

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – JUNE 8, 2020**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, June 8, 2020, at 5:00 p.m., at the Universal Conference Room, 634 College Drive, 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 Vice Chairman Brown, followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Commissioner Vaughn.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chairman Brown made a motion, second by Commissioner Vaughn, to approve the May 4, 2020 Regular Session, May 18, 2020 Regular Session minutes as presented. By a vote of 5-0, the motion carried.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Walker asked for any additions or deletions to the agenda. Commissioner McPeters requested an update of the Recreation Department operations be added to the agenda.

Vice Chairman Brown made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition, second by Commissioner Vaughn. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

COVID-19 Update

Ms. Karen Powell, Health Director, gave an update:

- ❖ 2,135 tested; 1,245 negative; 783 pending; 107 positive; 2 deaths as of today's date
- ❖ community testing has been increased
- ❖ the Health Dept. is diligent with follow up of contact testing
- ❖ continues to have a great partnership with the Emergency Operations Center(EOC)staff and assisting with the community testing

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

- ❖ Level 2 activation of the EOC continues on this day 85 of EOC being in operation
- ❖ 4.7% of the county population has been tested
- ❖ increase in number of children that have tested positive from 0-17years old is 18%; 50-64 17%; 18-24 10%; 2 deaths are over 65
- ❖ 91% have not required hospitalization; respiratory complications is the leading cause of hospitalizations
- ❖ DSS; Adult Care; and Child Protective Services are all receiving PPE

Commissioner Greene asked for the turn-around time for recovery of those 0-17 years old that had tested positive for the virus. Ms. Powell noted a lot of the positives in that age group were one year old and younger, and they were not better at this time, so they had no way of knowing how long it was going to take. These young ones had contracted the virus from the household. The older ones in that age group were getting better faster than the younger ones. She added they were seeing patients test positive, be in quarantine at least 14 days, and test positive again. Also, seeing some test negative, continue to have symptoms and test them again and they are positive.

Ms. Powell noted the antibody testing her department was seeing was not accurate at this time.

Chairman Walker asked Ms. Powell what measures the Health Department takes when they get results of a positive virus test. Ms. Powell advised they call the patient and tell them and every one in their household they must quarantine for 14 days. When the Health Department checks in on the patient and discovers they are not staying in quarantine, they will send a written notice by a Sheriff's deputy stating they have not been complying and it is imperative they stay in quarantine. Her department has not had any issues with anyone not complying with the written order.

Mr. Kehler added there were discrepancies with the NCDHHS number of positives for McDowell County and the Emergency Service numbers. He advised positives are counted in the county in which the patient resides, not where they work. He had contacted the NCDHHS staff and now their numbers match the Emergency Service numbers.

Mr. Kehler then reviewed the test sites for this week:

Monday, June 8 th –	St. John AME Church, Nebo
Tuesday, June 9 th --	1 st Freewill Baptist Church, Baldwin Ave 11:00-1:00
	Parkers Chapel Church, Jacktown Road 4:00-6:00
Wednesday, June 10 –	McDowell High School, 9:00-1:00
Thursday, June 11 –	Old Fort Town Hall, 9:00-Noon
	Montford Cove Baptist Church, 3:30-5:30
Friday, June 12 --	Cherry Springs Baptist Church, 9:00-11:00

He added it is a fast drive thru operation and citizens did not need an appointment. The nasal swab test was available for anyone who wanted to be tested.

County Operations Update

Mr. Wooten noted all county operations are open, and some have modified staffing. He noted court reopened June 1st and that required additional staff for cleaning.

EMS Capital Project Update

Mr. Wooten reported the EMS capital project development is moving right along as construction bids and financing bids had been approved and the application package had been sent to the Local Government Commission (LGC) last week. The LGC will meet on July 7th to review the application.

Recreation Dept

Mr. Wooten noted staff had received a request for use of the Maple Leaf ballfields. He requested guidance from staff at the Governor's office due to the current Executive Order of mass gatherings limit of 25 people, and there was no clear guidance for ballfields.

