

Monroe Commission Holds April Meeting

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on April 3, 2013 at the Courthouse. President Shane Ashley called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

David Langford from American Electric Power appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Langford is the county's contact with AEP during a major power outage. Commissioners relayed how important it was to have a personal contact to speak with when there is an outage in the AEP service area.

Commissioners asked the Clerk to contact FED EX and the United States Parcel Service (UPS) to see if either was interested in placing a drop box near the entrance of the Courthouse. Courthouse offices as well as others could utilize this drop in the town.

At the request of Helen Graves, Tourism Director for the county, and Dr. Craig Mohler, the County Commission designating County Route 17, that runs through Monroe County from the Giles County, VA border to the Craig County, VA border, as a Whistle Stop Byway. In addition, Commissioners designated County Rt. 15/5 from it's junction with County Route 17, approximately 1.5 miles southwest of Waiteville, to the point where it rejoins County Route 17 within the village of Waiteville be designated as Trestle Grove Scoop Loop Backway. Mohler reported the State of WV typically makes these types of designations but the particular program that does so has run out of funding. Ms. Graves and Mr. Mohler felt it would be the county's advantage to have these designations made by the county.

Acting on a request from Doris Taylor, representing the county's Community Educational Outreach Services (CEOS), the County Commission declared the week of May 19-25 as Community Educational Outreach Services week in Monroe County.

Donald J. Evans, County Clerk advised the County Commission that the county's Court Security Grant application has been completed and submitted. The County Commission is seeking funds to improve security measures in Circuit and Magistrate Court, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and at the Courthouse. Total funds requested were approximately \$160,000.00.

The County Commission reviewed a letter from Paul Mattox, Secretary of Transportation, advising the Commission's request for the state to take the Fountain Springs Golf Course road into the state road system has been denied. Mr. Mattox said the state presently wasn't taking any new roads into the system.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that he had received word from Division of Highway officials that they planned to tear down a building in Ballard that was previously used as a post office. The County Commission had received complaints about this building causing a traffic hazard. The building sits on the Division of Highway's right of way.

The County Commission reviewed the monthly meeting minutes of the Gap Mills Public Service District and discussed the need to replace the Animal Control Officer's vehicle. The County Commission agreed to look for a used pickup truck instead of a sport utility vehicle, which is presently used.

Commissioners reviewed a letter from the State Auditor's Office advising that a conditional approval has been issued for the county's 2013-2014 budget. The

Clerk said there was some information omitted from a specific line item in the budget and his office has already submitted the required information. Commissioners then met with each elected official and went over their budgets for the upcoming fiscal year.

The County Clerk advised the grant application seeking funds to maintain the Prevention Resource Officer position at James Monroe High School and add a second officer to be split between Peterstown Middle and Elementary Schools, has been submitted to the Division of Criminal Justice and Community Services. The Clerk told Commissioners that Joetta Basile, Superintendent of Schools, was instrumental in getting this application prepared.

Commissioners discussed the former Moody's Mobile Home Park in Peterstown. This park was ordered closed earlier this year by the Circuit Court of Monroe County for repeated instances of non-compliance of state mobile home regulations. It was reported that the majority of the mobile homes have been relocated.

The Clerk advised the Courthouse front door was recently damaged by an individual who was in custody and had just appeared in court. Prosecuting Attorney Justin St. Clair said charges would be filed against the individual. Duane Miller Construction Services has temporarily repaired the door and the original installer of the door will be contacted to replace the door panel.

The County Commission reviewed a letter from Melissa Smith, Executive Director of the WV Courthouse Facilities Improvement Authority. Ms. Smith advised (WFCFIA) is funding a Comprehensive Needs Assessment, at no cost to the counties, for all 55 county Courthouses. Siling Associates is the architectural firm chosen by the WVCFIA to conduct these assessments. Ms. Smith advised Siling would be in Union to conduct the assessment of the Monroe Courthouse. The purpose of the assessments is to help counties identify needed repairs and having this info will assist when the county applies for WVCFIA grant funds in the future.

Tim Wilson, 911 Director, appeared before the County Commission and provided an update of 911 Center activities. Wilson provided the monthly Wrecker Response Report. He said Galford's received six calls, Offenberger's three, Clarkson and Neel's received one call each and Dunbar and Wilson's each received one call. Wilson commended the volunteer fire departments from Ballard, Peterstown and Lindside for their response to the fire at McBride's store in Ballard last week. Wilson also commended law enforcement for their assistance on this call.

County Clerk Donald J. Evans advised Commissioners that he just had the pages in the four oldest deed books in the record room, dating back to 1799, encapsulated. In addition, the binders on all four books were replaced. Encapsulation is now the preferred method for preservation of records. The project was funded by a grant from the WV Records Management and Preservation Board, through the WV Division of Culture and History. The amount of the grant was \$4,800.00 and the work was performed onsite by R.D. Peeler & Sons from Sherman, TX. R.D. Peeler and Sons is one of the country's leading preservation companies and travels throughout the United States preserving documents at County Courthouses.

The Clerk reminded Commissioners they need to schedule a special meeting for April 16th for the purpose of laying the levy rates for the upcoming fiscal year.

The County Commission voted to advertise for bids for snow removal from around the Courthouse, other county buildings and the sidewalks. This bid will be for snow removal beginning in winter of 2013-2014.

There was a discussion on the use of the Shirley Neel Learning Center by individuals and various organizations. This center is located within the Monroe Health Center.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:50 pm. The County Commission will meet again in regular session on May 1st. If you would like to be placed on the agenda, please call 772-3096.

