some work to do in communicating what they want to see included in those bids, which will provide good information on how to proceed. He said perhaps in July, when there is more clarity of knowing whether the project is in good or bad shape, or right where they hope to be on the Training Center, they need to determine what this will mean in relationship to the schedule for bidding out the main campus.

RIGHT OF WAY DOCUMENTS/UNIVERSAL

Mr. Abernathy said there is a sub-station on the Universal property that is being expanded somewhat. He pointed out, as seen from the document, Duke Energy is asking for a new 30 foot right of way in order to help the County serve the tenants in the building. There is also right of way that crosses City property and they have raised a

question. Based on these circumstances, if the Board agrees, Mr. Abernathy said it might be advisable to wait a month to see what their issues are.

By consensus, the Board agreed.

TAX MATTERS

The monthly listing of tax releases and refunds were presented for approval. In summary, they were:

Releases Under \$100.00	Released amount of \$86.72
Releases Over \$100.00	Released amount of \$1,240.46
Motor Vehicle Releases Under \$100.00	Released amount of \$776.57
Motor Vehicle Releases Over \$100.00	Released amount of \$1,504.05
Release Refunds	Refunded amount of \$1,487.21

Commissioner McPeters made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hollifield, to approve the tax releases and refunds as presented. By unanimous approval, the motion carried

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

In order for everyone to be clear on current board appointments, the County Manager said there was one *second reading*, the *Planning Board*, and the others are *first readings*. Board vacancies are advertised *after* the first reading. Mr. Abernathy advised that since the Board had just made an appointment to the McDowell Tech Board, the question had been asked “Was this one that would still require two readings?” He pointed out he was not recommending that it be done now because this is out of his jurisdiction, but in the past, the Board has waived the “two-reading” policy where it is a non-issue. He said he did not know whether or not this would be the case now.

In discussion, Commissioner Kaylor asked wasn’t Mr. Effler the only one asking for reappointment to the McDowell Tech Board. The Clerk confirmed this, noting the other two were on file.

Chairman Walker advised Dr. Wilson has always said there are enough members at their meetings for a quorum. Therefore, since there would be no lack of a quorum, he thought the Board just needed to stay with policy on the first reading and proceed until the next meeting. At this point, the Clerk explained the reason she had included the first reading appointments was because sometimes there is a lack of interest, such as with Nursing Home/Adult Care, or there is a need for designated slots as with Region C Workforce Development. She said in the event the Board wished to utilize the option of

waiving policy, the ballot sheet was prepared for this. Further, Mr. Abernathy stated there is no law requiring two readings for board appointments and the reason this is done is to inform citizens of what the Board is doing and to allow the public input for service to the County.

Further discussion followed, with Chairman Walker stating the Board typically holds two readings on board appointments and reiterating why the Board, on occasion, has waived policy and made appointments on the first reading.

Commissioner Kaylor then made a motion to waive policy and make the McDowell Tech appointment now. Commissioner Lavender seconded the motion. By a vote of 4-1, the motion carried with Chairman Walker opposing the motion.

A brief discussion followed on whether to make the remaining appointments on first reading.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion to proceed with appointments to fill the remaining three vacancies. Commissioner Hollifield seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The Board then voted by written ballot on the following applicants for appointment:

Planning Board

Dennis J. Whitson, Brenda M. Vaughn and Alex R. Portelli

Nursing Home/Adult Care

Wilma Bartlett and Jewell McNeal

McDowell Tech Board of Trustees

Chet Effler, Cecilia Reel and James Washburn

Region C Workforce Development

Mark Webber and Doug Gouge

The Clerk tallied the votes, with results being as follows:

McDowell County Planning Board:

For Dennis Whitson – Commissioners Kaylor, Lavender, McPeters and Walker

For Brenda Vaughn – Commissioner Hollifield

Nursing Home/Adult Care Advisory Committee:

Unanimous vote for Wilma Bartlett and Jewell McNeal

McDowell Tech Board of Trustees:

For Chet Effler – Commissioners Kaylor, Lavender, McPeters and Hollifield

For James Washburn – Chairman Walker

Region C Workforce Development Consortium:

Unanimous vote for Mark Webber and Doug Gouge

PUBLIC HEARING 2013-14 BUDGET

At 5:30 p.m. as duly advertised, Chairman Walker declared the Board in public hearing on the proposed McDowell County Budget for Fiscal Year 2013-2014, as required by the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act. He asked the County Manager, as Budget Officer, to give a brief summary and make comment.