Late last week the Governor's staff clarified the Executive Order to be for a game at a field each team would be allowed 25 participants, and 25 spectators for a total of 75 people per game. Since Maple Leaf has four fields they could have a total of 300 people.

Ms. Sue Huskins, Recreation Director, reviewed a few of the requirements per the Executive Order:

- close down all common areas where people congregate
- sanitize balls after each pitcher, and each inning
- one team practices at a time and parents stay in their car
- if there are two entrances, each must be separate and monitored

Ms. Huskins would like an opportunity for the youth to play and honor the request for tournaments and practice.

Discussion followed on what language could be put in the contract; liability issues; and could you require participants to sign a waiver.

Attorney Fred Coats advised staff to post proper signage, and the person renting the field needs to sign the waiver.

Ms. Huskins noted the charge was \$75 per field, and the Recreation Department provides toilet paper, paper towels, and cleaning supplies.

Discussion was held by the Board on the importance of all field use request must go through the Recreation Department, and local teams would practice free of charge. The consensus of the Board was to see a draft agreement at their next Board meeting on the 15th for review, along with the current agreement. The agreement would be for all county ballfields.

Ms. Huskins noted she had a request from the owner of Big League Camp, Donnie Suttles to rent the fields at Maple Leaf for a tournament this coming weekend. Each participant will sign a waiver, and temperature checks would be done on each participant.

Ms. Huskins noted the goal was to open the Recreation Center pool on June 19th. She added there would be no swim meets this year, but the coach would like team swim practice. She added there could be 50 people allowed in the pool at one time, and more on the deck. There must be a gate keeper at the entrance and one at the exit. The requirements for the bathrooms are if they have one sink only one person in bath at a time, then cleaned; standing water on the floor has to be cleaned more often. Discussion was held on hiring a part time employee to keep the bathrooms clean. The Old Fort pool would not be open this summer.

Consensus from the Board was to open the pool as soon as possible. Ms. Huskins noted it would take 7-10 days to get the pool ready and currently no lifeguards have been hired.

Board Appointments

One vacancy was presented to the Board for an appointment to the MTCC Board of Trustees.

Vice Chairman Brown made a motion to table the item until the next Regular Session meeting, second by Commissioner McPeters. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Public Shooting Range

Mr. Wooten advised the NC Wildlife had prepared the shooting range bid specifications and a pre-bid meeting would be held later this week. The bid opening date is July 1st, with the goal to award the bid at the next Regular Session meeting. NC Wildlife will pay project cost invoices at 90%.

The road will be bid separately.

Golden Leaf Grant Update

The Golden Leaf Community Based Grants Initiative will award up to \$11 million to projects located in the 12 county Northwest Prosperity Zone, of which McDowell County is included. There will be a maximum of 1-3 grants per county and no more than \$1.5 million to be awarded to any one county. Golden Leaf designated County Managers as the point of contact for each county.

Mr. Wooten suggested issuing a press release providing details of the program to notify nonprofits, governmental and educational entities that might be interested in applying.

The following schedule was presented:

June 10 – Press release with details of grant sent to newspaper, Facebook, etc.

June 30 – Deadline for entities to submit Letter of Interest

July 17 – Review committee meets to endorse projects with best prospects for funding

August – September – Meet with entities with endorsed projects to fine tune applications.

October – Formal Letters of Interest submitted to Golden Leaf

Mr. Wooten suggested the Board select a couple of representatives to serve on the review committee made up of County, City, Town, Chamber and MEDA representation.

Administrative Items

EMS non-collectible write-off accounts totaling \$187,596.59 were presented for approval.

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

The following Project Budget Ordinances were presented for approval:

Courthouse Renovation and Addition Project Amendment 4
Catawba River Greenway Phase III Project Amendment 4
EMS Base Construction and Base Addition/Renovation
Coronavirus Relief Fund

Commissioner McPeters made a motion to approve all Project Budget Ordinances, second by Commissioner Greene. By a vote of 5-0 the motion passed.

