

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – February 17, 2025**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, February 17, 2024, at 11:30 a.m., in the Commissioner's Board Room, 69 N Main St., Marion, NC.

Members Present

Tony Brown, Chairman; Lynn Greene, Vice-Chair; Trisha Garner and David N. Walker

Members Absent

Patrick Ellis

Others Present

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Sena A. Allison, Clerk to the Board; Megan Rollins, Public Health Educator for the Foothills Health District and Tammy Wylie, McDowell County Tax Assessor

Call to Order

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

Community Health Assessment Report

The Chairman welcomed Megan Rollins to give the Board an update. Ms. Rollins began with telling every three years each County in North Carolina is required to do a Community Health Assessment that is a random survey to achieve a gauge that helps prioritize the health needs in each community. They use this survey to create a health improvement plan, by choosing three priorities to work on for the next three years. Ms. Rollins is a part of the WNC Healthy Impact Coalition that assembles information for McDowell, Rutherfordton and 16 other Counties to establish a Community Health Assessment. She told the data comes from the coalition paying a collection company to perform cold calls, and the responses they are given. This data is based on approximately 230 respondents to the assessment.

Ms. Rollins explained the assessment data given was from April to June of 2024, which was prior to Hurricane Helene and with that, some of these statistics are out of date. She added there will be a post Helene assessment to follow. The different data points from the report compares answers given for McDowell, WNC, along with the addition to North Carolina and the United States on some of the data collected.

The Community Health Assessment Report included:

- Quality of Life
- Social Determinants of Health
- Equity
- Financial Resilience
- Housing
- Food Insecurity
- Overall Health
- Mental Health & Mental Disorders
- Chronic Conditions
- Cardiovascular Risk
- Diabetes
- Substance Use
- Tobacco Use
- Access to Health Care
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Difficulties Accessing Health Care
- County Specific Questions
- Key Informant Input

Chairman Brown asked if this assessment has any basis in our Tier Rating, in which Mr. Wooten pointed out our Tier Rating comes from NC Commerce and is separate from this data. Ms. Rollins added this is a requirement by all counties through the Department of Human Services, in which you can find it on their website. She also disclosed this data is used for other agencies to apply for funding through grants.

Ms. Rollins noted she will be doing a public presentation to the community on March 6, 2025 at the Marion Depot from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. with a Workshop to follow (no date yet) that will include herself, other informants and community organizations to recognize the top 3 health priorities.

Tax Items

Chairman Brown welcomed Tammy Wylie to present a request to the Board. Ms. Wylie reported an appeal by Lake Tahoma to adjust their tax values that were assigned in 2023. She disclosed staff made corrections, completed an informal review and a reappraisal notice was mailed to the tax payer for review. Ms. Wylie said Lake Tahoma contracted a local appraisal firm to give their assessment on the market value for land only. She noted that she did look at each parcel individually and made the adjustments to establish a new amended value. The petition is for the Board to accept the appraisal done by the firm and to refund the difference in the values.

Commissioner Walker asked the Tax Assessor what her recommendation would be, knowing there would be more expenses if they did not settle, whereas she agreed settling would be best.

Vice Chair Greene made a motion to accept the amended appraisal, with a second by Commissioner Walker. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

DSS Update

Mr. Wooten spoke on receiving special appropriations for various relief monies that is in addition to FEMA or other agencies. Persons who are eligible would need to demonstrate an impact from Helene. These include: rental assistance, energy funds, adult protective services and child protective services. Mr. Wooten reviewed the balance available in each fund group, stating the dead lines are at the end of March, with a possible extension for monies not disbursed. The goal is to have all funds allocated to the community for relief and not the alternative which would be to allocate the non- applied monies to another County.

Mr. Wooten then directed the Board to see the MOU data presented, with Commissioner Walker expressing the need to reach 100% on the children being visited by a social worker one time every 30 days.

Administrative Items

Mr. Wooten began with speaking on the Audit Contract Extension of the FY 2024. This presentation is scheduled for the March regular meeting, as the auditor had some technical issues. He noted staff is asking the Local Government Commission for a no cost extension of the audit contract.

Vice Chair Greene made a motion to approve the request, with a second by Commissioner Walker. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Mr. Wooten gave a request by McDowell Technical Community College for the Board to assist in the cost for a new HVAC unit for the auditorium, as no upgrades have been done since the 1970's. He explained they have been able get assistance from other agencies for the remodel, while citing the County does have a statutory requirement to give capital support to the College.

The MTCC Auditorium Budget:

General Conditions -	\$ 279,113.01
Existing Conditions -	\$ 38,237.50
Concrete -	\$ 3,925.81
Metals -	\$ 15,769.32
Finishes -	\$ 91,553.32
Furnishings -	\$ 126,292.03
HVAC Sub -	\$ 171,927.30
Electrical Sub -	\$ 227,125.00
AV Sub -	\$ 434,126.15
Total -	\$ 1,408,000.00

Architect Services - \$ 70,000.00

The requested amount is approximately \$172,000.00, in which Commissioner Walker disclosed this also will cover rooms other than just the auditorium. Commissioner Walker asked the County Manager where the funds will be taken from, in which Mr. Wooten told the expectation is from Sales Tax Revenue.

Commissioner Walker made a motion for the County to award the College with \$125,000.00 for the HVAC, to be taken out of the Sales Tax line item, with a second by Vice Chair Greene. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Adjournment

Commissioner Walker made a motion to adjourn at 12:19 p.m., with a second by Vice Chair Greene. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Attest:

Sena A. Allison
Clerk to the Board

Tony G. Brown
Chairman