

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – MAY 11, 2015**

ASSEMBLY

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, May 11, 2015, at 5:00 p.m., Commission Board Room of the County Administration Building, 60 East Court Street, Marion, North Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT

David N. Walker, Chairman; Barry McPeters, Vice-Chairman; Tony Brown; Matthew Crawford; and Van “Randy” Hollifield.

OTHERS PRESENT

Charles R. Abernathy, County Manager; Ashley Wooten, Deputy Clerk to the Board; and Theresa Strickland, Public Information Technician (Filming).

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Walker called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Commissioner Brown, followed by the pledge of allegiance, led by Commissioner Hollifield.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Hollifield made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, to approve the April 13, 2015 Regular Session, the April 20, 2015 Adjourned Session and the May 4, 2015 Adjourned Session minutes as presented. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Hollifield made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brown, to approve the agenda as presented. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

BUDGET UPDATE AND FINANCE MATTERS AND AMENDMENTS

The County Manager presented several finance related items for the Board to consider.

Mr. Abernathy did present the budget amendments for review:

GF 41 - This amendment transfers 700.00 from equipment purchase to travel in the administration budget.

GF 42 - This amendment transfers funds within the EMS budget and also appropriates

donations, and Kid's Safety Grant.

GF 43 - This amendment appropriates inmate housing and concealed weapons permit revenues in the Sheriffs Department.

GF 44 - This amendment transfers 364 in expenses to send a senior delegate to a conference.

GF 45 - This amendment reallocates JCPC (state) funds per the committee.

911F3 - This amendment is in the 911 Fund and concerns the project approved at the April 2015 meeting.

Mr. Abernathy also presented four water refund requests, a fee waiver disposal request from McDowell Technical Community College, and the Workforce Development Agreement with Region C.

Commissioner Crawford motioned, seconded by Commissioner Hollifield, to approve budget amendments GF 41-45, 911F 3, the four water adjustments, the MTCC waiver request and the Region C workforce agreement. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

RECOGNITION OF BOY SCOUT

Before continuing with the agenda, Chairman Walker introduced Keaton Wooten, a Boy Scout from Troop 210 at First United Methodist Church in Marion. Mr. Wooten noted that he is currently a First Class Scout and was present in order to meet requirements of a merit badge.

WEBSITE UPDATES

Mr. Wooten provided a brief overview of county ordinances that have posted to the county website. He noted that staff had worked to organize the ordinances in any easy to follow format based on subject matter. He noted that Planning Assistant Phoenikx Buathier had updated and retyped many of the ordinances in order to make them easier to read.

A general discussion of the website update followed. Commissioner Crawford noted that other counties had paid thousands of dollars for this work and was happy to see that county staff could do the work.

TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

DSS Director Lisa Sprouse presented an update on some transportation improvements that her staff have been making. She noted that they have been testing a fixed route aimed at seniors to serve several apartment complexes as well as shopping centers in the Marion area. This test will help to provide information for the transportation planning study that is in the process of being implemented.

Ms. Sprouse also noted that she was working with Alain Mainer on maintaining the veterans transportation service that has been in place for several years. She said she felt that she would be able to enhance the services Mr. Mainer and the American Legion offer.

She added additional information about the fixed route test. She noted that right now they were wanting to do a loop for one day a month to gauge interest in the service.

A general discussion of the implementation followed. Several Commissioners questioned Ms. Sprouse regarding the funding of the program. She noted that most of the costs would be covered by reimbursements from DOT funds.

Karyl Fuller of Isothermal Planning RPO addressed the Board about the Locally Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan that her agency has worked on for the last several months. She asked for permission to move forward with including McDowell County in the plan, which would help with funding to replace vehicles. The consensus of the Board was to let Ms. Fuller proceed.

SENIOR RETIREMENT HOUSING UPDATE

The County Manager presented the Board a brief update on the senior housing retirement recruitment. He noted that the consultant would do an examination of the local demographics, county geography, and other factors that would determine what type of facility would be a fit for McDowell County.

