

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – APRIL 13, 2020**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, April 13, 2020, at 5:00 p.m., at the Historic Carson House Jubilee Arbor, Marion, North Carolina.

Members Present

David N. Walker, Chair; Tony Brown, Vice-Chair; Barry McPeters, Lynn Greene, and Brenda Vaughn

Members Absent

None

Others Present

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Cheryl Mitchell, Clerk to the Board

Call to Order

Chair Walker called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. The invocation was given by Commissioner McPeters, followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Commissioner Vaughn.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner McPeters made a motion, second by Commissioner Vaughn, to approve the March 9, 2020 Regular Session, March 12, 2020 Recessed Session, March 16, 2020 DSS Regular Session; March 20, 2020 Special Session; March 23, 2020 Recessed Session; March 26, 2020 Recessed Session; March 30, 2020 Recessed Session; April 2, 2020 Recessed Session; and April 6, 2020 Recess Session minutes as presented. By a vote of 5-0, the motion carried.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner McPeters made a motion to approve the agenda, second by Commissioner Vaughn. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

COVID-19 Update

Mr. William Kehler, Emergency Services Director, gave the following update:

- currently as of today 224 people have been tested for the COVID-19 virus; 18 positives; 189 negative; and 17 test pending
- ensuring PPE for first responders and healthcare providers remains the top priority; also
- mitigating against the virus entering adult care homes/assisted living facilities
- a DSS representative has been stationed in the EOC since it opened, and has been in constant contact with the facilities. A conference call was held last week with all living/nursing assisted facilities participating to review best practices from the CDC.

- both nursing facilities in the county were in compliance with the new directives from the Governor's office weeks ago
- EOC in coordination with the Health Dept. is assisting employers who have questions about employees who have been tested or going home sick
- tracking # of contact of positive and contact prior to testing
- PIO are doing an excellent job getting valid news out and also recog first responders week
- continuing to capture all financial cost which is approximately is \$163,000 with most of the cost being PPE. McDowell County Schools, Town of Old Fort and the City of Marion cost are in addition to that figure
- keeping virus out of congregate settings is paramount
- PIO has sent NCACC seven videos of best practices and volunteer stories

County Operations Update

Mr. Wooten noted the Administration, Annex, and DSS lobbies continue to be closed to the public. Employees are continuing to work behind closed doors, or teleworking as allowed.

EMS Capital Project Update

Mr. Wooten noted the bidding of the EMS capital projects is continuing. Bids for the North EMS station will be received on April 9th. There were nine bids submitted with the lowest bid from Beam Construction. Bids will be opened for the headquarters on April 23rd. There were 12 contractors at the pre-bid meeting.

Mr. Wooten noted there remains a lot of uncertainty with next year's budget due to the pandemic, sales tax, and property tax impact. There are some funds that have been set aside for payments for next year, so the bidding process will continue to go forward at this point.

Board Appointments

Due to a scanning glitch one application for the Planning Board was not in the agenda packet. Also, due to the number of vacancies on the reorganization of the Agriculture Advisory Board, the Board chose to have more applications before appointing to the Ag Board.

Commissioner Greene made a motion to table the Planning Board and Agriculture Advisory Board appointments, second by Commissioner McPeters. By a vote of 5-0, the motion carried.

Written ballots were presented for the vacancy on the Tourism Development Authority (TDA) representing lodging properties with more than 50 rooms.

By a unanimous vote of 5-0, Nathan Gowan was appointed to the TDA.

Administrative Items

A late fee Occupancy Tax waiver request was presented from a property owner due to forgetting to send in payment during the COVID-19 closure. The owner submitted a 5% late fee of their taxes due with the payment, but did not include the \$10 per day late fee. The total late fees were \$260.00.

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve the fee waiver, second by Commissioner McPeters. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

EMS non-collectible write-off accounts totaling \$48,718.82 was presented for approval.

Commissioner McPeters made a motion to approve the write-offs, second by Commissioner Vaughn. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed

A Nebo Water System fee waiver request was presented from Travis Kinne due to a water leak. The request was for \$21.32.

Vice Chairman Brown made a motion to approve the waiver, second by Commissioner Greene. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Budget Amendments

GF 54 – Appropriates revenue for Equipment Maintenance and Lease in Building Inspections

GF 55-- Appropriates grant revenue and transfers between line items in Emergency Services

GF 56—Appropriates donations and transfers between line items in Public Services.

GF 57—Appropriates donations at the Library

GF 58—Appropriates revenue at the Sheriff's Office

GF 59—Appropriates revenue at DSS

GF 60—Appropriates revenue received from NCDOT for fire department driveways.

GF 61—Appropriates designated revenue and transfers between line items at the Sheriff's Office

GF 62—Appropriates emergency reimbursements in Emergency Services

GF 63—Appropriates Senior Center revenue

911F3—Transfers between line items in the 911 Fund

911F4—Transfers between line items in the 911 Fund

ENT2—Transfers between line items in the Waste Enterprise Fund

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve all budget amendments as presented, second by Vice Chairman Brown. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Animal Services Fee Request

Mr. Wooten reported staff at the Animal Services had received training and certification to administer a rabies vaccination to all animals that come into the facility. Staff requested a \$10 fee be approved for the vaccine.

Commissioner Greene made a Lynn/Barry motion to approve the request, second by Commissioner McPeters. By a vote of 5-0, the motion was approved.

Tax Matters

Releases & Refunds

Refunds	\$ 159.96
MV tax refunds	\$ 631.16
Releases over \$100	\$ 2,614.40
Discoveries	\$ 694.32
Write-offs	\$ 3,420.31

Commissioner Greene made a motion, second by Commissioner Vaughn to approve all tax matters as presented. By unanimous vote of 5-0, the motion carried.

Citizen Comment

Chair Walker opened the floor for public comments at 5:34pm.

Dale McCoyle- spoke on Veteran services and requested Crisis Prevention phone numbers be put on the county channel. Mr. Kehler suggested the information be divided between Marion Police Dept., Sheriff's Office, Old Fort Police Dept., and EM units as they come in contact with veterans the products and information can be given to them.

Reports and Communications

Vice Chairman Brown stated he had received a call asking why the Board had shut down fishing and recreation activities on Lake James. He clarified the Board had never discussed or taken any action, nor would they be the ones to shut down activities on Lake James. Commissioner McPeters noted he had also received a phone call and he told the caller it was false information. He noted on Wildlife .org website it was stated if people do not comply with social distancing that boating and fishing access areas will be closed. There were no issues in McDowell County the Board was aware of.

Chairman Walker noted he had heard rumors that the Board of Commissioners was going to be requiring all citizens to wear mask. He stated those type of decisions would come from the CDC.

Adjourn

There being no further business to transact at this time, upon motion by Vice Chairman Brown, second by Commissioner McPeters, the meeting was adjourned at 5:39pm.

Attest:

DAVID N. WALKER
CHAIRMAN

CHERYL L. MITCHELL
CLERK TO THE BOARD