

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – SEPTEMBER 18, 2017**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, September 18, 2017, at 5:00 p.m., in the Commissioner's Board Room of the County Administration Building, 60 East Court Street, Marion, North Carolina.

Members Present

David Walker, Chair; Barry McPeters, Vice-Chairman; Tony Brown; Matthew Crawford; and Lynn Greene

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. The invocation was given by Commissioner Brown, followed by the pledge of allegiance, led by Commissioner Greene.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve the August 14, 2017 regular session minutes; August 21, 2017 open session minutes; and approve and seal August 21, 2017 closed session minutes, second by Commissioner Greene. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Walker called for any additions or deletions to the agenda. There were none.

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve agenda as presented, second by Vice Chair McPeters. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

National Preparedness Month/Hospital Contract

Craig Walker, EM Deputy Director gave a presentation on National Emergency Preparedness Month, specifically Fire Prevention Week which is October 8th—14th. Each local fire department goes to the school in their community and gives an educational program on fire prevention. This year's emphasis is on home fires concentrating on: close your door, check your smoke detector, and have an escape plan.

William Kehler, EM Director, spoke on hurricane preparedness, and always having a 72 hour emergency supply kit available. He noted we will soon be transitioning into winter storm preparedness.

He then presented a Transport Service Agreement with McDowell Hospital for transporting behavioral health transfers between McDowell Hospital and Mission. The proposed program would assign these future transfers to the Community Paramedic Program. The patient would be transferred to Mission by the community paramedic in a secure SUV equipped with real time audio/video monitoring of the back seat area. For involuntary commitments (IVC) a sheriff's deputy would accompany EMS. This would only be for non medical emergencies. Mr. Kehler also reported community care personnel have transported 82 mental health patients directly to Mission Hospital instead of sitting in ER at McDowell through the behavioral diversion program. This proposed solution will ensure EMS ambulances remain available for emergency calls for service.

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve the Transport Service Agreement with McDowell Hospital, second by Vice Chair McPeters. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Greene expressed his appreciation for the EM Department for the preparation and work that had been done during the Hurricane Irma State of Emergency.

Mr. Kehler also presented an addition to the county personnel resolution as policy for Emergency Services.

Emergency Preparedness:

If McDowell County deploys emergency teams outside of the county to support an external disaster, exempt employees will be compensated at time and a half for time worked over (40) forty hours during the disaster and recovery phase. Non-exempt employees will be compensated at the regular FLSA compensation policy. This process can apply to disasters within the county should a State of Emergency be declared and the severity of the disaster is one that qualifies for federal disaster aid.

The draft policy change was presented as a first reading, therefore there was no action taken.

Landfill Gas Monitoring/Electronics Recycling Fee

Mr. Randall Thomas, Public Works Director, reported the NC Department of Environmental Quality requires owners of landfills to monitor the gas that is generated by the decomposing waste. Mr. Thomas developed a monitoring plan which would require the installation of monitoring wells. He presented a proposal for Professional Environmental Services from Joyce Engineering for \$42,200. The amount is for drilling and installing probes, and monitors on any buildings within 1,000 feet of the landfill.

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve the landfill monitoring plan with Joyce Engineering, second by Commissioner Greene. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

The second item Mr. Thomas presented was a request for an electronics disposal fee. The disposal laws require TVs, computers, printers, etc. to be recycled. Recyclers do not have to pay at the landfill to recycle, but the county must pay to dispose of them. The cost varies from

\$2,000-\$3,000 a month for the county to dispose of the items. In order to recoup the cost, he suggested a per item fee for residents, and a commercial tonnage fee for non-residential locations (hotel, business, etc).

The proposed fee schedule for electronics:

Tube Computer Monitors or TV's (per item)	\$10
Flat Screen Monitors or TV's (per item)	\$ 5
Computers, Printers, Scanners (per item)	\$ 5

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve the fee schedule for electronics disposal, second by Vice Chair McPeters. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Chair Walker suggested a campaign ad to educate the public on the electronics disposal fee charge.

Mission/BCBSNC Discussion

Mr. Patrick Brady, with BCBSNC made a presentation in regards to the recent dispute with Mission Hospital. Because Mission cancelled their contract with BCBSNC on July 5th, they will be the only health system in North Carolina to be out of network with Blue Cross as of October 5, 2017. He noted several participants are already going out of county for hospital and physician visits. This dispute will affect 9,400 BC members in McDowell County, and 260,000 in the 16 county area served by Mission.

Commissioner Greene asked Mr. Brady to supply the data he quoted to the HR department.

Mission Hospital

Tim Blenco, Board Chair of the McDowell Hospital Board of Directors, and Jill Hoggard Green made a presentation on Mission Hospital. Mission Health Partners is made up area hospitals and doctors. Ms. Green noted 75% of their patients have Medicare, Medicaid and charity cases. Mission is ready to negotiate with BCBSNC.

Chair Walker thanked both parties for the presentations, and the services both agencies have provided to the county. He then called for a brief recess at 6:03pm. The Board was back in session at 6:05pm.

NCDOT Transportation Update

Mr. Wooten reported he had submitted the Board's request for a standalone transportation system to the NCDOT after last month's decision. Mr. Wooten received a letter from NCDOT welcoming the county's decision to establish a public transportation system. Staff from NCDOT will meet with county staff on October 2nd. Mr. Wooten noted federal funding would be necessary for the operation to be successful.