Mr. Abernathy noted that he had requested several other agencies for funding. Senior Center Weyland Prebor had noted that he could possibly secure \$3,000 from a state source. The Kate B. Reynolds Foundation had indicated they would probably not provide funding for the study.

Commissioner Brown noted that he liked the thought that it would address a need the county has as well as being an economic development engine. Commissioner Walker noted that he would like there to be an evaluation of opportunities for low to moderate to high incomes as well.

Commissioner Hollfield motioned, with a second by Commissioner Crawford, to approve the proposal by Advanced Engineering Consultants, to do the senior retirement housing study. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Leigh Hughey addressed the Board about her desire to have more senior housing opportunities for residents of McDowell County. She thanked the Board for the action and volunteered her services for the study.

Alice Decker stated that she was also very supportive of the study and said she would like to stay in the county as she ages. She mentioned that she knew friends that had to leave the county for their aging needs.

Suzy Johnson asked if the scale of the project had been determined. Mr. Abernathy noted that the consultant will make a recommendation based on the need that is identified. She suggested that considerations such as walkability, grocery stores.

Ann Frederica addressed the Board about her concerns about the placement of the national motto on county buildings.

Dan Patton also addressed the Board about the national motto item. He thanked the Board for their action and stated that he did not find anything offensive about the name of God.

BROADBAND UPDATE

Mr. Abernathy provided a brief update the broadband improvement project. He noted that there had been discussions with several broadband providers to offer improved broadband access to areas throughout the county.

The County Manager also noted that the county had submitted an Appalachian Regional Commission grant to help purchase equipment to provide improved service.

WATER PROJECTS UPDATE

The County Manger provided an update on three water projects.

He noted that the county was still waiting on word on final approvals from the state regarding the Interstate 40 Interchange Water Project.

Mr. Abernathy discussed the proposed water line that would serve the Universal complex. He stated that the county would work with TQA to leverage state grant funds to help with the cost of the line. Since the county was requesting the assistance of TQA, Mr. Abernathy recommended to the Board that they hold harmless any payback requirements from the granting agency.

Commissioner Crawford motioned, with a second by Commissioner Hollifield, to approve the hold harmless agreement with TQA. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

The County Manager informed the Board that county staff had submitted an application to the state for the lake reclassification and would probably not hear an update in several months.

GOLDEN LEAF GRANT UPDATE

Mr. Abernathy noted that the had met with Golden Leaf staff at the Universal Center to discuss the recent grant submission that would grade the building site behind the building and also establish an engineering component at the facility. He advised that an early summer notice was likely.

STATE BOND ISSUANCE DISCUSSION

The County Manager updated the Board on the recent discussion to have a state bond issuance that would provide funds for infrastructure and state facilities. He noted that two phases of the US 221 project are currently included in the bond package. There are also money included for Lake James State Park and possibly McDowell Technical Community College.

Commissioner Crawford motioned, with a second by Commissioner Brown, to approve a letter of support for the bond issuance. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

TAX MATTERS

The County Manager presented the monthly tax releases, rebills, and refunds.

A summary of the tax matters:

MV Releases Under \$100.00	Released amount of \$89.99
Releases Over \$100.00	Released amount of \$2,582.02
Releases Under \$100.00	Released amount of \$182.85
Refunds	Refund amount of \$263.83

The NCVTS Pending Refund report showed a refund total of \$1,018.08

Tax Write-offs	Write-offs total of \$4,088.93
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Commissioner Crawford motioned, with a second by Commissioner Hollifield, to approve the releases, rebills, and refunds. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

There were none to report.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to transact at this time, upon motion by Commissioner Hollifield and a second by Commissioner Brown, the meeting was adjourned to the William Harold Smith Building on the campus of McDowell Technical Community College in order to meet with the McDowell Fire Commission. The Chairman noted that no action would be taken at the meeting with the Commission and the Commissioners would only be hearing reports from each fire department.

DAVID N. WALKER
CHAIRMAN

ASHLEY R. WOOTEN
DEPUTY CLERK TO THE BOARD