

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – August 21, 2023**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, August 21, 2023, at 11:30 a.m., in the Commissioner's Board Room, 69 N Main St., Marion, NC.

Members Present

Tony G. Brown, Chairman; David N. Walker, Vice-Chairman Chris Allison

Members Absent

Patrick Ellis

Others Present

Ashley Wooten, County Manager/Deputy Clerk to the Board

Call to Order

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

McDowell Partnership for Substance Awareness Update

McDowell Partnership for Substance Awareness (MPSA) was recognized in order to give an update on the organization's activities. Ms. Wilson noted that the Commissioners had endorsed working with the group to develop the opioid spending plan.

Ms. Wilson also asked that the Commissioners declare August 31, 2023 as Overdose Awareness Day in McDowell County.

**PROCLAMATION
AUGUST 31, 2023 AS OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY**

WHEREAS, the International Overdose Awareness Day is recognized around the world as a day to acknowledge individual loss and family grief for people who have suffered an overdose; and

WHEREAS, Overdose Awareness Day recognizes overdoses from all drugs, because it reflects the reality of the overdose epidemic, allowing everyone to speak and educate more broadly about the issues; and

WHEREAS, Overdose Awareness Day hopes to publicly challenge the stigma associated with drug use and overdose; and

WHEREAS, Overdose Awareness Day provides an opportunity for people to publicly mourn for loved ones, some for the first time without feeling guilt or shame.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the McDowell County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim August 31, 2023 as Overdose Awareness Day and encourage members of the community to support those affected by the overdose epidemic.

ADOPTED this day, the 21st of August, 2023.

Vice Chairman motioned to approve the Recovery Month proclamation as requested, seconded by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

**PROCLAMATION
SEPTEMBER 2023 AS RECOVERY MONTH**

WHEREAS, mental and substance use disorders affect all communities, including McDowell County; and

WHEREAS, people with these disorders can achieve healthy lifestyles and lead rewarding lives in recovery with commitment and support.

WHEREAS, people who experience mental and substance use disorders can embark on a new path toward improved health and overall wellness; and

WHEREAS, the focus of Recovery Month spreads the message that behavioral health is essential to health and one's overall wellness, and that prevention works, treatment is effective, and people recover; and

WHEREAS, the impact of mental and substance use disorders is apparent in our local community; and

WHEREAS, through Recovery Month, people become more aware and able to recognize the signs of mental and substance use disorders, which can lead more people into needed treatment; and

WHEREAS, the Recovery Month observance continues to work to improve the lives of those affected by mental and substance use disorders by raising awareness of these diseases and educating communities about the prevention, treatment, and recovery resources that are available.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the McDowell County Board of Commissioners do hereby designate September as Recovery Month.

ADOPTED this day, the 21st of August, 2023.

Chairman Brown and Vice Chairman Walker asked Mr. Wooten to ensure that any outreach and support be done to endorse MPSA's entry into the school system to share the message about making health choices.

Ms. Wilson also asked that September 2023 be proclaimed as Recovery Month. Mr. Wooten noted that both proclamations had been issued in previous years.

DSS Update

DSS Director Bobbie Sigmon noted that she supported any efforts that could be made to spread the positive message about making healthy choices at the schools.

Ms. Sigmon gave her monthly report for the datasets that are collected for the NC Department of Health and Human Services Memorandum of Understanding reporting. She noted that some of the data is lagging.

One area she noted that is improving include the initiation for child welfare reports. The target is 95% and she said the department is at 91.41%.

Ms. Sigmon also made mention of SB 20, which creates a board payment for kinship placements. She noted that 25% of the children in the agency's custody are in kinship placement, which means those family members would be eligible for a payment. She noted that this is a budgetary impact. She also noted that they have more foster families than many surrounding counties.

She also noted that she had a front-line worker that was nominated as front-line worker of the year in the Child Support Unit.

Ms. Sigmon also noted that she is getting many of her long-standing vacancies closed in the various units. Each unit has at least one vacancy.

Mr. Wooten distributed the draft Home Study Policy to the Board and asked that the Policy be reviewed.

Administrative Item

The County Manager noted that the Tax Assessor had sent over a release/refund for two taxpayers. The release/refunds were ordered by the Property Tax Commission.

The total release and refunds for 2021 tax year was \$6,038.74 and \$6,038.74 for the 2022 tax year.

Vice Chairman Walker motioned to approve the release and refunds as requested, seconded by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Closed Session

Vice Chairman Walker motioned to go into Closed Session for personnel reasons as permitted by NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(6), seconded by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Commissioner Greene motioned to go out of Closed Session, seconded by Commissioner Allison at 1:46. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed. No action occurred after the Closed Session.

Adjournment

Commissioner Greene made a motion to adjourn at 1:48 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Attest:

Ashley R. Wooten
Deputy Clerk to the Board

Tony G. Brown
Chairman