

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
MCDOWELL COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION – October 14, 2024**

Assembly

The McDowell County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, October 14, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., in the Commissioners Board Room, 69 N Main St., Marion, NC.

Members Present

David N. Walker, Chairman; Tony Brown, Vice-Chair; Lynn Greene, Chris Allison and Patrick Ellis

Members Absent

None

Others Present

Ashley Wooten, County Manager; Sena A. Allison, Clerk to the Board; Fred Coats, County Attorney; Chris Simmons, Team USA International Precision Rifle Federation Work Champion; William Kehler, ES Director; Chad Young and Scott Killough, NCDOT; Kim Effler, McDowell County Chamber Director; Natalia Santana-Pollard, FEMA Recovery Resources and Kim Wellborn, Board of Elections Director

Call to Order

Chairman Walker called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The Prayer was given by Vice Chairman Brown. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Ellis

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Brown made a motion to approve the September 9, 2024 Regular Session minutes and the September 16, 2024 Regular Session minutes; with a second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Approval of Agenda

Vice Chair Brown requested an addition to the New Business portion of the Agenda on animal control. Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve the addition; this was seconded by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Recognition of Chris Simmons

Chairman Walker welcomed Chris Simmons to the Board to congratulate him for winning the International Precision Rifle Federation World Championship, in which he represented the United States. Vice Chair Brown spoke of how Mr. Simmons had mastered the art of shooting and how proud he is of Mr. Simmons in regards to not only his accomplishments with shooting, but the respectful person Mr. Simmons is. He invited Mr. Simmons to give the Board the history to which he became a World Champion.

Mr. Simmons stated that he was born in McDowell County, he started shooting while he was at McDowell High on the ROTC team and where in 2004 he won 3 National Championships. He explained his training towards the World Championship in Italy consisted of a two-year qualifying process to make the team, in which he went with 5 others overseas to represent the United States. There were 28 Countries with 328 participants that competed in long-range and rim-fire shooting. Chairman Walker asked how long does he practice and how many rounds per day, in which Mr. Simmons answered twice a day, with several hundreds rounds each time. Commissioner Ellis asked what was the distance on the long-range shooting, in which he answered 300 yards with a 22 Long Rifle. Commissioner Greene spoke on how proud he was and how he had watched Mr. Simmons shoot at McDowell High when he was an SRO officer. Commissioner Allison gave congratulations on such a high honor. Vice Chair Brown read the Resolution the Board bestowed to Mr. Simmons for his win for the USA.

Vice Chair Brown made a motion to adopt the Resolution, with a second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

The Board had their picture made with the Simmons family to commemorate the occasion with presenting him the adopted Resolution.

David Walker, Chairman
Tony Brown, Vice Chairman
Chris Allison, Commissioner
Patrick Ellis, Commissioner
Lynn Greene, Commissioner



Ashley Wooten, County Manager
Sena Allison, Clerk to the Board
Donald Fred Coats, County Attorney

McDowell County

RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION FOR CHRIS SIMMONS

WHEREAS, Chris Simmons was part of a two-year selection process to represent the United States of America at the inaugural event of The International Precision Rifle Federation Rimfire World Championships. Mr. Simmons excelled in his training by arriving at the range each day

before daylight and training until dark every evening, running 10-12 different positions in a 90-second, timeframe, firing hundreds of rounds daily; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Simmons competed with the top shooting competitors from 23 nations August 18th through September 3rd, 2023 at the Piancardato Tiro A Volo range in Collazzone Italy; and

WHEREAS, the three-day event had competitors battle a challenging course of fire at different distances, shooting from both supported and unsupported obstacles, long-range shots, and moving targets all within tight time constraints; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Simmons won the International Precision Rifle Federation World Championship by representing Team USA, on September 3, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the McDowell County Board of Commissioners are honored to congratulate Chris Simmons on earning the Championship Title, not only representing McDowell County but the United States of America, with respect and admiration of his diligent training and precision to the prestigious sport.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this the 14th day of October, 2024.

Helene Emergency Response

Chairman Walker invited William Kehler to give an update on Hurricane Helene, with first addressing how the Board was so proud all the agencies worked together to assist in the storm efforts and the operation that was ran in McDowell County. Mr. Kehler began by thanking those who supported the response to this historic event and noted it was day 20 that the Emergency Operations Center had been activated. The Director specified due to this historic storm an unprecedented response has been given by County, State, Federal agencies and numerous partner organizations to make up the community approach for such a disaster.