Mr. Abernathy stated the Board had held about eight meetings over the last month after the Budget recommendation was presented. The Budget Presentation has been running on the government channel, which is also visible on the internet at mcdowellgov.com.

Mr. Abernathy pointed out the Budget is recommended at \$37, 210,920. If this number were in fact what is approved, it would be a 4.6% increase. Further, if the Department of Social Services is taken out, which is revenue from the federal and state government, the increase would be cut about in half, for a 2.3% increase.

As far as new highlights to the Budget, the major items showing an increase are the Public School System, the raise for County employees, Worker's Comp., a new ambulance, new Sheriff cars, an increase for the water study, new positions including a Medicaid position, Sheriff's Department clerical, new Animal Shelter attendant, and some part-time hours as well.

Mr. Abernathy advised the Local Government and Fiscal Control Act, under which cities and counties operate in North Carolina, says a county must hold a public hearing on the Budget prior to its being adopted and it must adopt a Budget prior to June 30th unless it does an interim budget. He pointed out every time but once McDowell County has approved its Budget prior to the end of the fiscal year. The tax rate is recommended to remain at 55 cents per \$100.00 valuation.

Continuing, Mr. Abernathy advised there will be a change in the Nebo District of one cent for that specific district for fire service, a separate fire tax that counties approve. The Nebo District has requested the one-cent increase. Mr. Abernathy stressed the importance of making sure the people in that community know the fire tax had been proposed and asked that the news media make mention of this as well.

Chairman Walker opened the floor for comment from the public concerning the proposed Budget. Nebo resident Carol Fereby wanted to know when the county employees last got an increase. Mr. Abernathy replied last year.

Marilyn Foreman said she had a friend who was interested in applying for the opening on Planning Board but she understood this was finished. She asked if this was true. Chairman Walker briefly explained that any one who wishes to serve on a committee can contact the Clerk to the Board who will provide an application for that purpose. Applications are kept on file for one year and as vacancies occur, those applications are presented for consideration by the Board. The County Manager asked if the friend would be interested in serving on the Nursing Home/Adult Care Committees since applicants are needed in this area.

Carol Fereby said as a resident of Nebo, she did not know anything about the Fire Department tax increase, and asked if that could be explained. Commissioner Hollifield responded, saying the Nebo Fire Department came before the Board and requested a one-cent increase in fire tax in the Nebo District. He pointed out the firemen had presented some real good rational for the increase which included hiring and staffing the Fire Department full-time during the day time hours because they are volunteer firemen but work full-time jobs as most everyone else does and cannot respond to a fire on a moment's notice. Therefore, a full-time person is needed to keep their rating up—otherwise homeowner rates would increase. Further, the Fire Department has to keep its equipment up to date.

Michelle Harris asked for clarification on the increase/growth to the Budget, and about the fund balance. Mr. Abernathy responded to her questions and explained how projections are made, noting the County has added to its fund balance for 12-13 years in a row, even during the recession.

With no further questions or comments from the public, Commissioner McPeters made a motion to go out of public hearing. Commissioner Hollifield seconded the motion and by unanimous vote, the motion carried.

The County Manager advised he would ask that the Board adjourn from this meeting to the next budget workshop.

PRESENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/LAKE JAMES INTAKE

Mike Waresak, Projects Manager with McGill Associates, came before the Board to present the environmental assessment and to give a brief update on the status of the overall project for the water supply at Lake James. The status report showed:

- Environmental Assessment – Draft completed, will be submitted soon
- Duke Conveyance Permit Application/PER – 60% Complete

- Catawba Wateree Water Management Group Coordination – Presentation made in October, 2012 and water withdrawal request submitted October 26, 2012
- Surface Water Reclassification – McDowell County and Burke County Resolutions adopted, Request for other resolution pending for other affected municipality (City of Marion)
- Preliminary Easement Acquisition – Preliminary submitted to North Carolina State Parks and Recreation made February, 2013

Mr. Waresak said the Environmental Assessment Draft gives a layout of what the next steps will be in the process. This document will be submitted to the Public Water Supply Section and, once they have reviewed it and provided any input, it will be circulated among the various agencies for review and comment. This will allow them to initiate the surface water reclassification process in a more concerted effort. He advised the State wants to see the environmental assessment before they start their surface water reclassification process. The environmental assessment will also be used as part of the Duke Energy permit application.

