

Monroe Commission Hears from WVU Professor

The Monroe County Commission met on March 4, 2015 at the Courthouse. Commission President Clyde Gum, Jr., called the meeting order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Through the West Virginia Association of Counties, the County Commission recently posed a question to Professor Robert Bastress, Constitutional Law Professor at WVU. The County Commission asked if they could stop the Mountain Valley Pipeline from coming through Monroe County by ordinance or any other means. Professor Bastress responded "I assume the natural gas pipeline in question is an interstate line. If it is, the utility will have eminent domain authority under the Natural Gas Act once FERC grants a certificate for the project. That would preempt any local effort to stop the pipeline under state law or local ordinance".

Commissioners asked the County Clerk to prepare a letter and send to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and to Mountain Valley Pipeline requesting they hold a second Open House to provide those residents that will be affected by the alternate route of the pipeline an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the project. Mountain Valley Pipeline has advised they wouldn't be holding a second Open House like they did at Lindside when they announced the original route of the pipeline.

At the request of the Red Sulphur Public Service District, the County Commission agreed to sponsor a grant application to the Small Cities Block Grant Program seeking funding to extend public water to Addair Road.

Wayne Coyle, representing Washington National Insurance Company, met with the County Commission to explain the supplementary insurance policies his company offers to employees. Commissioners authorized Mr. Coyle to come back at a later date and meet with employees to show them what he can offer them.

The Commission appointed Tom Rickman to the Planning Commission, reviewed the meeting minutes of the Gap Mills Public Service District and accepted a proposal from Avaya to install a new phone system in the Courthouse. Replacement parts for the existing system are almost obsolete and the new system will only cost the county \$24.00 per month more than the existing system.

Tim Wilson, 911 Director, appeared before the County Commission providing an update of the activities of the 911 Center. Wilson said the center received 111 law enforcement calls for the month of February, 155 EMS calls and 34 fire related calls. He then provided the Wrecker Response Report. He said Galford's received six calls; Neel's and Clarkson's each received two calls and Lee's received one call. Wilson said he and Commissioner Gum are planning to meet with three different architects and then will decide who will design the expansion of the 911 Center.

The County Commission approved a proposal from Greener Pastures, Inc. to service the 911 Center generator and at the request of Wilson, changed the name of Sunset View Cemetery Road to Sunset View Road. Wilson said he

received complaints from some of the residents who live along this road stating that the current road name was too long to fit in an address box. He said these residents suggested the new road name.

Planning Commission Chairman Garry Taylor reported that the Planning Commission has finished the Cell Tower Ordinance but a couple of their members wanted to review it once more prior to submitting it to County Commission for their action. It was also discussed about the County Commission hiring a part time secretary for the Planning Commission.

The Commission, in accordance with WV Code, established Rules and Procedures for meetings and for providing notification of regular, special or emergency meetings and the availability of agendas. These rules and procedures published elsewhere in this newspaper.

Commissioner spent the afternoon hearing budget requests from various Courthouse offices and agreed to meet again on March 11th at 9:00 am to continue working on the budget.

The County Commission now meets twice a month in regular session. The meetings are held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. The meeting on the first Wednesday begins at 9:00 am and the meeting on the third Wednesday begins at 5:30. To be placed on the agenda for one of these meetings, please call 772-3096.