

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
RECESSED SESSION – JUNE 15, 2020**

**Assembly**

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Recessed Session on Monday, June 15, 2020, at 11:30a.m., at the Universal Conference Room.

**Members Present**

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

**Members Absent**

None

**Others Present**

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Cheryl Mitchell, Clerk to the Board; William Kehler, Director ES; Lisa Sprouse, DSS Director; Alison Bell, Finance Director

**Call to Order**

Chairman Walker called the meeting to order.

**Budget Public Hearing**

Chairman Walker called the meeting into Public Hearing setting pursuant to NCGS 159-12 to hear comments concerning the proposed McDowell County Budget at 11:35am.

The following comments were heard from the public:

Robert Ayers, MTCC Trustee Board Member – stated since 2008 the county has been giving \$80,000 and still giving the same amount; the College has added three more buildings and need more capital; need a new sign; future needs are much more than funding received

Bill Bach, MTCC Trustee Board Member-asked if the county charges MTCC rent on the UAMC space.

Mr. Wooten responded the county does not charge rent to MTCC. He further explained the UAMC property was purchased in 2012 for just over \$2 million. The college and the county identified a need to have additional training skills space. At the time of purchase there was an opportunity for Golden Leaf Community Assistance Initiative, and the county applied and received \$2 million. The county funded \$1.6 million with \$700,000 coming from the county general fund and the other \$900,000 coming from the tenants in the building. Mr. Wooten added

there was an additional 10,000sf added to the building to accommodate the Conference Room and classrooms. The total square footage was 50,000 after the addition for the Skills Center.

Vice Chairman Brown added the county is giving \$100,000 of in-kind services to the college by not charging rent on the Skills Center space.

There were no more comments from the public.

Commissioner McPeters made a motion to go out of public hearing at 11:44am, second by Vice Chairman Brown. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Consensus of the Board was not to take any action on the budget until their June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Chairman Walker called for a brief recess at 11:45am for the IT team.

Chairman Walker called the meeting back in session at 11:50am.

### **DSS Update**

Ms. Sprouse noted there had been an increase of children placed in foster care. Since March the agency had taken 19 children into foster care. Some of the children were placed in kinship care, and some were placed out of the county.

Ms. Sprouse also recognized Shannon Jones who has been working at the Emergency Operations Center for the last three months as coordinator with the long term care facilities. Ms. Jones contacts each of the 15 facilities every day and has a coordination call one day a week with 100% participation from the facilities.

Mr. Kehler added there was a positive virus test of an employee at one of the long term care facilities. Due to pre-planning of Ms. Jones and the ES staff there was no other outbreaks at the facility.

He also noted Ms. Jones coordinated a notification system to notify those whose test was negative. Due to the large number of individuals being tested, the Health Department nurses were only able to contact the positive test individuals and then begin the contact testing process. He added Ms. Jones was always eager to help where needed and had kept the facility clean which kept the EOC staff virus free. Mr. Kehler also thanked Ms. Sprouse for loaning Ms. Jones to the EOC during this pandemic.

Chairman Walker thanked Ms. Jones for her level of commitment to the long term care facilities.

Vice Chairman Brown thanked Ms. Jones and noted that employees like her and the other county staff is what makes McDowell County Strong.

Commissioner Greene also praised Ms. Jones for her coordination of evacuation shelters during disasters. She has been the shelter coordinator for many years.

Commissioner McPeters expressed his appreciation for the work she had done in the EOC, and the professional way she had worked with the facilities.

Commissioner Vaughn also thanked Ms. Jones for the way she has owned the responsibilities of making sure the long term care facilities are as safe as possible.

### **COVID-19 Update**

Mr. Kehler gave an update from Emergency Services:

- The EOC remains activated at Level 2 on this 92<sup>nd</sup> day of activation
- COVID-19 numbers: 2879 tested; 2412 negative; 314 pending; 153 positive; 2 deaths
- 6% positive rate of number tested; early in April percentage rate was 8.8%; last week the number of positives doubled in seven days
- 8% have required hospitalization- total of 12 individuals hospitalized
- majority of increase of positives is in the same household
- 893 individuals were tested last week
- positives are contacted quickly; as soon as the state testing lab gets the positive identified; they contact the local Health Department and they let the individual know so they can quarantine the entire family
- community partnerships continue strong
- \$298,000 has been spent toward COVID-19 cost
- testing is available for anyone and is free

### **Tax Resolution**

Mr. Wooten explained according to NCGS 105-357(c) the Tax Collector is permitted to treat small underpayments of taxes as fully paid and to not refund small overpayments of taxes unless the taxpayer requests a refund before the end of the fiscal year in which the payment is made. The statute defines small as one dollar (\$1.00) or less. Request was for approval of the following resolution:

#### **Resolution Authorizing the Tax Collector to Make Adjustment for Underpayments or Overpayments**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 105-357 (c), McDowell County can elect (1) to treat small underpayments as full payments and (2) not to refund small overpayments unless the taxpayer requests a refund by the end of the fiscal year. The Statute defines “small” as \$1.00 or less.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the McDowell County Board of Commissioners that:

1. The McDowell County Tax Collector, as a function of that office, be authorized to treat small underpayments of taxes as paid in full and not to refund small overpayments unless the taxpayer requests a refund before the end of the fiscal year in which the payment is made. A “small underpayment” is a payment made that is no more than \$1.00 less than the taxes due. A “small overpayment” is no more than \$1.00 greater than the taxes due.

**Adopted** this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020.

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Cheryl Mitchell  
Clerk to the Board

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David Walker  
Chairman

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve the *Resolution Authorizing the Tax Collector to Make Adjustment for Underpayments or Overpayments*, second by Commissioner Vaughn. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

### **Recreation Update**

Mr. Wooten distributed a copy of the current Parks and Recreation Facility Usage Agreement and a draft copy of a new agreement. Chairman Walker suggested a percentage of gate and concessions be considered in the agreement. Vice Chairman Brown suggested having county staff at each tournament to keep bathrooms clean and supplies replenished. Commissioner McPeters suggested eliminating the end time of 11:30pm. Also, suggestion made of getting input from tournament directors of improvements that could be made to the Maple Leaf ballfields. Requested Ms. Huskins obtain copies of Burke and Henderson County facility agreements for consideration.

Consensus of the Board was not to meet Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>; the next meeting would be Tuesday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am at the Universal Conference Room. The Board also agreed to meet for their Regular Session on Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, at 5:00 at the Universal Conference Room.

### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Greene made a motion to adjourn at 12:36 pm to Tuesday, June 30<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30am at the Universal Conference Room, second by Vice Chairman Brown. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Attest:

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Cheryl L. Mitchell  
Clerk to the Board

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David Walker  
Chairman