

Monroe Commission Holds April Meeting

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on April 4, 2012 at the Courthouse. Commission President Shane Ashley called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

The 8th grade students from Mountain View School were present for this meeting in honor of County Government Month. Commission President Shane Ashley explained the duties and responsibilities of County Commissioners. The students observed the morning session of the meeting and participated by asking a lot of good questions.

Rod Graves, Rocky Parsons and Jim Menard, members of the county's Planning Commission, appeared before the County Commission and provided them with an update of the activities of the Planning Commission. It was agreed that a meeting needed to be scheduled to develop administrative procedures for the Unsafe and Unsanitary Structures and Refuse Ordinance recently passed by the County Commission. The ordinance will go in effective May 2, 2012. A meeting place for the Planning Commission was also discussed, as was the possibility of a couple individuals coming to speak to the County Commission about wind turbines.

The County Commission voted to enter into a service agreement with Total Tech, Inc. to service the Courthouse air conditioner / heater units on an annual basis. Total Tech installed these units in Courthouse offices.

At the request of Doris Taylor and Phyllis Baker, members of the Community Educational Outreach Service (CEOS) organization, the County Commission adopted a resolution declaring May 13-19 as Community Educational Outreach Service Week in Monroe County.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that the grant application to the Historic Preservation Office has been submitted. The County Commission is seeking grant funds to go toward the cost of replacing the Courthouse roof. The awarding of these grants will be announced after July 1st.

The County Commission reviewed a letter from the State Auditor's Office advising the county's 2012-2013 has been approved and the meeting minutes for the Gap Mills and Red Sulphur Public Service Districts were reviewed.

Mike Will, the Executive Director of the Monroe County Council on Aging, appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Will spoke to the County Commission about the county using the Lindside Senior Center as a voting precinct on Election Day and the Senior Center remaining open and conducting normal business. He said he had concerns with people coming and going through the center even though the voting precinct is located in a separate room. County Clerk Donald J. Evans said he had asked the Secretary of State about this arrangement years ago and the state advised as long as Senior Center operations didn't interfere with voting, the center could remain open. Will went on to say that he thought he would close the Lindside Center on Election Day just to eliminate any potential problems and asked the County Commission if they had any problem with such closing. Commissioners advised they did not.

Members of the all-volunteer Monroe County Animal League appeared before the County Commission for the purpose of providing an update of the activities of the Animal League. Angie Chernauskas, a member of the league, reported that since 1999 the Animal League has transported 3,727 puppies to a no-kill shelter in Massachusetts. The Animal League has rescued and or adopted locally and via the Internet 558 animals and 1,373 dogs and cats have been spayed or neutered through the Animal League. The league advised Commissioners that their 2nd annual Canine Classic will be held at Fountain Springs Golf on May 5th with registration beginning at 12:30 and the tournament starting at 1:30. The County Commission relayed their appreciation to the members of the Animal League for all they do to find homes for the many dogs here in the county.

The Commission adopted resolutions supporting the Waiteville Community Center in their efforts to obtain a grant from the Governor's Community Participation Program for the purpose of making improvements to the community center.

The County Clerk advised the County Commission that Dr. Ron Ripley approached him about having an historical marker installed on the Courthouse lawn in honor of John Hutchinson. Mr. Hutchinson was the first County Clerk in Monroe County and was a leader in the movement to create Monroe County from Greenbrier County. Hutchinson also lobbied a bill through the Virginia General Assembly to establish the Town of Union. The marker cost approximately \$2,500.00. Commissioners took no action on this request at this time.

The Clerk also advised Commissioners that the Citizens Conservation Corps has extended the deadline to submit a service project for the Boy Scouts Community Service Project till the end of April. For more information please contact the Boy Scout Project County Champion Craig Mohler at 772-3016.

Commissioner Gum reported that he recently traveled to the Secretary of State's Office to pick up a check for a grant from the Help America Vote Act. This grant, in the amount of \$7,600.00, is to be used to construct a sidewalk at the new polling place in Gap Mills located at the Union Volunteer Fire Department Substation. Donald J. Evans, County Clerk, prepared the grant application.

The County Commission discussed a couple items with Bruce Power, 911 Director. There was a discussion on where to place a generator recently obtained from a Homeland Security Grant. Mr. Power prepared this grant application. Power also advised Commissioners that Code Red, a company that provides Reverse 911, has dropped their price to provide this service from their original quote. Greenbrier County and Giles County, VA both use Code Red and Power said both counties seem to be pleased with their service. The monthly wrecker call reported was provided by Power. In the month of March Galford's received five wrecker calls and Neel's, Offenberger's, Wilson's and Dunbar's each received one call.

A total of nine final estate settlements were approved, as were three exonerations.

The next County Commission meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2012.