His update included:

A briefing that was had this afternoon where it was given that 38 states, as well as teams from Puerto Rico and Guam being in Western North Carolina to assist with the storm response.

Pre-storm action began 48 hours in advance of Helene, by various personnel warning citizens of the flash flood threat and encouraged temporary relocation away from open creeks, streams and rivers. A door knocking campaign went forth in high risk areas, thousands of flyers warning people of the danger to come, and followed up with a reverse 911 call through the Nixle system that hit over 24,000 phones. A second door knocking campaign began on Thursday September 26th as another warning to seek higher ground.

As the EOC became activated, emergency personnel were placed on standby, equipment and staff were pre-positioned in various places in the County, a shelter at Glenwood Baptist Church was opened on Thursday morning.

The predecessor rain falls on Wednesday night dropped 10 inches on McDowell County, with several swift water rescues during the overnight hours.

Friday morning the McDowell 911 Center received over 760 emergency calls during the height of the storm. Communication infrastructure collapsing in Western NC due to the catastrophic damage on utility lines, enabled re-routing of the 911 calls outside the disaster area, in Johnston County where the infrastructure was stable and they could communicate through the Viper Network back to McDowell.

Over 100 persons were rescued by helicopter crews and transported to a safe location, over 200 rescued by boat or ground crews with detailing one specific rescue taking over 24 hours to complete in the Armstrong Creek area. He told this rescue took the McDowell Search and Rescue team hiking nearly 10 hours to reach the injured person, with the difficulty of navigating downed trees and unstable slopes to begin to have the patient air lifted to the Trauma Center.

Fire Departments and McDowell Rescue worked with the DOT to assist cut-shove operations for clearing travel routes, a total of 4 FEMA Search and Rescue Task Force from 4 different states were used to do precise searches to some of the hardest hit areas of the County.

Nebo Crossing Church was established as a base camp for First Responders, located next to the EOC. He told that at one time the Church housed over 1,000 local and outside agencies of Emergency Personnel, and gave special thanks to the Church for their efforts.

The volunteer assistance organization was led by Grace Community Church Preacher Jerry Lewis, McDowell County Superintendent Dr. Grit and MTCC President Dr. Kelley who served to get the Universal Building Warehouse organized for commodities to our community. This led to 16 different point of distributions in all communities, to serve needs including both non-profit and faith based for the purpose that one goes hungry.

The Helene Hotline # 828-652-3241 is the line for assistance to missing persons, medical, FEMA questions, transportation and commodities assistance. It runs 24 hours a day, and will continue with some adjustments as needs are being met.

The update as October 14th there are 2 missing persons, 1 confirmed fatality, with 1 death under investigation from the medical examiner's office. The Director addressed the statements that have been made are truthful, and as the proper process plays out, they will officially announce all determinations as they are deemed. He addressed giving accurate information as it us the utmost importance to have facts and not spread untrue rumors. The daily press release will give accurate information as it is received.

Phase 2 began to focus on human services with Community Comfort Stations at Old Fort First Baptist Church located on East Main Street in Old Fort and New Horizon Church located on US 221 North. These stations offer free laundry trailers, shower and bathroom facilities running 24 hours/7 days a week. McDowell EMS set up free medical assistance in Old Fort, ran by the office of NC EMS, supported by NC DHHS and is located at the Old Fort Train Depot at 25 W Main Street. A request to the NC EMS was made for additional resources for the northern end of the County.

Phase 3 will establish volunteer debris removal and home repairs, in which citizens can go to mcdowellcares.org for requests to be given. Baptist on Missions, together with Grace

Community Church gathered 600 volunteers over the weekend, and will serve as a long-term commitment to our community for services needed.

FEMA is set up 7 days a week, from 8:00 am to 7:00 p.m. at the Marion Senior Center on 100 Spaulding Rd with another location request to be in Old Fort.

The 1 shelter still in operation, is at the Marion Senior Center and is being managed by the Red Cross.

D-SNAP (Disaster Food Nutrition Service) is being organized currently, with a press release on details coming in the next 24 to 48 hours.

Disaster Survivor Assistance for FEMA were on the ground in Old Fort, at the Post Office on October 14th.

FEMA assistance can be obtained at: disasterassistance.gov, through the FEMA app, in person at the DRC, by calling 800-621-3362 and assistance at the Marion Train Depot through the MATCH Program.

