

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL SESSION – MAY 22, 2017**

ASSEMBLY

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in a special session on Monday, May 22, 2017, at 4:00p.m., at the County Administration Building, 60 E Court Street, Marion, North Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Barry McPeters; Tony Brown; Matthew Crawford; and Lynn Greene

MEMBERS ABSENT

David Walker

OTHERS PRESENT

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Cheryl Mitchell, Clerk to the Board

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair McPeters called the meeting to order, and turned the meeting over to Mr. Wooten. Chair David Walker entered the meeting at 4:02pm.

Mr. Wooten presented the following fire department analysis:

Department	Current Value	Current Base	Current Rate	One Cent Generates
Ashford/North Cove	197,000.02	328,333,366.67	0.0600	32,833.34
Crooked Creek	178,688.84	297,814,733.33	0.0600	29,781.47
Dysartsville	179,391.89	298,986,483.33	0.0600	29,898.65
Glenwood	168,321.30	258,955,846.15	0.0650	25,895.58
Nebo	311,421.23	444,887,471.43	0.0700	44,488.75
Old Fort County	113,218.64	188,697,733.33	0.0600	18,869.77
P.G.	165,720.72	276,201,200.00	0.0600	27,620.12
Sugar Hill/Mont.Cove	101,840.49	169,734,150.00	0.0600	16,973.42
Woodlawn/Sevier	76,754.47	127,924,116.67	0.0600	12,792.41
Hankins/North Fork	73,560.15	122,600,250.00	0.0600	12,260.03
Parkway	29,845.01	37,306,262.50	0.0800	3,730.63
Old Fort City	45,484.10	113,710,250.00	0.0400	11,371.03
Rescue Squad	385,134.22	3,667,944,952.38	0.0105	366,794.50
Marion Area	280,704.43	467,840,716.67	0.0600	46,784.07
McDowell Fire	701,055.78	3,505,278,900.00	0.0200	350,527.89
Total	3,008,141.29			1,030,621.64

FIRE DEPARTMENT TAX INCREASE REQUESTS

Pleasant Gardens- Chief Brad Ledbetter presented a request for a two-cent tax increase to add living quarters, four bedrooms, additional meeting room, and add additional bays. The current meeting room is used by the community. Chief Ledbetter added If the county approves a two-cent increase the bank would approve a \$750,000 loan for 15yr payments at 3.25% interest rate.

Commissioner Brown asked if equipment was up to date. Chief Ledbetter stated the department rotates five new turn out gear per year. He added truck maintenance is an issue, one 1978 truck needs upgraded, it is gas operated. Commissioner Greene asked if there was enough land to expand the department. Chief Ledbetter stated the plan was to build on top of the existing building.

Sugar Hill-Montford Cove-Chief Joe Washburn presented a three-cent tax increase to build a substation on Zion Hill Road. The addition would lower homeowner insurance cost due to living outside of the five mile radius of the current department location, and also increase the response time of the department. In addition 60% of the department lives on the Zion Hill end of the district. He added property land value had decreased \$30M in the fire district. The last fire tax increase of two-cents was projected to increase their budget by \$40,000, the increase actually generated \$6,000. The department is currently in an old school house and can't be expanded. Chief Washburn noted they had applied for a grant to cover new bottles for air packs.

Woodlawn Sevier-Brent Hollifield, President of the Board, asked for a five-cent increase. The department has a serious need for an engine truck, since their first out engine is a 1994 model. There are no hydrants in the district, so they must use creek water. They have had a 5½ percent increase in calls, and also maintenance on the equipment is higher. The department is in need of a new station, so they will have to purchase property and building, since they do not own the current building. Mr. Hollifield added the department has applied for federal grants for air packs that have to be replaced. The department has used bridge crews and volunteers in the department for work around the building. Due to the age of the trucks they must use a 2 ½ inch supply hose, and can't run the larger hose the other departments use. The current tax rate only brings in \$77,000; the request would bring in \$144,000, if approved. He added 40% of the district is federal property and not taxable.

Chair Walker expressed his appreciation to the departments for their service and dedication they give to the county.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Wooten noted he would like direction on having a budget workshop. McDowell Mission, and Ms. Hampton, Register of Deeds had requested a meeting with the Commissioners. The date was set for presentations on Tuesday, May 30th at 5:00pm.

Resolution Opposing Senate Bill 434

Mr. Wooten noted proposed legislation would eliminate all county environmental buffer zoning ordinances that apply to Lake James. The bill, if passed, would also eliminate the county from creating any environmental buffer greater than the State. He noted the bill had passed the Senate and now is in the House. Burke County had adopted a resolution opposing Senate Bill 434 also.

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve the resolution, second by Vice Chair McPeters. Discussion followed. Commissioner Brown was opposed to giving state any more authority over county property. Vice Chair McPeters noted local government knows their county, and knows better than the state what is needed. He added a lot of work had gone into having buffer protection that is in place now. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair McPeters made a motion to adjourn to May 30th at 5:00pm, second by Commissioner Brown. By unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned.

DAVID WALKER
CHAIR

CHERYL L. MITCHELL
CLERK TO THE BOARD