Budget Amendments

GF 77 –Amends various project funds to keep them balanced

GF 78 – Appropriates grant awards and transfers between line items

GF 79 – Appropriates a COVID-19 grant award at the Library

GF 80 – Transfers between line items

GF 81 – Appropriates grant funding at DSS

GF 82 – Appropriates rental income in the Soil and Water budget

GF 83 – Appropriates loan proceeds for vehicle purchases

GF 84 – Appropriates grant revenue for the Senior Center budget

GF 85 – Transfers between line items in Public Works

GF 86 – Allocates revenue received at the Sheriff’s Office

GF 87 – Allocates an additional grant at the Senior Center

GF 88 – Allocates grant revenues for economic development

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

Glenwood Ruritan Gold Rush 5K Permit

The Glenwood Ruritan Club requested to temporarily close Polly Spout Road for the Gold Rush Run 5K on Saturday, August 15, 2020. The following ordinance was presented for approval:

**AN ORDINANCE DECLARING A ROAD CLOSURE
FOR THE 2020 GOLD RUSH RUN 5K**

WHEREAS, the McDowell County Board of Commissioners are supportive of events held by various community groups; and

WHEREAS, the Glenwood Ruritan is planning to hold the first Gold Rush Run 5K race on Saturday, August 15, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the McDowell County Board of Commissioners recognizes that this Run requires approximately one and three quarter hours to install signing and traffic control, hold the Run and for the removing of signs, traffic control, and litter;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the McDowell County Board of Commissioners pursuant to the authority granted by G.S. 20-169 that they do hereby declare a temporary road closure during the day and time set forth below on the following described portion of a State Highway System route:

Date: Saturday, August 15, 2020

Time: 7:45 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Route Description: 1250 SR 1781 Polly Spout Rd to 3000 Polly Spout Rd.

This ordinance is to become effective when signs are erected giving notice of the limits and times of the event, and implementation of adequate traffic control to protect participants and to guide vehicles around the event route.

Adopted this 8th day of June, 2020.

ATTEST:

Cheryl Mitchell
Clerk to the Board

David N. Walker
Chairman

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

Review Officer Resolution

Mr. Wooten noted pursuant to NCGS 47-30.2 allows the Board of Commissioners to appoint Review Officers who are empowered to review and approve plats before they are recorded at the Register of Deeds. Due to a change of employees at the City of Marion, they requested the new resolution. Ms. Cotton and Ms. Auton would only review city plats. While Tammy Wylie, Art Uphold, Maranda Fender, Blair Melton, and Lisa Sparks would review the county plats.

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A
REVIEW OFFICER FOR MAP LAW CHANGES**

WHEREAS, the McDowell County Board of Commissioners on December 5, 2016 appointed per NCGS 47-30.2 review officers to review each plat before recording in the Register of Deeds; and

WHEREAS, the McDowell County Board of Commissioners had on said date appointed various employees to serve as review officers; and

WHEREAS, the McDowell County Board of Commissioners wishes to revise the lists of persons authorized as review officers to include Tammy Wylie, Art Uphold, Maranda Fender, Blair Melton, Lisa Sparks, Heather Cotton, and Lauren Auton; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cotton and Ms. Auton will only review plats involving property under the purview of the City of Marion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the McDowell County Board of Commissioners under the authority of NCGS 47-30.2 hereby establishes review officers for McDowell County as designated above.

ADOPTED this 8th day of June 2020

Attest:

Cheryl L. Mitchell, Clerk to the Board

David N. Walker, Chairman

I, _____, Notary Public, certify that Cheryl L. Mitchell personally came before me this day and acknowledged that she is Clerk to the Board of the McDowell County Board of Commissioners and that by authority duly given and as the act of the County, the foregoing instrument was signed in its name by its Chairman, sealed with its official seal, and attested by Cheryl L. Mitchell