Old Fort EMS Station had water damage which is currently uninhabitable and is in the process of placing a temporary trailer at the Old Fort EMS station.

Mr. Kehler proclaimed the long and extensive recovery process we will occur, extended his sincerest thanks to all groups and persons who have assisted our County so no one suffers, goes hungry and everyone has access to water. He noted this has been the most humbling experience he has witnessed in his career, just by seeing people come together to help one another and is a sign of hope and inspiration to show what McDowell County is made of. He promised that the Emergency Management Team will walk with each person affected until a full recovery is reached, noting their motto as "One Team, One Mission" and what an honor to lead this mission with everyone's support.

Chairman Walker thanked Mr. Kehler for his insightful summary and recognized the 48-hour pre-storm campaign attributed to the result of saving many lives. He acknowledged all the agencies who acted in this and spoke of Helene as being historical with regards to the 1916 storm. He declared the Board firmly believes this County has the best Emergency Management in the Nation, while giving accolades to all the agencies who worked throughout the EOC. The Chairman spoke on the Churches in the communities opening up and working tirelessly as distribution centers, while recognizing the people attending the meeting who worked as one team for the County.

Vice Chair Brown stated he saw an abundance of love given from individuals unbiasedly, giving help to one another was a huge blessing to him .

Commissioner Ellis revealed witnessing all the agencies who took sacrifices and risks to get to people who needed rescued or help. He noted the great efforts of the individuals and agencies at the EOC from law enforcement, to EMS to FEMA was impressive. He gave attention to how special McDowell County truly is.

Commissioner Allison gave his personal appreciation to Mr. Kehler and all the teams who worked together, with regards to being amazed at how communities are coming together.

Commissioner Greene recognized Mr. Kehler's leadership and cited his name, Sheriff Buchanan, Police Chief Alan Lawrence, FEMA, Army Core of Engineers and all of those whose agencies gave in the efforts of the storm. He expressed how we could not begin to honor all of the individuals who gave financially, volunteered or offering their own equipment to save this community. He noted how proud he is of the citizens of McDowell County, the County Manager, Fire Departments and Volunteer Fire Departments who spent hours watching over each other.

Commissioner Greene told of him witnessing people who lost their homes, handing out waters to their neighbors and gave his thanks to all the outside agencies who have supported our County, loved our County and prayed for our County, which will never be forgotten.

NCDOT Restoration Update

Chairman Walker welcomed Chad Young and Scott Killough to the Board Room for an update. Mr. Killough spoke in regards to their operations and told of completing their assessment of the County, which details approximately 700 road miles. He cited locating 497 locations of damage, 42 bridges that were damaged, with 7 being deemed as total losses requiring full replacements.

The updates are as follows:

- The NCDOT restored traffic on I-40, stabilizing the bridge over the Catawba River with a temporary repair made to the slide on Old Fort Mountain.
- 226 at Coxes Creek opened on this day (October 14th) for connection to Mitchell County.
- 226 A will take some time to restore fully as well as US 221 N, but repairs have started on the north end by NHM Construction with an anticipated 2-3 months for completion of both roads.
- The 221 North bridge at Mountain Paradise has had a contractor assessing the installation of temporary footers drilled and poured and projecting 7-8 weeks for the install.
- NC80 had substantial damage with contractors to give quotes. The goal is to restore the 2 lanes up to the school bus turn around, citing the slides at the top being significant with a 4-month goal to full restoration.
- Bat Cave Road opened to the County line for the Old Fort community to Buncombe.
- Pitt Station bridge into Baxter's had installation of culverts for temporary travel, projecting 1 month until restoration.
- Commerce Street at 70 and Curtis Creek Bridges to be started, working to shore these temporarily to a safe state for access with a 60- day projected time of completion.

Mr. Killough noted he will continue working with Mr. Kehler and the Highway Patrol to continue mobilizing areas as requested by the power companies to restore power to all areas in need. He told of the crews outside of the County assisting with repairing roads efforts that has brought the current road access, with much more repairs to come.

Commissioner Ellis expressed his thanks to the diligent work of the DOT and inquired of the time set for secondary roads to be completed. Mr. Killough answered in 6 months they are hoping to be 75-80% complete. He did state everyone at this time should have access to roads and if there was anyone who does not, to please contact the DOT.

Vice Chair Brown asked if the DOT was having issues finding materials, in which Mr. Killough answered they have not so far but there may be some extended wait times as they are competing for materials with the Rail Road and other agencies. Vice Chair told how proud he is of the accomplishments they have made and gave thanks to their crews for working so vigorously for the County.

