

# The McDowell News

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## BAXTER RESPONSE



WALT UNKS, WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL FILE

Part of Pitts Station Road in Marion that leads from U.S. Highway 221 to Baxter Manufacturing was severely damaged by floodwaters during Hurricane Helene as seen on Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024.

### McDowell County manager says workforce board, chamber, NC Works responding to Baxter layoffs

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McDowell County is working to help people who lost jobs at Baxter's manufacturing plant in North Cove.

News that 3% of the workforce, or 90 positions, have been eliminated was discussed at Monday's meeting of the McDowell County Board of Commissioners.

County Manager Ashley Wooten said the county's Workforce Development board, the McDowell Chamber of Commerce, the McDowell Economic Development Association and N.C. Works have spoken with each other and with Baxter to discuss resources available for the affected workers.

"We understand, from Baxter, from reports, that they are providing several severance packages for those employees who are affected," Wooten said. "I don't know the details of those or how long. But they have communicated they are supporting those folks."

Wooten said what he and other county officials are asking for is help and information about how those laid-off workers can be assisted. At this time, no job fairs are scheduled to be held in McDowell County,



MIKE CONLEY, MCDOWELL NEWS

McDowell Transit Director Jason Hollifield gives a report to the McDowell County Board of Commissioners on Monday.

Please see **COMMISSION**, Page A3

### Hike, Polar Plunge this Saturday

Trails association and Special Olympics holding events

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This Saturday is Valentine's Day and to celebrate the occasion, sweethearts can enjoy a hike through the beautiful

mountains of McDowell County. If you're feeling up for it, you can also jump into the waters of Lake James to raise money for the Special Olympics of McDowell County.

#### Valentine's Day hike

The McDowell Trails Association will hold a Valentine's hike on the Deep Cove Trail on Saturday morning, starting at

9:30 a.m.

"Grab your sweetheart and join us for this hike!" reads an announcement from the trails association. "Our second hike of 2026 will be the Deep Cove Trail, one of the newer trails in the Old Fort Gateway Trail System."

The hike is moderate to strenuous with some steep climbs

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MCDOWELL TRAILS ASSOCIATION

The McDowell Trails Association will hold a Valentine's hike on the Deep Cove Trail on Saturday.

How to create a calming 'nature nook' with indoor plants. **LIVELY, D1**

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#### Weather

Clouds and sun  
**High 53**  
**Low 28**  
Forecast • A6

