

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
RECESSED SESSION – JUNE 30, 2020**

**Assembly**

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Recessed Session on Tuesday, June 30, 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; Alison Bell, Finance Director; Terry DePoyster, Public Services Director

**Call to Order**

Chairman Walker called the meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes**

Vice Chairman Brown made a motion to approve the June 1<sup>st</sup> Closed Session minutes, second by Commissioner Vaughn. By a vote of 5-0 the motion was approved.

**COVID-19 Update**

Mr. Kehler gave an update from Emergency Services:

- The EOC remains activated at Level 2 on this 107<sup>th</sup> day of activation
- COVID-19 numbers: 4,255 tested; 3,901 negative; 135 pending; 219 positive; 2 deaths
- 5.3% positive rate of number tested
- 94% - no hospitalization required
- percentage of children 0-17 testing positive is increasing; concerns of being around grandparents
- McDowell is the only county along the 1-40 corridor that has not had an outbreak at one of the 15 long term care facilities
- emphasis has been placed on quickly notifying positives and get them to quarantine; and if in a household to quarantine the household
- continuing to monitor trends
- COVID-19 testing has been conducted in every community in the county

- EM is assisting the Board of Elections and Board of Education on planning for elections and opening of schools
- EM strongly suggest wearing mask when in public places
- June 5<sup>th</sup> was the highest percentage of positives

Commissioner McPeters suggested the Board recognize the operators of the long-term care facilities for the precautions and safety measures they had taken during this pandemic.

### **Duke Easement**

Mr. Wooten presented a request from Duke Energy for a thirty (30) feet wide easement to bring power to the shooting range site.

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

Mr. Wooten noted there were 12-15 contractors present at the pre-bid meeting for the shooting range construction. The bid opening would be Wednesday, July 1<sup>st</sup> at 2:00pm at the Universal Conference Room.

### **Resolution for Sale of County Owned Property**

Mr. Wooten presented a resolution for approval for the selling of two parcels of land near Lake James. The land was originally purchased by the county for the water treatment plant. Once it was proven to not be suitable for that purpose, the land was declared surplus several years ago.

#### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SALE OF COUNTY OWNED PROPERTY**

**WHEREAS**, the County of McDowell desires to sell two (2) pieces of property located on Forest Lake Heights Drive; and

**WHEREAS**, properties consist of 32.92 acres and 32.89 acres of vacant land; and

**WHEREAS**, the Upset Bid process per NCGS 160A-269 was performed and ended on June 22, 2020 with no additional bids; and

**WHEREAS**, the buyer of property will be responsible for costs associated with the sale of these two (2) properties, including legal fees.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the McDowell County Board of Commissioners that the County of McDowell desires to sell two (2) pieces of property located on Forest Lake Heights Drive for the amount of \$175,000.00.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

**ADOPTED** this the 30<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl L. Mitchell  
Clerk to the Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
David Walker  
Chairman

Commissioner McPeters made a motion to approve the *Resolution Authorizing Sale of County Owned Property*, second by Commissioner Greene. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

**Fiscal Year 2020 Amendments**

Mr. Wooten presented the following budget amendments for approval:

GF89 – transfers funds between line items under \$3,000 in miscellaneous departments

GF90 – transfers funds between line items in Emergency Services

GF91 – transfers funds between line items in Facility and Public Services

GF92 – appropriates fund balance in the Fire Dept. Loan Pool

GF93 – allocates additional revenue in Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

GF94 – allocates funds due to NCDOR review

GF95 – transfers funds between line items in Recreation

GF96 – transfers between line items in MEDA

GF97 – allocates Dogwood Grant funds in Emergency Services

GF98 – allocates revenue and transfers between line items in Sheriff's Dept

GF99 – transfers between line items for payroll and insurance items in various departments

GF100 – transfer between line items in various departments

Amendment SP4 – amends the School Project Fund for professional costs per cost plan

Amendment ENT4 – transfers between line items in Enterprise Fund (Waste)

911F6 – transfers between line items in the 911 Fund

911F7 – transfers between line items in 911 Fund

Amendment UENT2 – allocates additional revenue in Enterprise Fund (Universal Building)

Amendment SI3 – allocates revenue sources and to appropriate fund balance in the Self Insurance Fund

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

## Water Rate/Fee Adjustments

Mr. Wooten presented a request for increase in fees for the Nebo Water Department due to an increase in water fees from the City of Marion. The requested increase would be effective August 1, 2020.

The following increases in fees were requested:

### Billing Fees:

Monthly Bill: increase from \$4.73 to \$4.87 per 1,000 gallons plus \$17 base fee

Bulk Rate: increase from \$4.73 to \$4.87 per 1,000 gallons plus \$25 base fee

### Connection Fees:

#### Tap Fees-Domestic and Irrigation Meters:

Size	Residential	Commercial/Industrial/Institutional
3/4"	increase from \$350 to \$540	increase from \$550 to \$740
1"	increase from \$600 to \$630	increase from \$800 to \$830
2"	increase from \$1,000 to \$1,440	increase from \$1,200 to \$1,640.

### Meter Drop Fee:

Size	Residential	Commercial/Industrial/Institutional
1"	\$350 (NEW FEE)	\$700 (NEW FEE)
2"	\$1200 (NEW FEE)	\$1600 (NEW FEE)

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

## FY 2021 Budget Ordinance Approval

Mr. Wooten presented his Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Message which provided an overview of the budget recommendations for the county. A copy is with the agenda materials.

Chairman Walker had five items not included in the budget he would like to address:

1. There was no Cost of Living Adjustment in the budget. He suggested the Board direct the staff to look at future revenues and at the earliest possible opportunity recommend to the Board to give a raise when the revenues are in place.
2. The Board had hoped to lower the property tax rate, but due to COVID-19 the tax revenues had decreased. He hoped the Board could lower the property tax rate next year.
3. The Board had received a budget request of \$1 million from the Recreation Department for parks and recreation program and facilities. He noted the Board had spent \$250,000 toward the recreational shooting range that would begin construction this year. The staff will continue to look for funding sources to improve programs and facilities.
4. The McDowell Tech Community College Board members had requested more funding this year. The Board directed staff to set up a joint meeting with the full Board of Trustees, when it is safe to meet in person, and establish a five year plan. Chairman Walker noted the MTCC Board members had stated there had not been an increase in several years, and asked Mr. Wooten to review the last five years of the MTCC budget. Mr. Wooten noted their budget had been increased each year. From 2016 to the present the county had spent \$90,000 each year. In addition the Board had been funding the textbook program for the Career and College Promise program for \$25,000. There are also two buildings the county is paying for and the coming

budget has \$100,000 for building debt. Chairman Walker noted the county had spent in excess of \$2 million toward special projects. Mr. Wooten noted the State funds the salaries of the staff, and the county funds building, grounds and utilities.

5. Fund balance is currently at 15.96%, and the State would like for counties to have 25% fund balance. The Board would like for staff to come to the Board with any excess monies for instruction of where to put the funding, and the goal would be to increase the fund balance. Mr. Wooten noted there was a hiring and spending freeze in place and would continue into the new fiscal year until revenues started increasing.

Commissioner McPeters asked about the Woodlawn Roadside Park conditions. Mr. Wooten noted getting potable water to the facility is being addressed.

Commissioner McPeters made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Ordinance as presented, second by Commissioner Greene. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Greene made a motion to adjourn at 12:08pm, second by Vice Chairman Brown. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Attest:

---

Cheryl L. Mitchell  
Clerk to the Board

---

David Walker  
Chairman