

Monroe County Commission Meets

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on Wednesday, October 21, 2015. President Clyde Gum called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

President Gum advised that Hoke Brother's Construction has completed the foundation for the Solid Waste Authority's future recycling building. This building will be located at the HAM Landfill. The landfill has provided the Solid Waste Authority a long term lease on the piece of property on which this building will sit. This project was funded with a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to the County Commission. The Solid Waste Authority has also applied for grant funding with the DEP to actually construct the building. Grant awards should be announced later this fall.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that representatives from Gigabeam visited the Courthouse today. Gigabeam is a company from Rich Creek, VA that provides wireless internet service. The County Commission previously granted them permission to install their equipment on the county's communication tower on Bickett Knob. At this particular meeting, the County Commission granted Gigabeam permission to install a receiver on the roof of the Courthouse on an existing tower. Gigabeam representatives said this receiver will assist with providing internet service to the residents in the Union area.

The County Clerk advised that WVCORP, the county's insurance provider, has sent the county a check for the Process Server's vehicle that was totaled.

The County Commission reviewed a letter from Bob Williams, Chairman of the Union Rescue Board of Directors. In his letter, Mr. Williams urged the County Commission to adopt an ordinance "to impose upon and collect from the users of emergency ambulance service within Monroe County a special fee" as provided in WV Code 7-15-17. Mr. Williams said the services provided by Union Rescue have been devastated by reductions in insurance payments, new health care rate systems and contraction and consolidation of services by local health facilities. He went on to say the board is facing depleting revenues, a slow and steady drain of their resources, money that is set aside for maintenance and repairs, so much so that if they don't get some relief they will be forced to drastically reduce their operations within the next year. Donald J. Evans, County Clerk, advised the Commission that Jerry Brown, representing Peterstown Fire and Rescue, called him and said has been made aware of Union's proposal and the Peterstown Fire and Rescue Board of Directors recently met and voted to oppose the County Commission implementing such an ordinance and a placing a fee on the residents of the county to provide emergency medical services. Commissioner Ashley suggested the County Commission appoint a committee consisting of residents from the different areas of the county and ask them to make a recommendation to the County Commission as to how they feel emergency medical services should be provided, going forward the next ten years. Commissioners Gum and Miller agreed with this suggestion.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that the annual Sheriff's Delinquent Tax Sale is scheduled for November 6, 2015 beginning at 10:00 and The Bank of Pendleton County plans to sell the Sweet Springs Resort property, by auction, on November 12, 2015 at 11:00 am.

The County Commission voted to rent the former CASE building, located at the corner of US Rt. 219 and Main Street in Union. The rent amount is \$650.00 per month and includes all

utilities. Available space includes the downstairs conference room and the upstairs area. This building will be used to house the newly formed Drug Court and the Probation Officer's office. The County Commission is required to provide office space for these offices and there is no vacant space in the Courthouse.

The County Commission recently advertised for bids to expand the county's 911 Center. Two bids were submitted, one from Danhill Construction from Gauley Bridge in the amount of \$191,121. The other bid was submitted by DCI/Shires in the amount of \$174,000. The County Commission voted to reject both bids as they were more than was anticipated. This project has currently been put on hold.

The Commission accept a proposal from Aetna to provide group health insurance for county employees. The county previously had Coventry as the provider but Aetna recently bought Coventry.

At the request of the County Clerk, the Commission agreed to purchase two electronic poll books at \$1,500 each, to be used during Early Voting. These books, which are similar to a tablet or iPad, will eliminate the County Clerk's Office from having to print a precinct book for each precinct in the county. In addition, if a voter happens to go to the wrong precinct to vote, the poll workers will have the ability to search his or her name and advise them of their correct precinct. A final feature is the book is that it has software that the Clerk's Office can download into the current voting system and provide an update of everyone that voted in a particular election. The Clerk's Office presently has to scan each poll slip in order to update the voter's history and this is very time consuming task.

A total of five estate settlements were approved and the monthly financial report was reviewed.

The County Commission will meet again in regular session on November 4, 2015 beginning at 9:00 am at the Courthouse. To be placed on the Commission's agenda, please call 772-3096.