

Monroe Commission Holds September Meeting

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on September 5, 2012 at the Courthouse. President Shane Ashley called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Layna Valentine-Brown, the Coordinator for the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) for the West Virginia Secretary of State's Office, was present to make a presentation. Ms. Valentine-Brown presented the County Commission with a check in the amount of \$7,160.00. These funds represent a grant from the Help America Vote Act and will be used to construct a handicap parking area and sidewalk at the Sweet Springs voting precinct located at the Sweet Springs Rescue Squad building. Two doors will also be replaced and handicapped accessible hardware will be added to another door. Donald J. Evans, County Clerk, wrote the grant on behalf of the County Commission.

Commissioner Bill Miller reported that a fundraiser featuring a Hee-Haw Show will be held on October 6th at 6:00 pm at James Monroe High School. Miller serves on the Boy Scout Community Service Project Fundraising Committee and these funds will be used to purchase supplies and materials when the Boy Scouts come to Monroe County to perform community service projects in July 2013.

Planning Commission members Rod Graves, Rocky Parsons, Gary Taylor and Larry Mustain appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Graves reported that an individual recently met with the Planning Commission and advised that she was representing an organization that wanted to construct a 200- bed drug rehabilitation center in Monroe County. The individual said they would have separate facilities for males and females. Graves said this individual reported that a grant has secured to help with the construction of this center. This individual said she has looked at many properties across the county but hasn't secured a location yet. Graves said this individual didn't have a business plan and had not conducted a community or infrastructure survey. It was also reported that this organization has not inquired with the appropriate state agencies about this project. The State must approve such a facility.

Gary Taylor, who met with the County Commission as part as a member of the County's Planning Commission, reported that he received word from the WV Department of Transportation advising County Route 4 will remain open. A few individuals previously petitioned the state to close this road.

Bill Turner, Executive Director of the Family Refuge Center and Amanda McDaniel, an advocate for the center, appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Turner asked Commissioners if the county could make a contribution to the center. He said the Refuge Center served 267 residents from Monroe County last year. Commissioner Ashley advised the county's budget for this year was set but the County Commission would consider their request when preparing next year's budget.

The County Commission awarded a bid to Greenbrier Electro Mechanical for the purchase and installation of a generator for the 911 Center. The generator, which is a 48 kW and will be powered by natural gas, will run the

entire 911 Center in the event of a power outage. The county previously had a generator for the center but it wasn't quite big enough to run the entire center. Others submitting bids were Greenbrier Technology, Greener Pastures and Duane Miller Construction Services.

T.J. Meadows, representing American Electric Power, appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Meadows provided information on the severe storm that passed through the county on June 29th. He said AEP, in its coverage area, had to replace 1,500 poles and 100 distribution stations. Meadows said 400 circuit breakers were knocked out and 100 transmission lines were damaged. He said AEP's total damage was 92 million.

The County Commission accepted a bid from a company called CODE RED. CODE RED provides Reverse 911 Systems for government entities. This system will allow officials to send a pre-recorded message to everyone in the county that has a landline warning of an emergency or weather related event. Residents can also elect to be notified by cell phone, text message or email. The system has the ability to notify everyone in the entire county that has a phone or just a particular section of the county that may be experiencing such emergency or weather event. More information on this system will be provided in this newspaper in the very near future.

Tim Wilson, Interim 911 Director, appeared before the County Commission. Wilson provided the monthly Wrecker Response Report; Galford's received 8 calls, Neel's and Clarkson received two calls each and Gore's received one call. Mr. Wilson then presented Commissioners with a proposal to make the lower level of the 911 Center handicap accessible. The County Commission voted to solicit bids on this project. Bids will be accepted until October 2nd by 4:00 pm and bid specification can be picked up at the County Clerk's Office. Wilson said he was still working on getting an emergency radio communications tower installed in the Gap Mills area and has ordered some supplies approved for payment in a Mass Mitigation grant from the Department of Homeland Security. Approved in the grant were cots and blankets, to be used in an emergency shelter when the county has to designate such shelter, a box trailer that will be used to store the cots and blankets and used to haul these and other items to specific locations throughout the county when needed and Interoperable radios. Wilson advised Commissioners he plans to attend the upcoming 911 Council meeting, which will be held in Rainelle.

Brenda Reynolds appeared before the County Commission and provided some various forms she prepared that can be used in a county emergency. With these forms, the county can document the resources, personnel and vendors that are available and other important data needed during an emergency. Ms. Reynolds, who also serves on the Local Emergency Planning Commission, said the forms could be put on a thumb drive and shared with whomever would need them.

The County Commission approved the poll workers for the upcoming November 6th General Election and approved donating one of the county's police cruisers that has been taken out of service, to the Town of Alderson.

The County Commission signed an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Town of Peterstown. This agreement calls for the Town of Peterstown to be covered under the county's Floodplain Ordinance.

The Prosecuting Attorney Office has been approved for a Governor's Community Participation Grant in the amount of \$1,500.00 to purchase a scanner for the office. Commissioners authorized Shane Ashley, President of the County Commission, to sign the grant contract on behalf of the county.

A delegation of individuals from the Sweet Springs area met before the County Commission. These individuals asked for the Commission's support in getting several dilapidated buildings torn down on property owned by the State of WV. This property is adjacent to the Old Sweet Springs Resort. These individuals said the buildings are a safety hazard and reported two cows died due to getting inside one of the buildings and not able to get out. They said the Department of Agriculture said the state has the money appropriated to tear the buildings down but were awaiting word from the county's Historic Landmark Commission to issue an opinion on the proposal to tear down the buildings. It was also reported that many of these buildings contained asbestos. The County Commission agreed to forward a letter to the Department of Agriculture and to the Historic Landmark Commission advising these buildings are indeed a safety hazard and should be torn down. These individuals also filed a complaint this day under the county's Unsafe and Unsanitary Structure and Refuse Ordinance.

The County Commission met with Lorraine Jones. Ms. Jones has agreed to serve as the county's liaison with the American Red Cross.

A total of twenty final estate settlements were approved, as were fifteen exonerations.

The County Commission will meet again in regular session on October 3, 2012 at the Courthouse. Those needing to be placed on the Commission's agenda should call 772-3096.