

## Monroe Commission Holds May Meeting

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on May 6, 2009 at the Courthouse. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer.

Dale McCutcheon, representing the Monroe Health Center, appeared before Commission concerning a dilapidated house near Peterstown. Mr. McCutcheon said he had received several calls complaining about the condition of the house and neighbors felt the house was becoming a home for rodents. McCutcheon said the house could indeed be a public health hazard. The house in question is unoccupied and caught fire some time back. The majority of the structure is still standing. Commissioners asked the Prosecuting Attorney to research the legal remedies for this matter and to proceed with any means necessary to eliminate this potential hazard.

Commissioners met with the county's fire chiefs concerning the proposed use for the county's John Deere Gator Utility Vehicle. Richard Miller, Chief of the Lindside Volunteer Fire Department, previously presented Commissioners with a proposal to equip the county owned Gator with the necessary equipment and supplies to respond to calls in mountainous terrain.

Miller said his department would pay for all the equipment and they would be willing to store the vehicle at the Lindside Fire Department. Miller made it clear that the vehicle could be used by any emergency service responders in the county. Commissioners told the chiefs they had received a couple complaints from members of a particular department and they wanted to make sure all departments supported Miller's proposal before they acted on it. All the chiefs in attendance said they supported the proposal as did Kelly Crosier, Director of the Medic One Program. Commissioners unanimously voted for Miller to proceed with the original proposal. All fire departments were represented at the meeting except for the Ballard Fire Department.

Members of the Mountain Heritage Quilt Guild met with Commissioners concerning the Bicentennial Quilt hanging in the Courthouse hallway. Members asked permission to remove the quilt on an annual basis for cleaning. They also suggested modifying the case the quilt hangs in and place a screen in the top in order for the quilt to get some air. Commissioners granted the request for the annual cleaning and asked members to work with Duane Miller Construction Services on the installation of the screen. Duane Miller Construction Services constructed the original display case.

Marion Shiflett appeared before Commissioners and provided a very informative presentation on natural gas drilling. Commissioners suggested that Mr. Shiflett consider giving this presentation to various groups and organizations in the county to better inform the residents of this natural gas drilling process.

Frankie Campbell of Gap Mills appeared before Commissioners a second time concerning the lack of cellular phone service in the Gap Mills / Sweet Springs area. Frankie previously met with Commissioners asking for their assistance in getting cell service established in these areas. Commissioners advised Frankie that they had spoken to a couple of cell phone companies but neither said they had an interest in installing cell towers in these areas because

of the dense population. Frankie provided Commissioners with response letters he has received from his federal legislative representatives after he sought their assistance in getting cell service established. Commissioners asked Frankie to keep working on this project and they would also continue doing anything they could to bring cellular service to Gap Mills and Sweet Springs.

At the request of Sheriff Mike Gravely and Bruce Power, 911 Director, Commissioners voted to appropriate \$40.00 per month to each deputy sheriff to offset the deputies' cellular telephone bills. Power said deputies use their personal cell phones for official county business and if the county expects to be able to contact the deputies at any and all times, then the county should contribute to their monthly bill.

Commissioners reviewed the monthly minutes of the Gap Mills Public Service District, Monroe Board of Health and the Red Sulphur Public Service District and appointed Petrie Brown to the Monroe Health Center Board of Trustees. Ms. Brown was recommended to serve on this board by Shannon Parker, CEO of the Monroe Health Center. The quarterly 911 wireless distribution fee report was also reviewed.

Commissioners reviewed a letter from the State Auditor advising that the county's 2009-10 budget has been approved and a request to solicit bids to renovate the employee's restroom on the main floor of the Courthouse was also approved.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that neither company who was originally interested in providing the county a quote for group health insurance were able to provide such quote. Both companies said the county didn't have the minimum numbers of employees required for them to provide a quote. Commissioners have been searching for a group health insurance provider due to the ever increasing premium hikes from the WV Public Employees Insurance Agency.

At the request of Bruce Power, 911 Director, and the approval of Justin St. Clair, Prosecuting Attorney, Commissioners approved a revised confidentiality agreement and Standard Operating Procedures for 911 employees. Power reported that the emergency radio communications repeater has been installed in Sweet Springs. He said the repeater should be operable soon. On a related matter, Commissioners approved purchasing an additional repeater to be installed in the Moncove Lake area. Power said that once this repeater is installed, he will be searching an area in Waiteville to install a third repeater. These repeaters will improve emergency radio communications in these areas of the county.

Commissioners approved a drawdown request for the Greenville / Wikel Water Project in the amount of \$24,861. Of this \$24,861.00, \$23,743.92 was invoices from Pentree, Inc. for engineering services and \$1,117.16 was administration fees from Region One Planning and Development Council.

The County Clerk provided Commissioners with a monthly financial report and Commissioners authorized a payment of \$75,000.00 to be paid on the county's delinquent regional jail bill.

Commissioners also approved a payment of \$10,000.00 to Dinsmore & Shohl, the legal firm representing Assessor Donna Huffman in the tax assessment court case with Mountain America. The Supreme Court of Appeals has agreed to hear the matter but a date hasn't been set.

A request from Windjammer Cable to transfer cable service from Windjammer to Vital Communications was approved. Windjammer Cable serves residents in the Ballard, Orchard and Pine Grove areas of the county and Commissioners agreed to make a donation to Medic One's annual fund drive.

Sean White of the Princeton City Fire Department provided Commissioners with a power point presentation on the services the City of Princeton Fire Department can provide Monroe County in the event of a major hazard materials incident. The county fire chiefs also attended this meeting and later commented that Peterstown Fire and Rescue has the same type of equipment available if the county should have a hazardous material incident. Commissioners agreed the City of Princeton would be a good resource in the event the county experienced a major incident and Peterstown Fire and Rescue needed assistance. White noted that if the city did respond to Monroe County, there would be no fee to the county or the fire departments. He said the owners of the companies causing such incident would be billed.

Commissioners approved nine final estate settlements and five exonerations. The meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.