

Monroe Commission Holds December Meeting

The Monroe County Commission met on December 7, 2011 for their regular monthly meeting. Commissioner Shane Ashley called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer.

The County Commission presented a plaque to Otis Pence, former director of the Monroe County Council on Aging, in appreciation of 34 years of dedicated service to the Monroe County Council on Aging.

Monthly meeting minutes for the Red Sulphur and Gap Mills Public Service Districts were reviewed, as were the minutes for the annual meeting of the county's Building Commission.

The County Commission approved resolutions in reference to three Governor's Community Participation grants. The organizations receiving the grants are the Monroe Historical Society, Waiteville Community Center and the Monroe Animal League. Commissioners also agreed to use the grants funds from a Governor's Community Participation grant awarded to the county to pave the gravel parking lot adjacent to the Courthouse.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that he prepared a Court Security Grant application and it has been submitted to the Division of Criminal Justice Services. The County Commission is seeking funding to purchase "Prisoner's Benches" for Circuit and Magistrate courts. Those individuals who are incarcerated and are waiting to appear in court can be secured to these benches enabling court bailiffs to monitor several individuals in one location.

Mark Betler of Union met with the County Commission and told Commissioners that he would like to see the county's Solid Waste Authority be more proactive with recycling. Betler also said the schools should implement a recycling program.

Commissioners met with representatives from a company called Windustry. Dan Hale, spokesman, said Windustry is a non-profit organization located in Minnesota, whose mission is to support the development of small community owned wind projects. Hale said these types of projects are good for economic development due to local attorneys, accountants and engineers are hired in the development of such a project. Hale said that wind is clean, renewable, and economical and competes head to head with other new energy sources. He said Windustry has received a grant from USDA to assist with three wind projects. One of the projects is in Wisconsin; another in Montana and the third one is a site on Wolf Creek Mountain here in Monroe County. Hale said a meteorological test tower has been installed on this property to measure the wind speed. The wind speed must be documented for a minimum of one year to see if wind speed is adequate for installing wind towers. Hale said if the project comes to fruition, there will be two to six wind towers at this site.

Dr. Craig Mohler, County Champion for the Boy Scout Community Service Project met with the County Commission and provided them an update of the project. Dr. Mohler said he has spoke to several organizations that plan on submitting an application for a community service project. He stressed the importance of getting these committee appointments made. The County

Commission agreed to meet in special session on December 29, 2011 at 7:00 pm at the Lindsie Methodist Church Family Life Center for the purpose of making these appointments. The Commission encourages the public to attend this meeting and get involved with this most worthwhile project. Any questions can be directed to Dr. Mohler at 772-3016.

Peter Delcippo, a resident of the Walnut Springs development, appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Delcippo said he attended the meeting in hopes of getting the County Commission's support in getting the Division of Highways to take the road leading to his house from the Bud Ridge Road into the state highway system. Mr. Delcippo said he recently spoke with Division of Highways officials and they advised him there was no money in the budget to take this road into their system at the present time. Mr. Delcippo said he is a veteran and he and his wife are disabled and they have concerns about emergency service responders, law enforcement or the fire department getting to his home if needed during the winter months. The County Commission advised Mr. Delcippo that the Division of Highways has the sole authority in the matter of bringing roads into the system.

The Commission reviewed a letter from Magistrates Kevin Miller and Nancy Crews advising there was a leak in the Magistrate Office ceiling. Commissioner Ashley said he would speak to representatives of the Union Volunteer Fire Department about this leak since they own the building.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that, per their previous request, he has submitted an additional claim with the county's insurance company for additional damage to equipment in the 911 Center. The county originally filed a claim but when technicians were replacing the old equipment, they found additional damage. This damage was caused from a storm in the area several months ago.

Shannon Parker and Melissa Boggs, representing the Monroe Day Care, appeared before Commissioners for the purpose of providing Commissioners with an update of the Day Care Center. Ms. Parker and Ms. Boggs are members of the Day Care Board of Directors. Ms. Parker advised that the center closed back in June and has since reopened with a new director and board members. She said the center now has 61 children enrolled versus 27 when the facility closed.

