

Monroe Commission Hears Requests to Protect Water

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at the Courthouse.

Jerry Pitzer, board member for the Red Sulphur Public Service District, appeared before the Commission. Mr. Pitzer asked the County Commission to help protect the district's main water source from the proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline. Pitzer said the proposed route of the pipeline comes with 1200-1500 feet of their main spring, the Coburn Spring. He said the district produces 300,000 gallons of water a day serving 4,000 customers. Pitzer said the water from the Coburn spring is of such high quality that it only takes about 1/10 of the treatment required by their counterparts that draw from open sources such as rivers and lakes to produce the same amount of water. The County Commission unanimously agreed to speak to the Prosecuting Attorney to see what options they have in protecting the Coburn Spring as well as other water sources throughout the county.

Commissioners approved a payment in the amount of \$23,078 to Brewer and Company of WV, the company installing the Sprinkler System in the Courthouse and approved Change Order #3 for this project.

Tim Wilson, 911 Director, appeared before the Commission providing an update on the 911 Center activities. Wilson provided the center's Monthly Call Report. He said the center received 147 law enforcement calls in the month of November, 181 emergency medical service calls and 44 fire calls. Wilson then provided the monthly Wrecker Response Report. He said Galford's received eight calls, Neel's received two and Wilson and Lee's each received one call. The discussion then centered around the expansion of the 911 Center. Wilson said the center is near maximum capacity and it would be much more cost effective to expand the current center versus relocating it. Commissioners authorized Wilson and Commissioner Gum to proceed with this project and speak to an architect about the expansion.

Chris Webb, Executive of the Monroe/Summers Day Report Program, appeared before the Commission. Mr. Webb said there are presently 27 participants in the Day Report Program and 13 in the Home Confinement Program. Webb said participants have completed numerous community service projects around the county. Commissioners authorized the purchase of tools for participants to use.

Commissioners reviewed the monthly meeting minutes of the Gap Mills and Red Sulphur Public Service Districts and reviewed the amended Clean Indoor Air Regulation recently adopted by the Board of Health. Commissioners asked the Clerk to distribute a copy of the regulation to each Courthouse office.

Jeff Jones, the county's Director of Emergency Management, appeared before the Commission. Jones said he was working with the National Weather Service in Blacksburg to get Monroe County "Storm Ready" certified. Jones said several things have to be done to earn this certification, one of which is to have a weather radio in each of the county's schools. Commissioners authorized the purchase of ten weather radios to put in the school and other locations where they can be monitored.

Rebekah Stone, Chief Financial Officer for the Monroe Health Center, introduced Jim Nelson, the Health Center's new CEO to the County Commission. Mr.

Nelson attended school here in the county and comes to the Health Center from the Veteran's Administration in Beckley. Commissioners welcomed Mr. Nelson and advised they looked forward to working with him.

The County Commission authorized the installation of addition receptacles in the Jury Room. Leta Gullete-Comer, Circuit Clerk, took this room on as a project and had the entire room renovated. Ms. Comer wrote and received grant funding to pay for such renovations. Along with the renovations, new furniture was also purchased. This room is used for jury deliberations.

Commissioners authorized the installation of deflectors on the exterior lighting at the Magistrate's Office. New lighting was recently installed for security purposes and the lighting is shining into neighboring homes.

Commissioners reviewed a letter advising the County Commission has been awarded a REAP Recycling Grant from the Department of Environmental Protection in the amount of \$48,977. These funds will be used to assist the county's Solid Waste Authority with the building foundation and concrete slabs for a new recycling center to be located at HAM Landfill. The landfill donated land to the Solid Waste Authority on which to construct this building.

The County Commission reviewed a letter from the Division of Justice and Criminal Justice Services (DJCS) providing the results of an On-Site Inspection for the county's Prevention Resource Officer grant. A representative of the DJCS conducted the inspection. Representing the county during the inspection process was Officer Mike Heller, PRO, Joetta Basile, Superintendent of Schools and Donald J. Evans, County Clerk. The DJCS advised the goals of the PRO program were being met and all required grant documentation was in order.

Commissioners reviewed a letter from a resident of Peterstown advising of reasons why the County Commission should publically oppose the Mountain Valley pipeline that is proposed to pass through the county.

The County Commission denied a written request to extend the notification period for special meetings to 72 hours. Commissioners advised they would follow WV Code, which requires the County Commission to provide 48-hour notice for special meetings.

At the request of the county's Farmland Protection Board, the County Commission adopted a resolution approving a donated Conservation Easement consisting of 220 acres located in Springfield District.

The County Commission discussed various uses and the need for renovations to the former Broyles McGuire Funeral Home building. The county recently purchased this building.

The Commission authorized the President to sign a grant agreement with the WV Courthouse Facilities Improvement Authority for a grant the county was recently awarded. The grant, in the amount of \$100,000 will be used to complete Phase II of the installation of sprinkler system in the Courthouse. The county must provide a 25,000 match of the grant. Robert Hazelwood of Thrasher and Commissioner Clyde Gum prepared the grant application. Commissioner Gum also serves as Project Manager for this project.

At the request of the county's Farmland Protection Board, Commissioners adopted a resolution approving the donation of a conservation easement consisting of 220 acres in Springfield District.

County Clerk Donald J. Evans presented Commissioners with a summary of the expenses associated with the November 4, 2014 General Election. Total cost for this election was approximately \$38,000.

Commissioners reviewed a list of improvements the Union Volunteer Fire Department plans to make to the Magistrate's Office. The county rents office space from the fire department for the Magistrate's Office.

Budget reports for each Courthouse offices were reviewed and a request to open a Video Lottery establishment to be located beside the Mexican restaurant approximately two miles from Peterstown in US Rt. 219. The Commission agreed to prepare a letter stating there was no zoning ordinances or restrictions in the location where the business is proposed but the state Alcohol Beverage Control Commission is the government entity that approves or denies video lottery requests.

Commissioners approved seven final estate settlements and three exonerations. The County Commission's next regular session meeting is January 7, 2015. If you need to be placed on the Commission's agenda please call 772-3096.