

## Monroe Commission Holds May Meeting

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on May 8, 2013 at the Courthouse. Shane Ashley, President of the County Commission, called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

The County Commission recognized Shirley Hall, who recently retired as the Executive Director of the Family Resource Network after 20 plus years of service. In her role with the FRN, Ms. Hall provided valuable assistance to many children and families throughout the county. Kimberly Gross, Regional Representative for Governor Earl Ray Tomblin, was also on hand and presented Ms. Hall with a proclamation, on behalf of the Governor, designating her as a "Distinguished Mountaineer".

Donald J. Evans, County Clerk, advised Commissioners that the county's Prevention Resource Officer grant application will go before Division of Criminal Justice Services' review board this week. The county is seeking \$56,000 in grant funds to continue the Prevention Resource Officer position at James Monroe High School and to add an officer who will split his or her time between Peterstown Middle and Peterstown Elementary Schools.

Commissioner Bill Miller reported that the golf tournament recently held to raise funds for the community service projects netted \$2,700.00. These funds will be used to purchase supplies and materials for 15 projects that will be performed throughout the county by the Boy Scouts of America in July.

The County Commission reviewed applications for the Assistant 911 Director position. Applications will be accepted until Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. The meeting minutes for the Gap Mills and Red Sulphur Public Service Districts were also reviewed.

Acting on a request from the county's Solid Waste Authority, the County Commission agreed to apply for a REAP grant through the Department of Environmental Protection to assist with the Authority's recycling efforts. Bill Shiflet, a member of the Solid Waste Authority, said the Authority needs a new truck and a building for their recycling operations. He said both the Solid Waste Authority and County Commission can apply for this funding.

The County Clerk told Commissioners that a Division of Highway's representative told him yesterday that the building in Ballard, previously used as a barbershop, will be tore down this week. This building sits on the Division of Highway's right of way and Commissioners have received complaints that such building is causing a traffic hazard.

Commissioner Gum suggested the Commission check with the Board of Education to see if they are interested in selling the former Board of Education building. Gum said the county could use this facility for much needed storage. Commissioners authorized the Clerk to check with the Superintendent of Schools to inquire if the Board is interested in selling the building.

The monthly financial statement was reviewed and Commissioners agreed to prepare a letter of support for the Monroe Health Center. The Health Center is seeking grant funding to replace the water lines at the Center.

The County Commission authorized the painting of the Planning Commission office, the purchase of a desk for this office and the replacement of two exterior Courthouse lights.

Janet Caulkins was reappointed to the Board of Health and Commissioners authorized the payment for mowing of a vacant lot the county owns in the Glen Ray area of the county.

The County Commission agreed to give a desk presently used by the Sheriff to the Historical Society. Sheriff Mike Gravely advised he needed a different style of desk with additional shelving and no longer had a need for the present desk. The desk is very old and Commissioners thought the desk should be displayed in the Historical Society's museum. The Clerk said he spoke to a member of the Society and they have agreed to accept the desk.

The County Commission agreed to hold a mock meeting at Peterstown Middle School on May 24<sup>th</sup>. The Commission will talk to the 8<sup>th</sup> graders about county government and explain their duties and responsibilities as County Commissioners.

David McClure, representing Highland Towers, appeared before the Commission and advised Highland Towers was planning to construct a new cellular tower for AT&T just south of Lindside on Little Mountain. McClure said a prior plan by another tower company to construct a tower near the Lindside Christian Church was off the table. The County Commission received several complaints about the proposal of the tower being placed in this area. Some of the concerns raised were the closeness of the tower to surrounding homes and to US Rt. 219. Acting on these complaints, the County Commission met in emergency session week before last and issued a Moratorium on any new cell towers in the county. Commissioners agreed to leave the Moratorium in place until they decide if they wish to enact some sort of cell tower ordinance. An ordinance would, among other things, require tower companies to provide information to the County Commission as to where they plan to install a tower, thus eliminating a tower being placed in an area that would present a safety hazard to county residents. The County Commission made it clear that the county needs cell towers for reliable cell service and they are in no way opposed to them as long as they are placed in an appropriate and safe area.

Sheriff Mike Gravely and Magistrates Kevin Miller and Nancy Crews appeared before the County Commission to discuss the county's Home Confinement Program. Sheriff Gravely reported that he presently has twelve individuals on the program. Home Confinement is an alternative sentencing option for the Circuit Judge and Magistrates for non-violent offenders.

Mark Betler appeared before the County Commission and talked about the importance of recycling and showed Commissioners various paper products that can be recycled.

Acting on a previous request from the County Commission, the County Clerk said he spoke to officials with FedEx and UPS and neither was interested in placing a drop box at the Courthouse. Both officials said there wasn't enough public interest in using these boxes for them to justify placing one at the Courthouse.

Norbert Nertzel, Assessor, appeared before the County Commission and provided an update of the activities of his office and the County Clerk reported that mobile homes are still be moved out of the former Moody's Mobile home park and

seven mobile homes remain on the site. This mobile home park was closed by the Circuit Court of Monroe County for failure to comply with numerous violations of Mobile Home Park regulations.

Fred Zeigler, representing the Monroe County Historical Society, appeared before the County Commission advising the Historical Society is presently raising funds to build a Carriage House in Union to display the Society's omnibus, two carriages and a sleigh. Mr. Zeigler said the building, which will be located in the vicinity behind the Stoneway Inn, will have many windows and is designed so the items can be viewed without having to actually enter the building. He said the total cost of this project is \$55,000.00.

The County Commission addressed two estate matters, approved 16 final estate settlements and seven exonerations.

The County Commission will meet again in regular session on June 5, 2013 at the Courthouse. If you need to get on the Commission's agenda, please call 772-3096.