Chairman Walker thanked him for the work the DOT has put in to assist access to power companies for restoring power and getting our roads accessible. He also thanked him for the update and for answering important questions. Mr. Killough gave accolades to the way Mr. Kehler had the EOC set up for communication, remarking how it made their working together much easier. He committed to provide another update to the Board at a later time.

Helene Business Update

Chairman Walker introduced Kim Effler to give a business activity update to the Board, since Helene. Ms. Effler began with thanks to the Board for the opportunity to present the progress with the Chambers Business Action Recovery Plans goal. This plan is to ensure McDowell County's economy not only recovers but becomes stronger and more resilient following Helene, with a focus on four key areas, in no particular order; Child Care centers reopening, Baxter's Health Care support, collaborative recovery of businesses and direct outreach to local businesses. She explained these goals as:

#1- Child Care centers: These re-openings are essential for restoring our workforce so that employees can return to their jobs. McDowell County has 29 licensed child care facilities including 14 County operated locations. There are 5 privately owned centers currently open and 10 with pending contracts. Two have sustained critical damage and will remain closed until repairs are complete. Focus is to reopen to ensure our work force the ability to return to their jobs.

#2 - Baxter's Health Care: a critical employer and a vital support to the healthcare supply chain. She told of visiting the facility to see what challenges they are up against, pointing out how they have welcomed 1000 employees back to work by the dedication of deep cleaning and enduring production lines. She acknowledged within this update, the Chamber's partnership with NC Commerce preparing to support any employees who may need to file for unemployment or assistance to displaced workers for the ability to return to their jobs as quickly as possible.

#3 - Business and Industry Recovery Resource Center: has been established and placed at MTCC in the Harold Smith Building, which gives the opportunity to create human connection for those that have been deeply impacted by Helene. This is a successful collaboration between the Marion Business Association and McDowell Technical Community College to provide the resources to those who have suffered significant losses as individuals or to businesses to gain access to what they need to recover. They also help in applying for loans or grants.

#4 - Direct Outreach: starting the unification to local businesses by the Chamber to connect directly with our business community, which consists of 885 businesses in McDowell County. The Chamber desires to reach out to all businesses to see their needs and what they can do to support getting them back and operational.

Ms. Effler reported to date, being able to connect to approximately a fourth of the businesses with 80 of those fully operational. Some businesses reported structural damage mud or mold issues but will reopen while others are total losses. They have gathered information of 21 businesses in Old Fort, 18 in Marion, 15 in North Cove and Little Switzerland, 6 in Nebo and 2 businesses in Dysertsville that are critically damaged or inoperable. The Chamber is gathering data from federal, state and local Partners and are trying to get that information out to the local businesses quickly and accurately to get businesses back on our feet, whether they are a member or not. She also recognized that October is a big month for many of our businesses especially our tourism businesses, and how this was taken away by the storm. Ms. Effler stated how they are advocating on the local, regional and state level for loan forgiveness opportunities that support this unprecedented disaster. The Chamber launched a donation campaign through their 501 C3 foundation, in which \$67,000.00 has been raised thus far and will begin distributing small business grants to those in need. The director stated they will continue business recovery efforts until the economy is back on its feet and gave thanks to the community and the other Chambers who have lifted them up, pointing out Lake Norman Chamber for donating 200,000 lbs of supplies.

Ms. Effler gave thanks to Ashley Wooten, the County Manager and Will Kehler, the EMS Director, on what an honor to work with them at the EOC during this process and appreciation to McDowell County coming together for recovery.

Chairman Walker thanked Ms. Effler for working diligently at the EOC, being a partner in the restoration and the Chambers involvement in acquiring and granting the \$67,000.00 to businesses to begin to restore is greatly appreciated. Commissioner Greene added that Amazon is convenient and easy, but it is a good time to buy local.

FEMA Recovery Resources

Chairman Walker introduced Natalia Santana-Pollard to give an update on the FEMA process in which she gave sentiments to the people of McDowell County and focused on Will Kehler for running an outstanding operation in saving thousands of lives. She recognized the EOC staff and partners while expressing how she wished this was her community.

Ms. Santana-Pollard told as of this day there have been 7,400 registrations for individuals reaching out for assistance for FEMA, in which of those there has been \$4 million approved to be provided to McDowell County residences and noted these numbers change frequently.

