

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL SESSION – June 1, 2023**

**Assembly**

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Special Session on Thursday, June 1, 2023, at 4:30 p.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; Lynn Greene

**Members Absent**

Patrick Ellis

**Others Present**

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Victoria Craig, Clerk to the Board; Alison Bell, Finance Director

**Call to Order**

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

**Budget Presentation**

County Manager Ashley Wooten presented the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Budget to the Board and meeting attendees. The FY 2023 accomplishments were shared and followed up with the FY 2024 overview.

**FY 2023 Accomplishments**

- Staff continues to oversee American Rescue Plan Act investments made by the Board.
- The County applied for and received two Community Development Block Grants in the amount of \$5,950,000. One project will assist with home repairs in partnership with Gateway Wellness and the other will assist in the development of a transitional housing project in partnership with Freedom Life.
- The County received a grant of \$815,437 from the State to construct a water line to serve Hoppy Tom Hollow.
- A grant of \$2,836,740 was received from the State to construct water lines around NC 126 and the Lake Club (East End Project).
- A grant of \$331,905 was received from the Appalachian Regional Commission to extend water lines around Exit 90 in Nebo.
- Grants have been submitted to extend a water line to West Marion Elementary.
- Contracts were awarded for Nebo Water System Phase 1A and 1B Expansion Projects for the extension of over four miles of water lines.

- A contract was awarded to extend water and sewer at the Universal property for future business sites.
- The Shooting Range continues to receive rave reviews from patrons. The Range hosted a large youth tournament with several hundred participants.
- The State awarded the County a \$500,000 grant to establish a playground at the Maple Leaf complex.
- Numerous improvements were made at many of the County's parks.
- A pavement assessment was completed. Several parking lots including those at the Mental Health Building and the Sugar Hill Convenience Center have been scheduled for repair.
- The County's engineers have prepared a transfer station repair plan that will be initiated in FY 2024.
- Design and planning of various building projects continued during the year including, DSS, the Services Building, the Animal Shelter, and others.

FY 2024 Budget Priorities

- Recruit and retain high-quality staff through salary and benefit adjustments
- Establish reserves for capital projects
- Hold staffing as close to current levels as possible
- Increase the health insurance reserves

FY 2024 Budget Process

- Department heads meet with Budget Officer (County Manager) to review budget needs.
- Budget Officer meets with Finance Director to review departmental needs and estimated revenues.
- Budget Officer presents budget recommendations to the Board of Commissioners.
- Budget Officer makes recommended budget available for public inspection.
- Board of Commissioners holds a public hearing to receive public input.
- Board of Commissioners approve the final budget before June 30.

New Expenditure Impacts

**Public Safety**

EMS Facilities Debt	\$200,763
EMS Operating and Capital	\$220,048
Sheriff's Office Operating and Capital	\$114,227
EMS Salaries and Benefits	\$659,362
Sheriff's Office Salaries and Benefits	<u>\$1,012,070</u>
Total:	\$2,206,470

**County Organization Improvements**

Current Year raise and benefit impacts	\$1,283,756
Health Insurance	\$637,220
Retirement System rate increase	\$221,437
Black Bear Park staffing	\$106,359
DSS Medicaid Staffing	\$254,110
NEO Gov Software	<u>\$86,638</u>
Total:	\$2,589,520

**County Facilities and Equipment**

EMS Capital Debt	\$34,988
Sheriff Capital Debt	\$33,458
Waste Collections Capital Debt	\$59,873
Capital Reserve	<u>\$390,542</u>
Total:	\$518,861

**Community and Economic Development**

Recreation (Includes Black Bear Ops)	\$96,891
PARTF Match Old Fort	\$100,000
Property and Vehicle Insurance	\$265,000
Waste Collection Fuel and Maintenance	\$150,000
Watershed	\$15,000
DSS Technology	\$383,000
Juvenile Housing	<u>\$30,000</u>
Total:	\$1,039,891

**Community and Economic Development**

Increased Waste Disposal Cost	\$117,816
Solid Waste Reserve Fund	\$63,823
NC Forest Service	\$11,766
Revaluation Fund	\$105,776
Health Department Operations	\$28,745
Foster Care	<u>\$348,944</u>
Total:	\$676,870

Budget Proposal Fiscal Year 2022-2023 to 2023-2024

<b>2022-23 Budget Ordinance \$54,550,329</b>	<b>2023-24 Proposed Budget \$61,668,108</b>	<b>Difference \$7,117,779 or 13.05%</b>
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County of McDowell Budget Ordinance Comparison

Budget Year	Total Budget Per Ordinance	Monetary Increase	Percentage Increase
2015-16	39,675,990	1,210,096	3.15%
2016-17	40,848,514	1,172,524	2.96%
2017-18	40,612,169	(236,345)	-0.58%
2018-19	42,635,745	2,023,576	4.98%
2019-20	45,442,843	2,807,098	6.58%
2020-21	45,893,518	450,675	0.99%
2021-22	49,728,636	3,835,118	8.36%
2022-23	54,550,329	4,821,693	9.70%
2023-24	61,668,108	7,117,779	13.05%

Proposed Tax Rate .5675 Cents

	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>Tax Base</u>
2015-16	0.5500	3,582,854,944
2016-17	0.5500	3,624,940,969
2017-18	0.5500	3,722,603,765
2018-19	0.5875	3,825,160,550
2019-20	0.5875	4,331,018,255
2020-21	0.5875	4,522,123,534
2021-22	0.5775	4,640,208,348
2022-23	0.5775	4,774,680,712
2023-24	0.5675	6,025,526,100

**Adjournment**

Vice-Chairman Walker made a motion to adjourn at 5:11 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Attest:

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Victoria Craig  
Clerk to the Board

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Tony G. Brown  
Chairman