

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET REQUEST AND PRESENTATION – MAY 17, 2018**

ASSEMBLY

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Adjourned Session on Thursday, May 17, 2018, at 4:30 p.m., at the County Administration Building, 60 E Court Street, Marion, North Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Cheryl Mitchell, Clerk to the Board; Alison Bell, Finance Officer.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Walker called the meeting to order.

FIRE DEPARTMENT INCREASE REQUEST

Chief Terry DePoyster of the Hankins-North Fork Volunteer Fire Department presented a request for an increase from 6 cents to 8 cents. The funding would provide for a full-time Firefighter/EMT staff Monday through Friday, from 7:30am-4:30pm. The department would also like to replace turn out gear, breathing apparatus and a pumper/tanker. He noted due to the new Big League Camp and the Peninsula housing development there was a greater need for staffing the department.

Chief Donnie Tipton of the Glenwood Volunteer Fire Department asked for an increase of 2 cents. The request would help the department replace needed equipment, and to meet the increasing need of adding additional personal. The department has been experiencing a high volume of calls, and a decrease in volunteer firefighter interest.

Howard Lytle of the Crooked Creek Township Volunteer Fire Department requested a 2 cents increase, (6 cents to 8 cents). The funding would go toward the construction of a new station. The station is over 40 years old and has 10 ft doors, and the department needs 14 ft doors. The department also needs to replace a 1989 pumper truck and staff the new station with a full time Firefighter/EMT Monday through Friday.

Vice Chair McPeters made a motion to approve the two cents increase request for Hankins, Glenwood, and Crooked Creek, second by Commissioner Greene. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Chair Walker called for a brief recess at 4:50pm. The Board was declared back in session at 4:55pm.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

The County Manager presented an overview of the budget process. He noted he and Ms. Bell had met with the department heads and several external agencies over the last few months to develop the proposed budget.

Mr. Wooten gave an overview of the accomplishments over the last year. Some of those were:

- Establish a separate Transportation Department effective July 1
- Approval of an engineering contract for the Catawba River Greenway with construction in July
- Implemented an electronics recycling fee at the Public Works Dept; and also moving forward with a landfill gas monitoring plan
- Approved a grant match for planning of the Fonta Flora State Trail

Mr. Wooten presented a county comparison chart noting the following:

- McDowell County employs 33 fewer employees than the average
- McDowell County budgets \$11,747,201 fewer dollars than the average.
- McDowell County tax rate is 15.70 cents below the average.
- Property tax revenues are \$8,817,831 below the average.
- Average general expenditures per Capita is \$239 below the average.

The fiscal year 2019 budget priorities were:

- increase public education funding
- improve public safety through investments in Emergency Services and Sheriff's Office
- recruit and retain skilled county staff
- improve county facilities
- invest in community and economic development

The new expenditure impacts:

Public Education	\$233,233	
Public Safety	\$320,470	
County Facilities and Equipment	\$655,113	
County Organization Improvements	\$441,957	(includes a 2.5% COLA)
Community and Economic Development	\$333,746	

Chair Walker asked for a monthly fraud report from DSS.

Mr. Wooten noted the local education funding continues to increase. The proposed budget would increase \$2,023,576 or 4.98%. The proposed General Fund property tax rate was .5875 cents per \$100.

The proposed fund balance appropriated for 2018-19 was \$360,000 a change of 0.94%, and available fund balance was \$9,865,278. The debt service percentage was .47%.

Chair Walker noted the Board would review the budget recommendation. A line item budget request would be sent to the Board electronically and also as a hard copy.

After discussion the Board decided to meet for a budget workshop on May 31st at 4pm, and with the Fire Commission at 5:30 at MTCC. They also decided to meet on Monday, May 21st at 5:00pm to review Sugar Hill waterline bids.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to transact at this time, upon motion by Commissioner Brown and a second by Commissioner Greene, the meeting was adjourned to Monday, May 21st at 5:00pm.

DAVID N. WALKER
CHAIRMAN

CHERYL L. MITCHELL
CLERK TO THE BOARD