

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION –DECEMBER 20, 2021**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, December 20, 2021, at 11:30 a.m., at the DSS Conference Room.

Members Present

Tony Brown, Chairman; David N. Walker, Vice-Chair; Brenda Vaughn; Chris Allison and Patrick Ellis

Members Absent

None

Others Present

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Cheryl Mitchell, Clerk to the Board; William Kehler, ES Director

Call to Order

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 11:30a.m.

COVID Update

Mr. William Kehler gave an update on the Omicron variant. In vaccinated individuals there were mild to moderate symptoms, and this variant is more transmissible than the Delta variant. There were 45 positives over the weekend. The PCR test does not designate which variant on a positive test.

Mr. Kehler noted Station #1 houses the command staff, and also has several individuals in one office. Also, the 911 Center has several employees in close quarters. He requested the mask mandate be put back in place for Station #1 in congregate setting and a rapid test prior to entry. He also requested the crisis pay, which is set to expire December 31, 2021, be extended until the end of January.

Vice Chairman Walker made a motion to approve the surge pay for 30 days, second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Commissioner Vaughn made a motion to allow Mr. Kehler to allow the discretion to allow individually per base the ability to mandate mask, second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 4-1 the motion passed.

Brown; Vaughn; Ellis; Allison – yes
Walker – no

Commissioner Ellis asked for the status of the construction of the Sugar Hill bridge. Mr. Wooten noted he would get an update and report back to the Board.

Discussion was held on the stop loss of the county's insurance policy. Consensus was to get an update from the third-party administrator.

Vice Chairman Walker made a motion to send a letter to Senator Hise, Rep. Greene and the head of NCDOT regarding the status of the Sugar Hill bridge, second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Discussion was held on an update of broadband from Altice and Spectrum.

Mr. Wooten noted he would like to have a meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair and meet with the engineer to discuss water lines and options.

Commissioner Ellis made a motion to adjourn at 12:15pm, second by Vice Chairman Walker. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Attest:

Cheryl L. Mitchell
Clerk to the Board

Tony G. Brown
Chairman