The project is to construct a 3.8 million gall per day raw water supply intake near the Catawba Dam and Hidden Cove Boat Access Area on Lake James, approximately 4,000 linear feet of raw water transmission main from the intake to the water treatment plant site, and a 1.0 MGD water treatment plant on the Crescent Resources property, currently under option by the County. The intake size is based on a 50 year projection for the McDowell County and Marion water systems.

Mr. Waresak pointed out four alternatives were considered, but the analysis indicates that the raw water intake on Lake James is the most practical of the alternatives considered. Continuing, he addressed existing environmental characteristics, predicted environmental effects, and mitigative measures. The environmental assessment concludes that the proposed Lake James intake and water treatment plant will have no significant impacts to the environment. Mr. Waresak said their proposal would be to get the document submitted to initiate the surface water reclassification process.

A brief discussion followed.

Chairman Walker stated he thought it is important for the County to continue in the process because water is the key for the future of the County and for future generations, and noted the importance of having it permitted

Commissioner Lavender made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hollifield, to authorize submission of the Environmental Assessment as requested by McGill Associates. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

Mr. Abernathy stated the County has the property (275 acres) under option through November, and it has been under option for three or four years. The amount remaining to be paid to hold the property under option is \$995,114. He pointed out this is

an issue that needs to be explored between now and November, noting that while there are other options available, it is something that needs to be decided.

Continuing, Mr. Abernathy said in this year's budget there is \$197,585 and \$56,000 of that is the payment for the extension of water and sewer on Sugar Hill Road out to Walmart. This leaves \$141,000, but he pointed out that \$10,000 should be taken from that amount in case something goes wrong with the system in Nebo. This would leave \$131,000 to do the continued work, and then add the STAG grant back to that number, meaning we have a \$480,000 grant that we draw down at the rate of 45 County/55 grant.

Concerning the resolutions, Mr. Abernathy advised he was meeting with the City of Marion, and their resolution is probably going to have an agreement component to it unlike the Burke situation because due to the nature of their regulation, it wasn't necessary. Also, the Utility Committee has been discussing it, and they are looking for this to be resolved, hopefully within 60 days.

A general discussion followed.

NOISE ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

Chairman Walker pointed out this item was on the agenda last month and it is back for further discussion. He asked the County Manager to lead the discussion.

Mr. Abernathy said the Attorney had reviewed the Ordinance and is recommending that he meet with the Planning Board and the Sheriff had also had additional discussion with the District Attorney. Mr. Abernathy said what they would recommend is that the item be put back to the Planning Board and that the County Attorney be instructed to meet with them and bring back something within 60-90 days.

Commissioner Hollifield made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McPeters, to accept the recommendation made by staff. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

Mr. Abernathy pointed out the Planning Board meets in the Commission Board Room on the 4th Monday each month at 7:00 p.m. if any one present would like to meet with them.

HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The County Manager pointed out that two years ago the Commissioner said they wanted to place more emphasis on coordinating resources and seeking grants to assist primarily senior citizens in housing repair needs such as a leaky roof, a floor needing repair, or a wheelchair ramp. There is a church group of volunteers that has been doing this for years. The Commissioners had communicated with that group that they did not want to take their place but if we were coordinated better and applied for grants, maybe

we could do a better job and help more people and they agreed. The County held off forming a non-profit entity and appointing a committee of citizens since County staff was basically doing this on its own, and of course the volunteers have continued doing what they do. However, the Finance Officer feels and Mr. Abernathy agrees, that the time has come to have a committee oversee the non-profit entity that would be the Housing Authority.

Continuing, Mr. Abernathy said there were two decisions, neither of which had to be made tonight. One is the size and composition of the Authority—number of members (9, 11, 13?), and would it be a group of citizens that are named, or be slots with a business person, a couple of ministers, a contractor, etc. Mr. Abernathy suggested, with input from Darline Atamanchuk of the Housing Coalition and Phillip Hardin with DSS, to have nine (9) members that might include an attorney, churches, construction sector, industry, the City, the County, USDA, Hospice, and IPDC. He pointed out Mr. Hardin would be on the agenda in July and he would not want to finalize the Authority without Mr. Hardin being present. He said perhaps the suggested membership might serve as a first reading, and the Board could provide feedback on what the composition and size should be.

