

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RECESSED SESSION – May 11, 2023**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in a Recessed Session on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., in the Board Room of the Dogwood Building 17 at McDowell Technical Community College located at 54 College Dr. Marion, NC.

Members Present

David N. Walker, Vice-Chairman; Chris Allison; Patrick Ellis; Lynn Greene

Members Absent

Tony G. Brown, Chairman

Others Present

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

Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Walker called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

Marion Fire Department Fire Tax Request

County Manager Ashley Wooten presented the funding request of the Marion Fire Department.

The City has requested an increase of 0.7 cents, which equates to an increase from 9.33 cents to 10.03 cents. The primary reasons listed to justify the increase are:

- 1) A new debt payment for the two fire trucks,
- 2) a firefighter position starting in January,
- 3) Salary and benefit costs for the existing staff, and
- 4) capital costs including turnout gear and radios.

Based on recent tax base estimates, that 1 cent in the Marion Area district generates approximately \$64,792. This means that the dollar amount generated by the rate increase equates to around \$45,354.40. This ~\$45,000 is in addition to the anticipated revenue growth that would come from the revaluation.

After considerable discussion, Commissioner Greene made a motion to deny the fire tax increase request by Marion Fire Department, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Marion Fire Department Rescue Tax Request

City Council voted to request the rescue tax effective **July 1, 2024**. The motion requests that the 1.05 cent rescue tax collected in the City limits as well as the Marion Area go to the City Fire Department instead of the Rescue Squad. The justification is that the City believes they should be receiving the funding since they are performing the service already.

The Rescue Squad and P.G. Fire Department provide the most certified services currently (other agencies may be capable of providing equivalent services, but they are not certified).

Staff suggests studying this issue in collaboration with the Fire Commission in agreeance with Emergency Management Director, William Kehler.

Commissioner Ellis stated that he doesn't want the rescue squad to be dissolved in the near future.

Commissioner Allison made a motion to direct staff to review all fire and rescue contracts and bring back any recommended updates, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Adjournment

Commissioner Greene made a motion to recess to the EOC/Backup 911 Center at 634 College Dr. Marion, NC at 5:49 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Attest:

Victoria Craig
Clerk to the Board

David N. Walker
Vice-Chairman