They are currently working with NC State for Disaster Unemployment, and told of the Serious Needs Assistance of \$750.00 to be given to individuals who have experienced a loss. She noted none of the money FEMA issues is a loan, they are all grants and do not have to be paid back and encouraged citizens to go online to apply or go to the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) at 100 Spaulding Rd Marion, NC 28752. She did contend that if you are turned down, you should appeal the decision.

FEMA has started doing preliminary damage assessments for the public assistance programs as of this week and she noted how she personally could not fathom the loss this community has experienced expressing that FEMA is with everyone before, during and after disasters.

Vice Chair Brown brought up the denial of the \$750.00 assistance that many have experienced, in which Ms. Santan-Pollard implored these individuals to reach back out within 30 days to get a better understanding of why the application was denied.

In addition, for small businesses the Small Business Administration is a place to seek help, as well as programs available by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the Farm Services Agency for farmers large or small.

Commissioner Greene thanked the FEMA organization for being gracious and supportive to getting our communities back up, in which Ms. Santana-Pollard stated it is their privilege to serve this mission. She will be sending Mr. Wooten the requested hard copies of information to distribute to the Commissioners.

General Election Update

Chairman Walker recognized Kim Welborn, the Director of the McDowell County Board of Elections to speak on the upcoming election. Ms. Welborn began stating the election is 22 days away with early voting starting October 17th thru November 2nd. The times will be from 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. each day, with 3 Saturdays within that time period to be open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. She explained all early voting will be held at the Marion location as the Old Fort site had to close under the Election Boards decision, due to destruction caused by Helene. The Director told of the addition of more check-in stations, more curbside stations and the precinct officials scheduled for Old Fort will be used as extra staff in Marion for directing traffic, parking and keeping the lines inside. She added there will be greeters at the door to alert voters to have their photo ID out and ready.

Ms. Welborn updated one of the election day polling places was destroyed at the Old Fort number 2 location at Westland Church and told they had checked all 16 remaining polling locations and believe they will be able to keep them open with a final decision to be made by the Board of Elections. She will make the recommendation to house Old Fort 1 and 2 together on Election Day at the Old Fort Depot, mentioning having been given approval by Old Fort officials for that one day.

The director gave information on being connected currently with a fiber line through Spectrum and working with their IT department to get on a backup internet system along with a backup paper system.

Ms. Welborn told of the State Board Election passing a Resolution last week as well as passing the 2024 Disaster Recovery Act for the ability to make election modifications such as State Employees being able to work at the polls on election day without having to take leave time.

She spoke on training last week with plenty of workers present, detailing one who lost everything but declared he would be there and the absentee by mail changes being implemented for the day before the election instead of the week before.

Presently there have been 800 people ask for mailed ballots, and noted all 100 counties now accepting ballots to displaced persons, such as if someone is in Charlotte during the voting period, Mecklenberg County can transfer that ballot back to McDowell. The State has made it possible to have Multi Partisan Teams go to nursing facilities and shelters to assist voters and mentioned Ashley Wooten's suggestion for the McDowell County Transit System to offer rides for voters.

Ms. Welborn stated how blessed they were not to have any damage to the Marion office, and wants to ensure they are ready and the desire for all citizens to vote.

Chairman Walker thanked her for the hard work she and her staff do to ensure for a fair and safe election.

Debris Management

Ashley Wooten began with an update on the process for debris removal for the County. He told of the revision on who would be doing the debris removal which originally was a company called SDR that the county would have been billed for. This has moved to the Army Corps of Engineers as we have been given the opportunity for them to manage removal of our storm debris. He told of being contacted by North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) in regards to managing this for our county, stating they are activated at times of disasters to do cleanup. He noted there will not be Army vehicles that will be on our roads, but contracted by private entities who will start the process. Mr. Wooten told that he has been communicating a great deal with the Army Corps of Engineering on when to begin, and will let everyone know when this will start. He explained they will move geographically and will lean on the areas that were the hardest hit.

The County Manager briefly discussed the agreements for the operation, including how the county will be working with Army Corps to make sure inside the town, the city and many parts of the county public roads will be cleared. Mr. Wooten asked the Board to approve the debris removal agreements he provided.

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve the agreements as presented, with a second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

Chairman Walker asked what is the procedure for citizens on getting their debris ready for pickup, in which Mr. Wooten gave the steps as bringing the debris 10 to 15 ft. off the roads right of way, being within reach of their equipment. He added the County will push out social media posts and press releases with the instructions needed for public and private roads and will update details as the process gets underway.

