

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
ADJOURNED SESSION – APRIL 24, 2017**

**ASSEMBLY**

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Adjourned Session on Monday, April 24, 2017, at 11:30am, in the Commissioners Board Room, 60 East Court Street, Marion, North Carolina.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

David N. Walker, Chair; Tony Brown; Matthew Crawford; and Lynn Greene

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Barry McPeters, Vice-Chair

**OTHERS PRESENT**

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Walker called the meeting to order.

**TRAIL FUNDING AGREEMENT**

Mr. Wooten introduced Michael “Squeak” Smith, Chairman of the Board of Resource Institute (RI), who made a presentation on the MOU with McDowell County and Resource Institute. Mr. Smith noted that RI will secure and assist in finding funding for projects, will write grants, research funding opportunities and options, and assist the county with other funding avenues as needed.

Mr. Smith presented the following additional funding details of the MOU:

- RI will invoice the county 75% of the 10% fee total once the grant application is approved, due within 30 days.
- RI will assist the county with project close out paperwork with DWR/CWMTF/ any specific funding entity where RI obtains dollars for McDowell County.
- RI will make a final billing to the county for the remaining 25% once the specific project is completed.
- Funds are paid out on a reimbursable basis, with a \$/\$ match requirement.
- Previously spent dollars do not meet match requirements.
- Funds from this grant should be available by fall of 2017 and must be invoiced against within two years from grant approval without an extension.

Mr. Frank Dean asked about starting construction on Part 1 of Phase 3. Mr. Wooten noted there is a RFQ in the process, once a firm has been chosen the design and permitting process typically takes up to 3 months. The anticipated notice of funding would be six months.

Mr. Smith suggested applying for more grants in the next fiscal year. Chair Walker expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Board to the McDowell Trails Association and Mr. Smith for all the support on the Greenway. Mr. Wooten advised the county will look at the revision of the agreement and will contact RI.

Chair Walker called for a brief recess at 11:59am. Board was back in session at 12:03pm.

### **EMS CAPITAL PLANNING**

Mr. William Kehler, EM Director, gave a presentation on the need for expansion of EMS facilities.

EMS Station1 – built in 1978

- needs extensive remodeling and parking improvements
- extended response times due to downtown traffic
- current operation has outgrown available space.
- no training area/conference room
- small truck bays causing damage to ambulances
- limited number of restroom facilities
- limited amount of sleeping quarter space
- lack of office space—in need of three more offices
- Growth of Community Paramedic Program.

In 2013, Mr. Kehler explained the department did an extensive study on the location of calls coming into the center. Only 12.2% of the calls are within a 5 minute response time. The proposed four station plan maintains the 5 minute response in the downtown district while improving response times in all districts.

With EMS stations in Old Fort and Nebo the construction of stations north and south of Hwy 221 Bypass will improve response times on average of 5-7 minutes for all communities currently being served by Station 1 district, while maintaining a 5 minute response within the downtown area.

The Commissioners each gave their input. Chair Walker noted he was in favor of a 4 station system. Commissioner Greene stated he was in support of the 4 stations also and asked what the response time would be to Baxter Labs from the 221N location. Mr. Kehler noted the response time would be 8 minutes. Commissioner Brown was in favor of EMS Headquarters at 221S, and establishing a station at 221N to service the northern end of the county. Mr. Kehler recommended no further than the end of the 221N Bypass. Commissioner Crawford was in favor of building two stations.

The County Manager noted the county owns property on Barnes Road on Hwy 221S, but does not own any property on 221N. He would get Mr. Kehler's input and bring back recommendations. He added since Holland and Hamrick had done a lot of design work for the county the process for a design contract could be started.

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to have the County Manager present options for building both EMS sites including property identification and architect, second by Commissioner Brown. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

## **FACILITIES DISCUSSION**

Mr. Wooten noted the Board had voted to move forward with drawing and architect of building a third courtroom. He added the architect had looked at leaks on the deck and researching if the deck could withstand building a facility on top of the parking deck. The results showed another facility could be added.

The preliminary drawing for a third courtroom was estimated at \$3 million.

Mr. Wooten added there had been discussion on moving the Register of Deeds office. The preliminary drawing for construction/remodeling the Register of Deeds on the county owned Brooks property was an estimated cost of \$350,000. Once the ROD was moved then the District Attorney's office could be moved from the third floor into the former ROD office. The estimated cost of the move is unknown at this time.

Commissioner Brown suggested moving the Soil and Water office in order to add more space around the current EMS building.

Commissioner Greene advised he was not in favor of building a third courtroom. He agreed the county should maintain the building by adding a HVAC and new windows, but he would suggest looking at the court scheduling, and see how much the courtroom is being used. He had noticed most court was over each day by noon, and according to the court schedule only one time would a third courtroom be needed from now till August. He suggested looking at other options before building a third courtroom.

Chair Walker added the possibility of juvenile court would add to the schedule, and agreed the court schedule needed to be considered. He added the Clerk of Court had indicated she needed a family courtroom, since she had to use her office for most cases. The Clerk had also indicated more juror waiting room was needed.

Commissioner Brown added new courthouse construction would have been \$18-\$20 million.

Chair Walker added the vote had been taken over a year ago to build the third courtroom, Commissioner Greene added it would be 2020 before there would be a raise in the age of juveniles, there were entire afternoons when court room was empty, and also cases are faster now.

Commissioner Brown made a motion to adjourn, second by Commissioner Crawford. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

---

David Walker  
Chairman

---

Cheryl L. Mitchell  
Clerk to the Board