Ohio County Commission
June 14, 2023

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, June 14, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by President Donald A. Nickerson. The Pledge of Alliance was recited.

Present at the meeting: President, Donald A. Nickerson, Commissioner Zach Abraham, Commissioner Randy Wharton, Solicitor Don Tennant, Finance Director Rodd Archey, Administrator Randy Russell, Emergency Management Director Lou Vargo, and Facilities Director Melissa Marco.

Delegations:

- Randy Russell, County Administrator, recognized Michael Kelly, the County Clerk. Mr. Kelly was named County Clerk of the Year by his peers. The Ohio County Commission extended their congratulations to Mr. Kelly.

- Kevin Price, Chief Development Officer for Aviation, was introduced by Randy Russell. He is currently working on several projects: University partnerships between West Liberty and Marshall for a higher education program, manufacturing site visits, and he is currently speaking with the fuel suppliers for branding opportunities. Mr. Price recently completed a career day at Bridgeport High School and hopes to make it an annual event.

The minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham.

Grants:

- Stop Violence Against Women (SVAW) – This grant has been administered for 24 years. The grant totals $71,800 with a County match of $16,167. Motion to approve made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

- Victims of Crime Assistance (VOCA) – Request by Mr. Archey to apply for the VOCA grant in 2024. The grant is in the amount of $39,215 with no County match. Motion to approve made by Mr. Abraham, with a second by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

- Help America Vote Act (HAVA) – Ohio County was awarded $63,680. Motion to approve the grant made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Community Grants:

- Brewfest – A motion was made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton, to contribute $2,500 to the event. Motion carried.
- Fort Henry Days – A motion was made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton, to contribute $1,500 to the event. Motion carried.
- American Legion Post 1 – Motion to approve $2,000 for the Patterson fireworks display made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

- Governor Boreman Statue Committee – A motion was made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton, to donate $1,000 towards the statue. Motion carried.
- Wheeling Symphony – A motion was made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton to donate $3,500 towards their annual fireworks display.
- YMCA – A motion was made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton to donate $400 to their annual 5K held in August. Mr. Nickerson abstained from the vote. Motion carried.
- Pinto Challenge – The Commissioners asked for more information regarding the event. The request was tabled until the information is provided.
- WVU Extension – A motion was made by Mr. Wharton and seconded by Mr. Abraham to approve $4,532 for their annual summer camps. Motion carried.
- Beast of the East – A motion was made by Mr. Abraham and seconded by Mr. Wharton to approve $3,000 for the annual tournament. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- The Highlands TIF II – A motion to move the public hearing to July 18 at 6:00 p.m. was made by Mr. Abraham and seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

New Business:

- Opioid Settlement Mylan – Mr. Abraham made a motion to approve the paperwork for the settlement, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Opioid Settlement Amneal – Mr. Abraham made a motion to approve the paperwork for the settlement, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Northern Panhandle Conservation District – Mr. Abraham made a motion to approve the payment of $3,000 to the Conversation District for the Wheeling Watershed project, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Collateral Agreements – Four agreements have been received to secure the County's deposit accounts at local banks. Motion to approve the agreements made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Local Government Board of Directors Appointment – Ohio County is the lead county for Region 1. All counties, cities, villages, and towns in the region, which spans from Hancock to Wetzel counties, will be asked to send a delegate to nominate a Region 1 Director. Mr. Russell has reached out to each County asking for one person to be a liaison and request nominees. The nominee should have relevant knowledge in pharmacy, finance, substance abuse, and recovery and prevention. This is an unpaid position, and the Director will spend quite a bit of time working to identify eligible projects that meet stringent criteria for funding. No further action is needed at this point.
- Ohio County Fire Board – Currently, two seats are set to expire. The Fire Board's recommendation is to have Chief Sean Rineker of Clearview fill a three-year term from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2026. Chuck Newhart cannot be reappointed to the Board. Mr. Russell has reached out to the Fire Chiefs for nominations but has not received any names to date. Mr. Newhart has agreed to stay on the board until a new appointee can be found. Motion to approve the recommendation made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Objection to AEP and Mountaineer Gas Increase – Mountaineer Gas has asked for their seventh rate increase. The Commission will lodge objections to the West Virginia Public

Service Commission. Motion to send the letters made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Staff / Elected Officials Report:
Administrator:

- Mr. Russell stated June 19 has been made an official holiday by West Virginia Governor Jim Justice. County offices will now be closed June 19 and June 20.
- The Ohio County Board of Education has voted not to enter into an agreement with the PROs.
- On July 2, 2023, the Highlands will host its annual fireworks display.
- Wings over Wheeling will be held on June 24, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Ohio County Airport.

Facilities:

- The ConEx storage boxes will be delivered this weekend for the HVAC project.
- We are in the process of obtaining pricing for the porches at the Courthouse. The marble has been located. Repairs to one porch can be made with existing marble, while new marble will have to be purchased for the second porch.
- Annex elevator – The elevator will have a phone installed and will be ready for inspection.

Emergency Services:

- EMA completed fire hydrant testing today with the PSD, OCDA, and Valley Grove. Multiple training courses are scheduled over the next month.
- EMA responded to an incident involving a carport and two garages.
- Drage Flick reported he is completing training and cross training efforts for a Law Enforcement firearms instructor. With regards to payroll, there has been no definitive movement on training a new processor, but someone could process payroll if Drage was not available.
- Scheduling was discussed in detail – Mr. Flick stated Sheriff Howard makes the schedule, but deputies have offered suggestions to scheduling. Currently, they work 12-hour shifts. Mr. Flick stated the deputies brought the 12-hour shift idea to the Sheriff and he ultimately does the scheduling. Mr. Abraham asked if the Sheriff was addressing any budgetary concerns working 12-hour shifts. Mr. Wharton asked Mr. Flick if he was concerned about the 12-hour shifts and Mr. Flick stated he did feel it pushed the deputies to their limits.
- Currently, the DHHR is not paying for mental hygiene trips. The trips have been reduced and separate accounting is used.
- Right now, there are 32 people on staff. The PROs will be used. To date, 30 are certified, and 20 are on the road. The office also has two in field training and two are in the Academy. Two new hires would bring the Department to full staff.
- John Shultz reported car crashes are up and he feels we have good, well-trained staff. Two volunteers went to Mingo County to be part of Corey Meynard's funeral procession.

Finance:

- The Commissioners were provided with up-to-date bills. Two questions were raised:
  - Mr. Nickerson asked about the payment to Wesbanco. Mr. Archey stated this payment was for the Sheriff's cruisers. Mr. Nickerson also inquired about the payment to Bethlehem. Mr. Archey stated this payment was for EMS services. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.
- Unpaid Invoices – The Commissioners reviewed the unpaid invoices. No action needed.
- Budget Revisions – Mr. Archey stated the ARPA loss is not accounted for in the revision. There are revisions to the general fund that were presented to Commissioners for approval. Motion made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried. The Coal Severance budget revision was also presented. Mr. Archey stated this is a calculation of the estimated carryover. Motion to approve made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Exonerations – After review, Mr. Wharton made a motion to approve the exonerations, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.
- Certificate of Reentry – Motion to approve made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

Commissioner's Reports:

- Mr. Abraham stated an OVERTA Board Meeting will be held tomorrow.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Donald A. Nickerson, President

Randel A. Russell, Administrator