

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ADJOURNED SESSION – FEBRUARY 27, 2017**

ASSEMBLY

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Adjourned Session on Monday, February 27, 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; Lisa Sprouse, DSS Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Walker called the meeting to order and recognized Lisa Sprouse, DSS Director for a presentation on the Foster Parenting Program.

FOSTER PARENTING PROGRAM

Ms. Sprouse noted a recent case the department had received, in which a single woman gave birth to her 5th child this month. The newborn was born with numerous drugs in its system. The father of the child is in prison, and the mother does not have custody of any of her children. Her parental rights were previously taken for one of her children.

She also spoke of another case where a 5 year old tested positive for meth, and another case where a child was born at home and tested positive for meth and heroin. She noted for the children who were testing positive the drug levels were really high.

The total cost for foster care payments is on the increase, and approximately half of the care is received back in reimbursement. The different types of reimbursements were discussed. Ms. Sprouse noted the foster parent program budget would reach one million dollars this budget year for the 40-50 children that are in foster care and not placed with relatives. The goal is to increase relative placement, and in-county placements.

Discussion was held on the parents providing funding for their child while in child protective custody.

Discussion was held on the need for stronger laws in dealing with parents. Suggestion was made on pursuing information to create a letter for legislature to create stronger laws.

Discussion was held on how it would affect DSS to increase the age from 16 years old to 18 years old. Ms. Sprouse noted there would be an increase in cost to place youth in group facilities, and they were mandated to provide coverage for ages 18-21.

NC Kids.com is a website for information on adoptable kids.

Ms. Sprouse announced there would be a MAPP training class for foster parenting beginning this week.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Sprouse for the presentation and the service of her department to the county.

Chair Walker called for a motion to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(5) to discuss the RockTenn building purchase option. Chair Walker called for a motion to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(5) to discuss the RockTenn building purchase option.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to go into closed session, second by Commissioner Greene. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Mr. Wooten noted he had called Wesley Gurley and presented the offer of \$750,000 on Friday, and Wesley told him he would get back with him on Monday. This morning Mr. Wooten called Wesley Gurley and Mr. Gurley said he had changed his mind due to several income tax implications and made a counter offer of \$950,000.

Chair Walker advised Wesley Gurley would have had ample time to investigate any tax implications before offering the purchase price of \$750,000, and was disappointed he would increase the price after making the offer to the county.

Discussion followed about the purchase price, and consensus was to hold with offer of \$750,000.

Commissioner Greene made a motion to go out of closed session, second by Commissioner Crawford. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

OPEN SESSION

Chair Walker called the meeting back in open session.

Chair Walker advised Mr. Gurley had stated he would sell the RockTenn building and parking lot for \$750,000 and as of this morning had changed his mind and increased the price to \$950,000.

Chair Walker asked for comments from the Commissioners, and stated he would not pay more than the agreed on price from Mr. Gurley.

Commissioner Greene stated he had sworn by oath to protect the interest of the citizens of the county, and it was his opinion to not make the deal at \$950,000.

Commissioner Brown stated he would not accept it.

Commissioner Crawford stated he had agreed to \$750,000 and would not agree to pay more money.

Chair Walker said the counter offer was not accepted.

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