

## Monroe Commission Meets

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on September 7, 2016 at the Courthouse.

The County Commission voted unanimously to send a letter to EQT, the company that will construct the proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline asking them to provide them with any updates on the pipeline. Commissioners have received little to no info from EQT. In addition, the Commission voted to send a letter to Red Sulphur Public Service District requesting they be notified when they have a representative from EQT scheduled to attend one of their meetings. The Commission plans to send a representative to any meeting EQT is in attendance in an effort to keep updated on the proposed construction of this pipeline.

Commissioner Gum reported that he was continuing to work with Jason Roberts from Region One Planning and Development Council to prepare a grant application to the WV. Courthouse Facilities Improvement Authority. The Commission is seeking funds to renovate the McGuire Building. This building will be used to house the state mandated Drug Court Program, the Day Report Center and possibly the Magistrate Offices.

At the request of the owner of Pickaway Plains Restaurant and Antiques, the County Commission voted to prepare a letter affirming this establishment has met all local requirements in applying for a Nonintoxicating Beer Floor Plan Extension license for September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. This letter is required to be submitted with the state application for this temporary license.

The County Commission approved payment for \$1,000 for both the Monroe Public Library and Peterstown Public Library. These funds were appropriated in the county's current budget.

Jeff Jones, the county's Director of Emergency Management, appeared before the County Commission. Jones provided an update of the complaints filed under the county's Unsafe and Unsanitary Structures and Refuse Ordinance. He said a new complaint has been received on property located on Elmwood Lane, located north of Peterstown on Rt. 219. Jones also reported he was continuing to update the county's Emergency Operations plan.

Allison Tomlinson, the County's Tourism Director, appeared before the Commission and provided an update on her efforts to promote tourism in the county.

Tim Wilson, the county's 911 Director, appeared before the Commission providing an update of 911 Center activities. Wilson provided the monthly Wrecker Response Report. He reported that Galford's received four wrecker calls for the month, Neel's received one, Clarkson's three and White's received one. At the request of Wilson, the Commission entered into an agreement with Apex for the purchase of a repeater and related equipment for the tower in Rock Camp. According to Wilson, this repeater will improve radio emergency communications in this area of the county. The Commission then reviewed two proposals for a building to be placed at the Rock Camp tower site. This building will be used to house the equipment related to the new repeater being installed on the tower. One proposal was from Duane Miller Construction in the amount of \$5,850.00. The other proposal was from River Mountain Sheds from Rich Creek, Va in the amount of \$3,495.00. Commissioners agreed to accept the proposal of River Mountain Sheds. Wilson also advised he recently hired a part time dispatcher.

#### Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

The County Commission held a second public hearing on this day at 9:00 am. The purpose of this hearing was to hear input from the public on the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The following were in attendance; Cori Edwards, representing Region One Planning and Development Council, Eric Duff, representing the Town of Alderson, Scott and April Ernst, Jeff Jones, the county's OEM Director and the County Commission. No input was provided on this program.

#### Planning Commission

The following individuals representing the county's Planning Commission, appeared before the Commission; Melvin Young, Rocky Parsons, Robert Allen, and Tom Danick. These members stated that an audit needed to be conducted of Union Rescue to find out the reason they are having financial problems. They said you can't keep throwing money into a system that isn't working. Melvin Young said we needed someone to review their books that has a background in this type of work. Mr. Young suggested the county also needs to take a serious look at a Building Improvement Location Permit. The County Commission advised these members that Union Rescue is on the agenda at 1:30 today if they wanted to attend that

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#### Ralph Spangler

Ralph Spangler of Peterstown appeared before the County Commission requesting to file a complaint under the county's Unsafe and Unsanitary Structures and Refuse Ordinance. Mr.

Spangler said he lives in the Pinhook Subdivision and there are several lots that the owners don't mow. He said he has mowed these lots for 15 years but has quit. Mr. Spangler said the condition of these lots cause his property to have a lesser value and in addition it is a health and safety issue with kids living in the neighborhood. He said he knows there has to be snakes in the high grass. The Commission advised Mr. Spangler to proceed with filing his complaint and submit it to the Commission and the complaint will be reviewed.

#### Boy Scouts

Commissioner Gum advised Commissioners that the Boy Scout Committee will meet here at the Courthouse next Thursday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm.

#### Mountain Valley Pipeline Update Meeting

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that a meeting is scheduled to provide an update on the Mountain Valley Pipeline tomorrow night at 5:00 pm at the Lindside Methodist Church Family Life Center.