Commissioner Lavender said his preference would be to give some latitude on the number, saying 9-12, and let the Housing Coalition and Mr. Hardin bring back a number and suggested slots. Also, Commissioner Lavender said since the grant had been awarded through the County, we should be the disbursing agent similar to TDA and others, for administering the funds. Mr. Abernathy said this would be the case, and noted this brings up the seconded decision—the \$75,000 grant for urgent housing repair that will be available over course of the next year. He explained the difference in a non-profit, such as an authority, and an entity such as the Planning Board that is County controlled.

Mr. Abernathy said he would assume the Board would accept applications and follow the “board appointment” process in handling this item. Chairman Walker asked that the Board provide feedback as requested by Mr. Abernathy.

Mr. Abernathy asked that the Board take action on acceptance of the \$75,000 urgent grant for housing.

Commissioner Lavender made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kaylor, to approve acceptance of the grant. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

In further discussion of the membership, Mr. Abernathy suggested naming a core group and then charge them to seek applicants. He also mentioned the three areas that the Commissioners said they wanted the grant writer to focus on, all of which had been successful with a grant. He said the Board might be thinking about they want the grant wrier to focus on for the next year. Commissioner Lavender said he felt the County should consider working closely with the College on the fund raising effort it is about to pursue and have some grant writing for the main campus project.

Chairman Walker asked the Board members to be thinking of any ideas or topics they wished to have the grant writer pursue and these could be consolidated during one of their budget meetings.

REPORTS AND CUMMUNICATIONS

There were no reports and communications except for the Chairman saying they were looking at June 14th for the next budget meeting.

ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE SUGGESTIONS

Nebo resident Gwen Straub led the discussion, first mentioning the things the Board has undertaken to make improvements to the animals, noting that she wants them to continue this track record. She then proceeded to review the proposals she and others wish to make in amending the Animal Control Ordinance. The suggestions deal primarily with tethering and animals that are kept outdoors.

Discussion followed with some of the Board members giving their comments on the issues presented, their particular interests, etc., advising that they felt other groups in the County, such as hunters, should be included in drafting a document that would be suitable for the County.

Chairman Walker thanked Ms. Straub for being present tonight and for all her work in this presentation.

FOREST SERVICE PRESENTATION

Scott Ellis, County Ranger in McDowell County who has worked for the Forest Service for 26 years, came before the Board to give an Annual Report from the North Carolina Forest Service. Also present was Greg Smith, District Ranger with the Forest Service.

Mr. Ellis reviewed the Forest Service staff, their equipment, use, forest management services, education services, etc. He advised their budget for 2013-2014 for operating, vehicle, and salary is \$180,109, with \$72,044 being the County's portion of budget (40%) and \$108,065 being the State's portion (60%).

A general discussion followed on permitting, acreage, and what can be done on specific areas in relationship to the Forest Service.

Mr. Smith spoke on various things the budget amount pays for and addressed situations where they have tapped into resources made available to them that are not covered through general County services.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Michelle Harris spoke again concerning the Box Creek situation and the need for an ordinance for protection of land owners. She made reference to the invitations sent out and asked whether any one is planning to attend. She also noted the letter which she sent to the County Commissioners, and briefly made mention of Mr. Sweeney's involvement in the project.

Mr. Abernathy advised he had inquired with the School of Government and told Mrs. Harris that no county in the State of North Carolina has such an ordinance as this.

Carol Fereby spoke in favor of having something in place to protect her property. Further, she noted she has worked with Gwen Straub on the Animal Ordinance and is working with Marilyn Foreman on a program for taking care of animals that are not being cared for.

Rachel Keneger spoke on the same issue.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, upon motion by Commissioner Kaylor and a second by Commissioner Hollifield, the meeting was adjourned until 11:30 a.m. Friday, June 14, 2013. Time is now 8:00 pm

DAVID N. WALKER, CHAIRMAN

CARRIE PADGETT
CLERK TO THE BOARD