



Madison County Government
www.madisoncountync.gov

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Madison County Government 2023 State of the County Mid-Year Report Madison County, NC – June 15, 2023

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, we are pleased to provide the Madison County 2023 mid-year report.

First and foremost, we recognize and thank the Madison County Government Administration, Department Heads, and employees that have provided for the facilitation of the "Team Madison" concept. We appreciate the confidence that has been put in this elected board as we deal with the ever-changing tasks at hand. We are also very grateful for the trust that the citizens and voters have put in us by allowing us the opportunity to serve each of you in our County.

During the first six months of this board being in office, much progress has been made. We are blessed to live in a great county, and we would like to share some of our early successes with you as we continue to work on your behalf:

1. After 2-1/2 years with a part-time Interim County Manager under the previous BOC, this Board made hiring a County Manager the top priority and quickly hired Rod Honeycutt as full-time County Manager.
2. A new HR Director who comes to us with multiple years of HR experience at NCDOT & DHHS was hired.
3. Created a County Government Leadership Round Table Team that meets every three weeks to discuss, prioritize, implement, and monitor county projects and grants programs. Currently we have over 60 such activities and commitments we are undertaking.
 - a. Establishment of a Grants Management Coordinator to support these endeavors while also seeking other state, federal, and private grant funding opportunities.
 - b. Development of an electronic calendar to alert staff of upcoming deadlines and to manage details of each project.
4. We are nearing completion of the 23-24 draft budget that includes:
 - a. No property tax increases.
 - b. At least a 3% COLA to every county employee (except the Commissioners), targeted raises for positions where retention or vacancies has been an issue &/or raised the County min wage to \$12/hr. **Note, NO (zero) compensation increase for the Commissioners.**
 - c. Eliminated unfilled and unnecessary positions and programs.
 - d. Targeted salary increases to DSS workers, Sheriff's Office deputies and detention officers, Maintenance Department, and other critical positions that have historically suffered hiring and retention issues.
 - e. Elimination of nearly \$3,000,000 in unfunded payroll liabilities by paying down large comp time and holiday balances.
 - f. Creation and funding of a budgeting mandate to pay all overtime and holiday hours as they are accrued by the e911 Communication Center Telecommunicators, Sheriff's Office Deputies, Detention Officers, and Control Tower Operators.
 - g. Increased Economic Development project funding initiatives through Article 44 money (without reducing any allocated funding to the Madison County School system).
 - h. Allocated funding to contract with a professional lobbying firm in Raleigh for County legislative, legal and funding initiatives.

- i. Increased County School System funding by \$500,000.
 - j. Increased the capital maintenance budget to address building and infrastructure issues to years address chronic funding neglect.
 - k. Established \$100,000 annual funding for Parks & Rec (for facility & field maintenance plus new programming for youth sporting and non-sporting activities).
5. Directed County Manger to work with the Parks & Rec Director, Parks & Rec Board and youth league sports team leaders to develop short-term sporting facility needs and to develop a long-term strategic plan involving the county's Parks & Rec programing and activities. Provided emergency funding for much-needed building and field improvements to chronically neglected county recreational facilities.
6. Hired a new e911 Director & several new telecommunicators (now back at full staff).
7. Hired a new Animal Shelter Manager & Animal Control Officer. Restructured the shelter staff. For the first time in the shelter's history, the county has a certified Veterinarian Technical Assistant on staff. The shelter is expanding the public hours to include Saturday walk-ins and the roll out of a web-based appointment scheduler. Much needed facility upgrades are currently underway.
8. Commitment and commencement of funding exploration, design, and construction of a new courthouse complex is underway.
9. Initiated and completed the bidding process and "design & build" for the NC 213 water connector project between Mars Hill and Marshall. We are actively pursuing the funding to do the same for sewer in the NC 213 corridor.
10. Completed the Event Venue ordinance & updated the noise ordinance that protects the rights of property owners while trying to ensure the character, tranquility & traditional rural mountain living. This will remain a work in progress as the need for tweaks become evident/improving.
11. Support, design and provide funding with the Economic Development Board in the initiation of the "Due Diligence" phase of site development for a new industrial complex on Long Branch Road in Marshall.
12. Selected and contracted for professional services to conduct a "job and pay classification study" of county departments and associated employment positions to ensure we are competitive in attracting and keeping quality professionals.
13. Continued a partnership with the Mars Hill VFW Post 5483 and aided in acquiring the necessary property for a soon to be announced veterans' park on Medical Park Drive.
14. Empowered the Tax Administrator's office to aggressively collect delinquent property taxes.
 - a. Working with our tax office staff to increase the tax collection rate to a projected 97+% this year (with a goal of 98%+).
 - b. Active identification and surplus of unwanted county properties.
15. Creation of a 9-1-1 Advisory Board.
16. Approved the purchase of a new 9-1-1 console system and added a fiber Viper link.

Thank you on behalf of your Board of Commissioners.

Sincerely,
Madison County Board of Commissioners

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