#### Rhonda Dortch

The County Commission reviewed a letter from Rhonda Dortch. Ms. Dortch moved from North Carolina to Hinton and is an organic farmer. She stated she was interested in acquiring and restoring the Dry Pond Community Building, She said she would use the kitchen as a workspace with the open school house space for Farm to Table dinners, workshops or demonstration area. The grounds would not house large livestock except potentially on special event days. She stated she would like to construct a covered shelter for producing sorghum syrup and apple butter. Ms. Dortch said she would love to have the opportunity to acquire this property with the intent of restoring it back to a useful work space, teach and work with others sharing years. The Commission took no action on this matter as there is a provision in the deed that the county has to offer the property to the Board of Education for a fair price before selling it at public auction.

#### Mountain Valley Pipeline

Commissioner Ashley made a motion for the County Commission to send a letter to EQT, the company constructing the proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline, and ask them to provide the Commission with any updates on the construction of this pipeline. Commissioner Miller second the motion. Vote was unanimous.

#### Mountain Valley Pipeline/Red Sulphur Public Service District

Commissioner Ashley made a motion to send a letter to the Red Sulphur PSD asking them to let the Commission know when they have any meetings scheduled with EQT, the company that will be constructing the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Commissioner Miller second the motion. Vote was unanimous.

#### Kiosk

Commissioner Ashley made a motion to send a letter to Don Dransfield advising the county plans to remove the information kiosk located in front of the Courthouse if the 4H group didn't plan to complete it. Commissioner Miller second the motion. Vote was unanimous.

#### Library Funding

Commissioner Miller made a motion to pay the two libraries, the Monroe Public Library and Peterstown Public Library, in the county the \$1,000 that was appropriated for them in the county's budget. Commissioner Ashley second the motion. Vote was unanimous.

#### Minnie Vass Estate

The children of the late Minnie Vass, namely Wilson Bland, Eleanor Ash and Bonnie Dickerson, appeared before the County Commission. Mr. Bland said that his late mother's taxes increased from 2008 to 2009 from \$9.44 a year to \$487.00 per year. He said they were in attendance today to inquire why there was such an increase. They advised their mother kept her affairs rather quiet and she wouldn't be one to inquire why there was such an increase. The children said their mother's property consisted of 71.4 acres with a house located near Hollywood. They advised they had spoke with current Assessor and of course, he wasn't the Assessor back in 2008 and he didn't have an explanation for the increase other than to say a new Assessor took office in 2009 and might have noticed the taxes were entirely too low and they adjusted them as to what they thought was a fair market value. The Commission asked the Clerk to send the children a letter advising this is the only explanation they could give them about the increase without having any other info.

#### Allison Tomlinson, Tourism Director

Allison Tomlinson, the county's Tourism Director, appeared before the County Commission. Ms. Tomlinson said she was working on a brochure that features four county businesses. She said each of these four businesses will pay \$150.00 to \$175.00 to have their business name printed on the brochure and Ms. Tomlinson said this will produce about 10,000 brochure type cards that will be distributed.

#### Executive Session

At the request of Sheriff Gravely, Commissioner Ashley made a motion to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Miller second the motion. Vote was unanimous. Commissioner Miller then made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Commissioner Ashley second the motion. Vote was unanimous. The Commission was in Executive Session for approximately 20 minutes.

#### Ken Hedrick, Chief Deputy

Sheriff Gravely previously told the County Commission that Deputy Jeff Greer was being paid more on the hour than Chief Deputy Ken Hedrick. He said he wasn't sure how this happened other than Deputy Hedrick might not have received the pay increases the other deputies did over the years. Gravely said it wasn't fair for his deputies to be paid more than his Chief Deputy. Commissioner Ashley made a motion to give Chief Deputy Ken Hedrick a \$1.00 on the hour pay increase effective immediately and retroactive back to July 1<sup>st</sup>. Commissioner Gum second the

motion. Motion passed 2-0. Commissioner Miller had already left the meeting to drive his bus route before this action was taken.