Health Department Report

Mr. Wooten noted Karen Powell, District Health Director, had been very helpful in getting numbers and information on a standalone health department. Current services would cost \$300,000 to be budgeted to operate a standalone health department.

Karen Powell gave an update on environmental health services in McDowell County. She had hired one new inspector; and two retired inspectors brought in on part time basis. There is a 6 weeks wait time on getting inspections.

Chair Walker suggested submitting a legislative goal of addressing environmental health services. Commissioner Brown suggested each county submitting more money to get another inspector. Ms. Powell noted there were discussions between Rutherford and McDowell to fund another inspector.

Chair Walker expressed his appreciation to Ms. Powell.

No decision was made by the Board.

Shooting Range Update

Mr. Wooten presented a tentative timeline for the shooting range:

October, 2017- sound test; December, 2017- public meeting; February, 2018-NC Wildlife Resources Commission permission to proceed; September, 2018-Completion of design and permitting; June, 2019-construction complete

Commissioner Brown asked the County Manager or his Assistant to call each week and get an update from the Wildlife.

Courthouse Project Update

Mr. Wooten presented a tentative timeline from architect, Chuck Hamrick on the courthouse renovation project. The schedule was based on when the plans can be completed, and when the Local Government Commission meets:

December 11, 2017	Advertise construction bids
January 11, 2018	Open construction bids
January 22, 2018	Public hearing and selection of construction and finance bids
February 1, 2018	Deadline to send approval package to LGC
March 6, 2018	LGC meets to review financing request
March 7, 2018	Earliest construction contract and loan documents could be signed

Stacy Hill Road Water Project

The estimated cost of Stacy Hill Road Water Line Project is \$1.2 million. There is \$365,000 remaining in EPA grant funds and the county would have to finance the balance with approval from the Local Government Commission (LGC). After discussion with the LGC since the water system's fees would not fully cover the debt payment, it would not likely be funded.

Mr. Wooten proposed securing a loan of approximately \$415,000, using the \$365,000 EPA grant funds, county water system reserve funds of \$100,000, and fund balance of \$371,000. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve using up to \$371,000 from fund balance to construct full water line, second by Commissioner Brown. Discussion followed. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Administrative Items

Property Matter

Roy Davis, in 1983 donated a piece of property in West Marion to the county. It was discovered the property gifted was owned and occupied by a family for many decades, and several parcels are incorrectly mapped in the vicinity of the property. Mr. Wooten proposed deeding the properties to the correct owners.

Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve deed transfer in accordance with NCGS 1-35, second by Commissioner Greene and it passed as follows:
AYES-Vice Chair McPeters; Commissioners Crawford, Brown, Greene
NOES- Chair Walker

Fee Waiver

Mr. Wooten presented an occupancy tax penalty waiver in the amount of \$160.00. The owner requested the waiver due to being out of town.

Vice Chair McPeters made a motion to waive the late penalty on occupancy tax, second by Commissioner Greene. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Tax Matters

Mr. Wooten presented a request from Ms. Linda Onufrey, Tax Collector to charge off uncollected taxes for the 2006 tax year in the amount of \$104,035.69 as of August 31, 2017. The amount was not included in the accounts receivable annual audit report because by statute the funds were not collectible.

List of applicants presented asking for late exemptions:

Kathryn Bailey	James Browning	Julia Hensley	Johnny Henline
Nancy Holland	Joseph Lail	Carolyn Moore	John Nuttall
Stuart Perna	Clyde Robinson	Mary Smith	Jerry Wagner
Frankie Styles			

Releases, Refunds, & Write-offs

MV tax refunds	\$ 734.20
Releases under \$100	\$ 191.61
Releases over \$100	\$112,532.30
Refunds	\$ 6,706.57
Discoveries	\$ 20,244.18

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve all tax matters as presented, second by Vice Chair McPeters. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Board Appointments

The following committee vacancies were presented:

- **Nursing Home/Adult Care Committee** –one application from Leah Robertson for a reappointment. This was a first reading.
- **Industrial Facilities and Pollution Control Financing Authority Board-** has two vacancies. No applications have been received.

No action was taken by the Board due to being a first reading.

Reports and Communications

Mr. Wooten noted the Commissioners had been invited to the following events:

Ribbon Cutting at McDowell High Athletic Field, Friday, September 21st, at 7:10pm

Community Unity Service – Sunday, September 24th, at 3:00pm at East McDowell Middle School Auditorium

Lake James State Park meeting on Friday, October 6th at 11:00am

Chair Walker left the meeting at 6:53pm and returned at 6:55pm.

Citizen Comment

Cresta McLaughlin spoke on incessant noise from a rock yard business. The noise goes from 6am to 9pm and later at night, seven days a week. Chair Walker and Vice Chair McPeters will discuss the issue with Sheriff Greene.

Mickey Lewis owns 40 acres behind industrial park, and brought a complaint about the amount of trash on Rockwell Drive. He suggested blocking Rockwell Drive to prevent people from entering and trashing the property. Consensus was to install a cable blocking the drive.

Adjournment

There being no further business to transact at this time, upon motion by Commissioner Brown, second by Commissioner Greene, the meeting was adjourned.

DAVID WALKER
CHAIRMAN

CHERYL MITCHELL
CLERK TO THE BOARD