The County Clerk advised the county still hasn't received the appropriation from the West Virginia Senate for the purpose of paying the salary of the Prevention Resource Office. Earlier this year, the Legislature appropriated \$30,000.00 for the PRO position, \$15,000.00 from the House of Delegates and \$15,000.00 from the Senate. The County received the House's portion but not the Senate's. Senator Ron Miller has confirmed to the Commission that the funding was approved by the Senate but didn't know what the delay is. Commissioners asked the Clerk to prepare a letter to the Governor asking for his assistance in obtaining these funds.

Commissioners approved a Travel Policy for county employees and voted to use a Governor's Community Participation to pave the gravel parking lot adjacent to the Courthouse.

Bruce Power, 911 Director, appeared the County Commission providing an update on the activities of the 911 Center and the Office of Emergency Management. Power said he just received word that a grant application he prepared and submitted to the Division of Homeland Security has been approved. The grant award amount is \$13,700.00 and will be used to purchase cots, a utility box trailer and three IRP radios. The county's Office of Emergency Management will utilize this equipment in the event of a county emergency. Commissioners expressed their appreciation to Power for writing and submitting this grant. At the County Commission's request, Power said he has researched several Reverse 911 Systems. Reverse 911 is a public safety communications system used by public safety organizations throughout the United States to communicate with groups of people in a defined geographic area. The system uses a database of telephone numbers that are used to deliver recorded emergency notifications to a selected set of telephone service subscribers in the event of a county emergency. Commissioners asked Power to have two of these companies attend a County Commission meeting to provide a demonstration of their respective systems.

Power provided the wrecker response report for the month of November and advised US Cellular was planning to install a new tower near the Summers and Monroe border near Pence Springs.

The County Commission voted to relocate the Gap Mills voting precinct location from the Gap Mills Community Center to the new Union Volunteer Fire Department Substation located on Rt. 3 in Gap Mills. The new location is handicap accessible and the relocation will be effective with the May 8, 2012 Primary Election.

A request from Sheriff Mike Gravely to purchase a new vehicle for the Sheriff's Department was approved. The Sheriff said he planned to transfer money from his salary line item of his budget to the vehicle purchase line item. The Sheriff said the funds were already in his budget because he didn't replace the position left vacant after the passing of Deputy Joe Galuszek. The Sheriff said he would be purchasing a 2012 Ford Expedition off of the State of West Virginia's vehicle contract at a cost of \$27,196.00.

Roger Griffith, Dean of New River Community and Technical College Greenbrier Valley Campus, appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Griffith said he recently was contacted by the personnel at the Monroe Public Library about NRCTC offering college courses at the library. He said the college was interested in this proposal. Mr. Griffith said there were several students from Monroe County presently attending the Greenbrier Valley Campus. He said he recently spoke to a Monroe County employer who expressed an interest in their employees taking certain college classes to help them advance in their jobs. Commissioners felt there were individuals who would be interested in taking college classes but simply can't get to Lewisburg but could possibly get to Union. Commissioner Gum said he would like to see more college classes offered at the high school. Mr. Griffith said the college offers numerous classes and they would try and hire local teachers to teach the classes. He said he knew that there was a possibility of gas drilling commencing in Monroe County and the college now

offers a gas well technician class. He said would return to a County Commission meeting in February or March and for the Commission to be thinking about which classes would be of most benefit to the residents of the county.

Delegate Tom Campbell and Senator Ron Miller appeared before the County Commission to provide an update on Marcellus Shale legislation. Delegate Campbell, who serves on the Marcellus Shale committee, said such committee has prepared a bill in reference to Marcellus Shale drilling and has sent such bill to the Governor for his review.

Planning Commission members Rod Graves, Jim Menard and Rocky Parsons, appeared before the County Commission and provided an update of the Planning Commission. Mr. Graves provided an update of a Marcellus Shale drilling summit he recently attended at Penn State University.

Commissioner Gum provided an update on the condition of the county owned building in which the offices of the Prosecuting Attorney and Probation Offices are located. The Family Resource Network occupies the bottom floor of this building. Commissioner Gum said the small flat portion of the roof needs replaced and the door needs replaced. Commissioners authorized Commissioner Gum to seek estimates on these repairs.

Commissioners approved eight final estate settlements and four exonerations. The County Commission will hold their first meeting of the New Year on January 4, 2012.