

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – June 16, 2025**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, June 16, 2025, at 11:30 a.m., in the Commissioner's Board Room, 69 N Main St., Marion, NC.

Members Present

Chairman, Tony Brown; Vice-Chair, Lynn Greene; David Walker, Trisha Garner and Patrick Ellis

Members Absent

Others Present

Ashley R. Wooten, County Manager; Alison Bell, Finance Director; Scott Boyd, NCACC Strategic Coordinator

Call to Order

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

FY 2026 Budget Public Hearing

Commissioner Brown declared a public hearing for the purposes of hearing comment on the proposed FY 2026 budget for the County. He asked the County Manager to make introductory comments.

Mr. Wooten noted that each local government is required to receive public comment on the budget before approval. He stated that the hearing was duly advertised in *The McDowell News*.

Chairman Brown recognized Ms. Kay House to make comments on the budget. Ms. House stated that she appreciated the efforts of the Commissioners to seek Helene relief from the state and federal delegation. She also expressed her desire that the state utilize rainy day funds for additional Helene relief.

With no one else present wishing to comment on the budget, Commissioner Walker made a motion to close the public hearing, with a second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

DSS Update

The County Manager presented the monthly DSS Memorandum of Understanding data. He noted that there is now a metric included in each month's report that shows the physical location of children in DSS custody.

Mr. Wooten also presented the annual Energy Outreach Plan for adoption. He stated that this plan governs how eligible beneficiaries are informed and approved for energy assistance from federal funds.

Commissioner Walker motioned to approve the Energy Outreach Plan, with a second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

CHSA Update

The County Manager reminded the Board that they had discussed the concept of establishing a Consolidated Human Service Agency, which would include DSS and other human service agencies under one umbrella.

Mr. Wooten noted that he and Strategic Coordinator Scott Boyd had been researching CHSA examples across the state. According to the research, every county evaluated had DSS and Health under the CHSA. There was a variation of other departments included under the umbrella in other counties with Senior Centers and Transit often being mentioned.

The County Manager stated that he recommended following a methodical plan to implement the change if the Board was so inclined. The steps would include 1) Determine what agencies would be included under the CHSA umbrella, 2) Obtain the services of a consultant or attorney who can ensure the county personnel policies are congruent with federal merit standards, 3) Determine the CHSA governance structure (Commissioners as board or appointed board), 4) Schedule the required public hearing 5) Vote to institute the consolidation, and 6) Advertise and hire a CHSA Director.

After a general discussion, Commissioner Walker motioned to continue with consolidation steps as outlined, with a second by Vice Chairman Greene. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Administrative Items

The County Manager presented several Administrative Items, including a renewal request for the License Plate Agency.

Vice Chairman Greene motioned to renew the contract with NCDMV for the License Plate Agency, with a second by Commissioner Walker. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Mr. Wooten also presented the Helene Disaster Response and Recovery Amendment 1 and budget amendments:

- GF 42 - Transfers between line items under \$3,000
- GF 43 - Allocates excise tax in the Register of Deeds
- GF 44 - Allocates revenue and transfers between line items in the Sheriff's Office
- GF 45 - Allocates revenue and transfers between line items at DSS
- GF 46 - Allocates revenue at the Tag Office
- GF 47 - Transfers between line items at JCPC
- GF 48 - Transfers between line items and allocates revenue for Parks and Recreation and for Water/Sewer Development
- GF 49 - Amend salary and benefit line item
- GF 50 - Transfers between line items for bullet proof vests at the Sheriff's Office
- GF 51 - Appropriates grant revenue for a pavilion at Glenwood park
- GF 52 - Transfer between line items to pay for the interbasin transfer project at WPCOG
- FD3 - Allocates estimated property tax revenue between the fire districts
- SP3 - Amends the school project fund for various school construction projects
- UENT2 - Allocates revenue for building improvements at the Universal Building
- TF1 - Allocates revenue for the DSS trust account

Vice Chair Greene motioned to approve the Disaster Response and Recovery Project Amendment at the budget amendments as presented, with a second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Clerk to the Board Appointment

Chairman Brown stated that Sena Allison had resigned as Clerk to the Board and also that the position vacancy had been posted. He announced that the Board had selected Madalyn Robinson to be the next Clerk.

Commissioner Walker motioned to appoint Ms. Robinson as Clerk to the Board, with a second by Commissioner Garner. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Recess

Commissioner Walker made a motion to recess the meeting to 11:30 a.m. on Friday June 27, with a motion by Vice Chairman Greene. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Attest:

Ashley R. Wooten
Deputy Clerk to the Board

Tony Brown
Chairman