

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – OCTOBER 12, 2015**

ASSEMBLY

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, October 12, 2015, at 4:00 p.m., at the Historic Carson House, 1805 Highway 70 West, Marion, North Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

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

Vice-Chairman McPeters made a motion, second by Commissioner Brown, to approve the September 14, 2015 Regular Session minutes as presented. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Crawford made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman McPeters to approve the agenda. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS, ORDINANCES, AND UPDATE

The County Manager and Finance Officer, Alison Morgan, presented a list of budget amendments for approval:

GF-1 Sales Tax line item - Amendment to appropriate anticipated sales tax reimbursement.

GF-2 Building Inspections, County Administration and MEDA – Amendment to allocate miscellaneous income and transfer employees to different departments within the county

GF-3 Emergency Services - Amendment to allocate reimbursement from emergency spill and to allocate loan proceeds.

GF-4 Library - Amendment to appropriate donations and fund balance for carpet and books.

GF-5 Sheriff’s Department - Amendment to appropriate inmate housing, donations and fund balance for equipment and uniforms

911F1---911 Fund - Amendment to appropriate fund balance to replace radio consoles and recorder.

Project Budget Ordinances—

Jail and Courthouse Addition/Renovations-Amendment 1

Universal Water Line-establishing grant revenues from NC Commerce and Appalachian Regional Commissioner

Harmony Grove Road/I-40 Interchange Water Line-establishing grant revenues from NC Commerce and Appalachian Regional Commission

Catawba Falls Trail Bridge-establishing grant revenue from NC Recreational Trail Program

Vice-Chairman McPeters made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Crawford to approve GF1-5, 911 F1, and the four Project Budget Ordinances. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

The County Manager stated he was again updating the board on revenues, and keeping them abreast of current status of the budget. He stated it is early in the year, but the county budget continues to be in line. There are still concerns over sales tax receipts. Property tax collections are above what they were at this time last year.

Chairman Walker ask Mr. Wooten about the State Bond that will be on the election ballot in March. The County Manager stated it was a bond referendum that would be spent on building infrastructure for community college systems. He also stated that last month the NC Legislature unveiled the budget proposal, which showed some of the sales tax revenue will be re-allocated; meaning about \$500,000 should come to our county. The Board would determine where and how the monies would be used. Chairman Walker suggested waiting on decision regarding ¼ cent sales tax referendum to see if/when monies would come into the county. Commissioner Brown stated he would like for this to be put on the agenda for next month, and continue to monitor sales tax referendum.

Jail/Courthouse Project Update/Pump Station

The County Manager reported construction continues at both facilities with no major issues having been found.

Courthouse:

**A new transformer has been installed, and electrical service will be separated for the Administration Building and the Courthouse.

**Water lines will also be separated for the two buildings.

**Contractors will also install fire tap for future fire sprinkler system. HVAC is in long range plans, so architects are adjusting plans for that now.

**Pit for elevator has started; installation will be a long process.

Jail:

**Issue with existing sewer lines, blueprint was not as actual placement.

**New sewer lines will be run back to City of Marion pump station.

**Figures for outside portion of work on sewer lines were presented at \$150,000. After discussion with staff, Sheriff Greene, and County Commissioners, adjustments were made according to the needs of the job, and figures were brought down to \$21,000.

Mr. Wooten stated he would keep the Board up to date on these renovations.

The County Manager reported the City of Marion has requested for several years that the county work to eliminate foreign matter entering the pump station that serves the jail. While there are

physical barriers installed currently, certain items (clothing, etc.) can pass through and cause significant damage to the pump station and put the jail out of service. City staff have sent specs for a device called a "sewer chewer" that would eliminate issues related to foreign objects. Everything passing from the jail sewer drains would pass through the grinder before entering the pump station. The cost to the county would be \$16,840. City staff would cover the installation cost.

Commissioner Hollifield made a motion, second by Commissioner McPeters to approve purchase of wastewater grinder. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

TAX MATTERS:

- **Review Officer Resolution**

Chad Phillips, Tax Assessor requested the City of Marion Planning Department be added for city property only for reviewing of plats.

Commissioner Crawford made a motion, second by Commissioner McPeters to approve *Resolution Establishing a Review Officer for Map Law Changes*. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

- **Watershed Administrator Appointment**

Mr. Phillips recommended Ronald Harmon be appointed as Watershed Administrator due to retirement of Chuck Abernathy, the previous Administrator.

