

## Monroe Commission Holds July Meeting

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on July 11, 2012. This meeting date was changed due to the Commission's regular meeting date falling on Independence Day. Commission President Shane Ashley called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

The County Commission discussed storm recovery efforts with Tim Wilson, Acting 911 Director. Wilson said the power in most of the county has been restored except for a few areas. The Commission relayed their appreciation to Wilson and the 911 staff and to everyone that stepped forward to lend a hand after the severe storm passed through the county on June 29<sup>th</sup>. "We are certainly appreciative of the assistance we received from everyone", said Shane Ashley, President of the Monroe County Commission, "we don't want to try and name everyone that assisted for fear we may miss someone, but if you helped in anyway in the storm recovery efforts, we thank you", said Ashley.

Federal Emergency Management Agency officials were in the county last Wednesday and met with the County Commission to gather information on how much damage was caused by the storm that passed through the county on June 29<sup>th</sup>. These officials said FEMA would be reimbursing county and town government entities for expenditures they incurred as a result of the storm. Officials also stated that FEMA would not be reimbursing those who lost food as a result of the power outage. Those individuals who suffered damage to their home or property, which is not covered under their homeowner's policy, should report such damage immediately to the 911 Center at 772-3912. It hasn't been determined if FEMA will be reimbursing for any damage not covered by insurance but the county wants to have this info available in the event they do.

Gregory L. McCann, National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator Assistant for the WV Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management was in the county today at the request of the County Commission. McCann and Tammy Fox, the county's Floodplain Coordinator, visited a couple sites in the county that are prone to flooding. McCann provided the Commission with a report of their findings along with a new map of the Town of Peterstown depicting the flood zone area within the town limits.

Helen Graves, Tourism Director for the county, appeared before the County Commission to provide an update on tourism activities. She said the Tourism Bureau has been approved for two grants; one will be used to redesign the tourism website and the other one will be used to print the county brochure. Ms. Graves also told Commissioners that two different tour groups were scheduled to visit Monroe County in the near future.

Planning Commission members Rod Graves, Rocky Parsons and Jim Menard met with the County Commission. Mr. Parsons reported that in an effort to learn more about wind towers, the Planning Commission has invited the individual who is proposing to place a wind tower on Wolf Creek Mountain to an upcoming Planning Commission meeting. Parsons emphasized the Planning Commission is not supporting or opposing wind towers at this time, they simply want to learn more about them. Graves reported he attended a Marcellus Shale

conference last month in Morgantown. He said several topics were discussed at the conference such as economics, the environment, and social issues.

Commissioners reviewed the monthly meeting minutes for Red Sulphur and Gap Mills Public Service Districts as well as the Loss Run Report from the WV Counties Risk Pool, the county's insurance provider.

The County Commission made the following appointments; Roderick Winston and Rose Lasker to the Monroe Health Center Board of Trustees, and Susan Cobb to the Monroe Library Board of Trustees. Commissioners reappointed Bill Shiflet to the Greenbrier Valley Conservation District.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that the WV Division of Culture and History has approved a Historic Preservation Grant for the county in the amount of \$30,700.00. These funds will be used to help pay for the Courthouse roof replacement. Donald J. Evans, County Clerk, wrote the grant on behalf of the county.

Commissioners tabled a request to change the name of a road now called John Dowdy road to Becky Jane Hollar road. The Commission received a petition containing several signatures requesting this road name change. Commissioners want to confer with Tim Wilson, Acting 911 Director, before acting on this request.

Elora McKenzie and Joyce Dobbins from the Ballengee area appeared before the County Commission. Ms. McKenzie said a neighborhood organization consisting of about 70 members has been formed in the Ballengee community and they want to become the lead organization for emergency situations for both Monroe and Summers counties. Ms. McKenzie said they are willing to do what is necessary such as distributing water and providing assistance after an event like the severe storm that passed through the county a couple weeks ago. Commissioner Ashley said he would work with the county's Threat Preparedness Committee to get interested individuals in the Ballengee community trained as Certified Emergency Response Team (CERT). McKenzie said the organization has applied for their 501 (c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service. These ladies also said they have plans to develop a community park with a shelter and are presently seeking grant funds to assist with such development.

Commissioners heard a presentation from a representative from Aflac in reference to supplemental insurance for county employees.

The County Commission was notified that the Sheriff's Department's grant application seeking funds for the Prevention Resource Officer position has been approved by the Division of Criminal Justice Services. The amount of the grant is \$20,000.00. Commissioners signed the necessary paperwork associated with this grant.

Roger Griffith, Dean of the New River Community Technical College, Lewisburg Campus, appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Griffith said the One Room University that will be housed in the Agnes Campbell Roles Learning Center in the Monroe County Public Library is ready for fall enrollment. The One Room University will allow individuals to take classes in Union without the time and expense of traveling to Lewisburg. According to Griffith, several classes will be offered at the library and a number of online classes will be

available. NRCTC will provide a part time instructor and the necessary technology related to hosting high-speed Internet and video access. The Monroe County Commission has provided financial assistance to the library for extra costs they will incur as a result of housing the One Room University.

Tim Wilson, Acting 911 Director, provided Commissioners with the monthly wrecker response report for June. Wilson reported that Galford's received seven calls and Clarkson's received one. Commissioners also approved a request from Wilson to attend a grant seminar in Institute on July 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that the following organizations have been approved for a Governor's Community Participation Grant; Wayside Community Center for \$1,000.00, Monroe Animal League for \$1,500.00 and Monroe Historical Society in the amount of \$1,000.00. The County Commission signed the contracts associated with these grants.

A delegation of individuals appeared before the County Commission to relay their opposition to hydraulic fracking in the county. Some of these individuals carried signs depicting different cities, counties, states and countries where hydraulic fracking has been banned. Reading from printed material, some of these individuals spoke about the affects hydraulic fracking has had on communities. Joe Chasnoff, one of the speakers of the group, said he was preparing an ordinance called the "Monroe County Community Rights Protection from Hydraulic Fracturing Ordinance".

The County Commission addressed four estate matters; approve seven final estate settlements and 13 exonerations.

The next regular meeting of the County Commission is scheduled for August 1<sup>st</sup>.