### Union Rescue Financial Problems

Representatives from Union Rescue, including members of the Board of Directors and employees, appeared before the County Commission. Also in attendance were members of the county's Planning Commission, representatives from area emergency service agencies including Peterstown, Alderson, White Sulphur and Lewisburg. The purpose of the meeting was again to discuss the poor financial condition of Union Rescue and what can be done to ensure the residents of Union will have emergency medical services. Richard Miller, a member of Union Rescue's Board of Directors, stated that everyone knew Union Rescue was experiencing a financial hardship. He said Union has made substantial cuts to their operations and were down to having two paid employees on staff. Miller also stated that Giles County, VA was facing a similar problem. He said Carillon provides services to the residents of Giles and they were getting ready to cease operations. Miller said when he submitted the proposal to the County Commission, the fee that will be placed on residents of the county would only pay for 60% of Union's operating cost. The squad will have to come up with the other 40%.

Commissioner Gum then asked why everyone is opposed to an outside agency coming in and taking over the management of Union Rescue. Gum said that during the meeting held last week with an outside agency, this agency said they would lease Union Rescue's vehicles and buildings and keep the majority of the employees. In addition, the current employees would probably get a pay increase. Thomas Haynes of White Sulphur Rescue Squad, said he has seen these private agencies come into counties before. He said they are all about business and the number of calls they receive and some have pulled out of counties after a couple months when they learned there wasn't enough calls for them to generate revenue. Bill Wickline stated he had been on the Union Rescue Board of Directors for 30 years and you have to have a paid service as you can't get volunteers like you once could. Bob Williams, another Union Rescue board member, said it was time to make some type of decision, one way or another. Mr. Williams also stated that Princeton Rescue had offered to help train Union officials on the billing system but this never worked out. Tom Danick, a member of the Planning Commission, said Union Rescue has a business problem, not a problem providing service to the residents. Commissioner Ashley asked Danny McMillion, representing Peterstown Fire and Rescue, for his comments. He said he was in attendance to listen and take the information back to his department. Tom Danick then stated we needed to get rid of the "us" and "then" referring to the north and south of the coun, and start referring to "us". Robert Allen, also a member of the Planning Commission, said we needed a Consulting Managing to review Union's books and current operations make a recommendation on what Union must do to be operational again. Robin Frazier, Union's current Executive Director, said she talked to someone at WVU who will provide consulting services for \$1,500.00. Commissioner Ashley stated that if an outside agency comes to the county that it will affect neighboring EMS entities as they will try and get as much coverage area as they possibly can, even trying to come into their county or town. Commissioner Bill Miller said he wasn't voting for an ordinance to place a fee on the people of the county because Peterstown Fire and Rescue told him they didn't support such an ordinance. It was agreed by the County Commission to schedule another meeting for September 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 am at the

Lindside Volunteer Fire Department and to invite Union Rescue's Board of Directors and the members of the Planning Commission and to set objectives of the meeting prior to the meeting. The Clerk will email such objectives to all interested parties once they are defined by all parties Those attending this meeting and the agency or entity they were representing are listed below.

Name	Representing
Jeff Jones	Monroe County OEM
Perry Pauley	Union Rescue Board Member
Travis Simcox	Union Rescue
Matt Butler	Alderson Fire & Rescue
Wes Hylton	Greenbrier County EMS
Billy W. Wickline	Union Rescue Board Member
Robin Frazier	Union Rescue
Seth Havens	Union Rescue
April Ernst	Community
Danny McMillon	Peterstown Fire & Rescue
Melvin Young	Planning Commission
Robert Allen	Planning Commission
Randall Mills	Union Rescue
Kevin Galford	Lindside Fire Dept.
Quince Galford	Union Rescue
Bob Williams	Union Rescue Board Member
Stephen Sowers	Lindside Fire Dept.
Thomas Hayes	White Sulphur EMS
Kelly Crosier	Union Rescue
Heather Scott	Union Rescue

#### Final Estate Settlements Approved

Estate of Orice Dewey Thompson, Jr. by Nancy Lou Ella Thompson, Executrix

Estate of Nathan Goochie Via by Sandra S. Via. Administrator

Estate of Pat Roger Ayers, Sr., by John H. Ayers, Jr., Executor

Estate of France's C. Johnston by Christina Jackson, Executrix

#### Vacation Order

It is Ordered that all orders and proceedings had before the Clerk of the Monroe County Commission for the month of August 2016

#### Adjournment Order

It is Ordered that the court be and the same is hereby adjourned until regular session scheduled for September 21, 2016. Commissioner Ashley made a motion to adjourn at 4:10 pm. Commissioner Miller second the motion. Vote was unanimous.

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Clyde Gum, Jr., President, Monroe County Commission

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Respectfully submitted by Donald J. Evans, Clerk