Commissioner Brown made a motion, second by Commissioner McPeters to appoint Ronald Harmon as the Watershed Administrator. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

- **Exemption Requests**

Mr. Wooten stated that GS 105-277.1D(e) provides that an application for property tax relief provided by this section should be filed during the regular listing period but may be filed after the regular listing period upon a showing of good cause by the applicant as determined and approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

The list of applicants who qualify for Elderly Exemption who are asking for exemptions with reason:

Virginia Clontz
Hanley Medford Disabled Veteran Exclusion

Commissioner McPeters made a motion, second by Commissioner Brown to grant exemption for filing deadline for Elderly Exemption. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

- **Releases, Refunds, & Write-offs**

Write-offs/Deceased	\$5,999.56
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Commissioner Crawford made a motion, second by Commissioner Brown to approve the tax write-offs. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

WOODLAWN FIRE DEPARTMENT REFINANCING

Tony Cook, Treasurer of the Woodlawn-Sevier Fire Department stated the department had recently obtained their 501-c3 tax-exempt status. He requested the Board to adopt a resolution to acknowledge the non-profit status of the fire department. The resolution allows the department to refinance their loan for a tax-exempt loan. The amount of loan is \$234,620.92.

Chairman Walker stated on behalf of the Board his appreciation for the volunteer fire departments, and the work they do to provide fire protection for the entire county.

Commissioner McPeters made a motion, second by Commissioner Hollifield to approve the Resolution of Approval of Tax-Exempt Loan to the Woodlawn-Sevier Voluntary Fire Department, INC. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

DONATION OF VEHICLE

Mr. Wooten spoke on the new Law and Justice program at McDowell High School. Sheriff Greene requested to donate a 2008 Dodge Charger to the program at McDowell High School. Chairman Walker stated his appreciation for the law enforcement of our county, and all the work that Sheriff Greene and his men do.

Commissioner Crawford motioned, with a second by Commissioner Hollifield, to approve the RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DONATION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY TO NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.

ISOTHERMAL PLANNING UPDATE

Scott Dadsden, Executive Director of the Isothermal Planning and Development Commission, appeared before the Board to give an update on all the programs the Commission oversees. Mr. Dadsden invited the Board to attend a Stronger Economies Together (SET5) program at the Tryon Equestrian Center.

Chairman Walker thanked Mr. Dadson for his update.

911 EQUIPMENT PURCHASE/RESOLUTION

William Kehler, Director of Emergency Management, request authorization to purchase new 911 consoles and 911 Recorder. The current equipment was pre-owned and is nearing the end of its life expectancy. The new equipment would be compatible with new technologies that are emerging (text to 911, etc.). The purchase would be covered with 911 funds that are in reserve. The proposed equipment to be purchased is as follows:

- "5" AVTECT Radio Consoles - \$211,844.70
- "1" 911 Recorder - \$29,931.75
- Total Amount \$241,776.45

Commissioner Brown made a motion, second by Commissioner Hollifield to authorize purchase of 911 console and recorder. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Chairman Walker stated the Board wanted to present a resolution to Emergency Services.

Commissioner Hollifield motioned, second by Vice-Chair McPeters to approve Resolution of Appreciation for McDowell County Emergency Services. By unanimous vote motion carried.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Wooten stated the county has vouchers for a spay and neuter program, as a reminder to the public they can call DSS for an application. State has lowered income level to sub-poverty level for assistance in this program.

Commissioner Crawford ask if study for retirement community was completed. Mr. Wooten expects draft to be presented at November or December meeting.

Chairman Walker declared a five-minute recess.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Ron Shuping from the Nebo community appeared to express his appreciation for the action of the Board of Commissioners in placing "In God We Trust" motto on the buildings.

UPDATE ON CARSON HOUSE ACTIVITIES

Dr. Haney introduced the Historic Carson House Board members who were present; Bunnie Burgin, Evelyn Butler, Ann McNutt, Linda Cloherty, Executive Director, Debbie Queen, and Fred Dodge. Dr. Haney announced this was the 172nd year of the Board of Commissioners having their meeting at the Carson House. Dr. Haney gave an interesting presentation on John Hazard Carson, builder of the Carson House. He noted an increase in group and school tours, and an interest in the genealogy room. Directors continue to go into the schools and present educational programs. Dr. Haney also announced the completion of the Jubilee Arbor, an outside venue for programs, reunions, and weddings. Dr. Haney stated his appreciation for the support of the Board of Commissioners.

Chairman Walker stated his appreciation on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, for the hospitality and graciousness of the Carson House Board.

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.

DAVID N. WALKER
CHAIRMAN

CHERYL L. MITCHELL
CLERK TO THE BOARD