Building Inspection Fees

Mr. Wooten asked the Board to waive building inspection fees related to Hurricane Helene recovery including electrical and structural.

Vice Chair Brown made a motion to waive inspection fees, with a second by Commissioner Greene. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

County Emergency Staffing Policy

The County Manager stated that Buncombe and Henderson counties had implemented a disaster leave for employees who work during closures and would propose our county look at a way to compensate that time as well. The request is for any hours worked 0-40 be called Disaster Leave, which would be granted equivalent to the hours worked during the event, whereas the employee would be able to use the leave for comp time or vacation time, expiring one year from the date of the event. This leave would not convert to sick leave nor does it have a payable value at the end of employment.

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve Disaster Leave as presented to County staff, with a second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

Helene Costs

Mr. Wooten stated there are no dollar amount costs and staff is working on cost estimates for the Counties own purposes. He explained under FEMA reimbursement, the state of N.C. covers the 25% non-federal share of FEMA relief. Mr. Wooten went over the categories of expenses typical to have reimbursements as:

Emergency Work:

Category A: Debris removal

Category B: Emergency protective measures

Permanent Work:

Category C: Roads and bridges

Category D: Water control facilities

Category E: Public buildings and contents

Category F: Public utilities

Category G: Parks, recreational, and other facilities

Administrative Cost:

Category Z: Administrative cost

Mr. Wooten stated generally expenses are expended up front or if work is contracted out, the contractor does the filing in which we would be reimbursed for. He explained if any requests are denied by FEMA, we will appeal and seek all expenses we have incurred. He spoke on additional State Funds that could provide for any uncompensated repayments.

Baxter Healthcare Parking Agreement

The County Manager gave details of Baxter Healthcare's employees not being able to park on site, to which representatives of the company reached out with the request to use Sandy Andrews park for the next several months for temporary parking. He explained the park inquired heavy damage due to the storm and is unusable for its purpose currently, to which Baxter's proposed to repair the park to its prior state in exchange for use of their current parking needs.

Vice Chair Brown made a motion to approve temporary parking to Baxter Healthcare with the promise of repairing the park, with a second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

Glenwood Parade Road Closure Request

Mr. Wooten made the request to the Board for the Ordinance of a road closure for the annual Glenwood Christmas Parade to be held on November 30, 2024.

Vice Chair Brown made a motion to adopt the road closure Ordinance, with a second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

NCACC Legislative Goals Voting Delegate

Mr. Wooten asked the Board for the nomination of one of the County Commissioners to be their representative at the NC Association of County Commissioners Legislative Goals Conference on November 14-15, 2024.

Vice Chair Brown made a motion to select Commissioner Greene to attend the NCACC Conference, with a second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

Budget Reports

Mr. Wooten stated there are no budget amendments at this time.

Administrative Items

Mr. Wooten presented the EMS write offs for \$33,197.33 that are non-collectible accounts, with one Nebo water system leak request for \$108.

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve all Administrative Items as presented, with a second by Commissioner Ellis. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

Tax Matters

Mr. Wooten addressed the monthly tax releases, refunds and discoveries.

Motor Vehicle Tax Refunds: \$1209.58

Releases over \$100.00: \$0

Releases under \$100.00: \$0

Discoveries: \$23,483.15

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve as presented, with a second by Commissioner Allison. By a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Animal Patrol Matter

Vice Chair Brown made a motion for clarification concerning language by the Planning Board on the County's Animal Control policy and Ordinance. He would like them to review some of the language and then present the Board with a better interpretation of certain policies, with a second by Commissioner Greene. By a vote of 5-0, the vote passed.

Citizen Comment

Ginger Webb spoke on regarding threats that had been made against FEMA workers.

Commissioner/Staff Reports

Mr. Wooten made a general concern towards the journey of recovery in our community. He specified for people who have lost homes or businesses to recognize the organizations who will work with them for their needs. He illustrated how businesses have gone back to work, impressing moving safely with the challenges ahead with the request to please bear with each other in the coming times. He told how proud he was of staff and agencies serving their best efforts during and after Helene.

Chairman Walker wanted to acknowledge his thanks to Mr. Wooten's guidance and leadership of the County during the storm as well as staff and other agencies working such long hours through the storm efforts at the EOC.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Brown moved to adjourn at 6:37 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Ellis."

Attest:

Sena Allison
Clerk to the Board

David N. Walker
Chairman

