

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL SESSION – MAY 23, 2022**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Special Session on Monday, May 23, 2022, at 5:00p.m., in the Commissioner’s Board Room located at 69 N Main St, Marion, NC.

Members Present

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

Member Absent

None

Others Present

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Cheryl Mitchell, Clerk to the Board; Alison Bell, Finance Director; Lake Silver, Management Asst

Call to Order

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Budget Presentation

Mr. Wooten presented his 2022-2023 budget presentation to the Board. He started his presentation with an overview of fiscal year 2022 accomplishments:

- Emergency Services staff continued their collaboration with the Foothills Health District to assist with the administration of COVID tests and vaccines.
- The Shooting Range was completed. The facility is funded via 90% state funds, and 10% county funds
- The N Main Administrative Offices were completed. The facility will relocate administrative staff back to the downtown area.
- The Emergency Services Headquarters was completed, and completed the four-station plan, which will result in better response times.
- Several Parks and Recreation improvements and partnerships were begun including youth football, baseball/softball.
- The County continued to administer American Rescue Plan Act funds. Funding has been directed toward various projects including broadband, water extensions, and park improvements.
- The County received several state capital grants that will assist in the improvement of County facilities.
- The Board authorized the expansion of the Nebo Water System to provide water to areas adjacent to the existing lines.

- The Stacy Hill Road water line was extended to complete a connection to the existing line on US 70.
- A grant was submitted that would extend water service to Hoppy Tom Hollow Rd., and other water planning efforts were initiated.

New Expenditure Impacts

Public Education	\$ 314,050
Public Safety	\$ 1,267,731
County Facilities and Equipment	\$ 61,284
County Organization Improvements	\$ 1,795,498
Community and Economic Development	\$ 939,094

The 2022-2023 proposed budget was for \$54,425,329, which was an increase of 9.44%. The proposed tax rate remained the same at 57.75 cents for the General Fund. Property tax income remains the largest single source of revenue at 51%.

In summary the percentages of the expenditures of the proposed budget were:

Public Safety	28%
Human Services	25%
Education	21%
General Government	12%
Environmental Protection	4%
Cultural and Debt	4%
Recreation Service	4%
Economic and Industrial Development	2%

Mr. Wooten noted one of the future budget concerns were park properties need significant upgrades such as new lighting at ballfields.

Mr. Wooten reminded the Board there would be a budget public hearing on June 13th at 5:00pm at the Regular Session meeting, and the Board would need to approve the budget by June 30th.

Chairman Brown requested the Board review the budget recommendations and let the County Manager know their thoughts regarding the budget.

Vice Chairman Walker made a motion to have staff to get bids to see what the cost for LED lighting at the Maple Leaf fields would be, second by Commissioner Allison. Commissioner Ellis asked what other recreation properties needed lighting. Vice Chairman Walker amended his motion to determine lighting needs at the Old Fort fields also, second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

FY 2023 Fee Adjustment Requests

Mr. Wooten noted the County’s solid waste hauler, CPI, was increasing their tipping fee.

Staff recommendation was to increase the Transfer Station Tipping Fee from \$60 to \$62.

Vice Chairman Walker made a motion that due to an increase in carrier hauler fees to the County for hauling waste, that the County increase tipping fees from \$60 to \$62 effective August 1, 2022, second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Staff recommended assessing the tipping fee for all waste that is brought into the Transfer Station (exempting residential haulers due to statutory limitations) including municipal solid waste, construction/demolition, etc., and setting the minimum to \$5.

Commissioner Ellis made a motion to set the minimum fee of \$5, second by Commissioner Vaughn effective August 1, 2022. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Commissioner Allison was asked if there was a place in the County where the public could take personal papers and have them shredded. Mr. Wooten noted the county did not have a place but staff could contact a vendor about hosting a county shred event. Once the shred event was set, staff would advertise where and when.

Mr. Wooten noted the City of Marion was increasing their water rates by 6 cents, and since the County purchases their water from the City, staff recommended a 9% water rate increase due to costs associated with water lines.

Vice Chairman Walker made a motion to approve a water rate increase of 9% due to City of Marion increasing their fees to 6%, and to help offset associated cost, second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Capitol Asset Report

Lake Silver, Management Assistant, gave an overview of the 164-page Capitol Asset Report he had completed. A copy is in the Clerk's office.

The report detailed all McDowell County real estate capital assets. McDowell County owns 48 properties, 39 of which have facilities on them, and therefore the County is responsible for all maintenance. Nine are undeveloped or partially developed parcels. In addition to the county-owned assets, the County also leases several spaces from other organizations to fulfill services. They are currently leasing seven spaces and are responsible for the upkeep of the interior of the spaces.

The report will be updated each year, and presented to the Board for budgetary purposes.

The Board expressed their appreciation to Mr. Silver for the presentation and the report.

Adjournment

Vice Chairman Walker made a motion at 5:55pm to adjourn, second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Attest:

Cheryl L. Mitchell, Clerk to the Board

Tony G. Brown, Chairman