Ohio County Commission
January 2, 2024

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, January 2, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by President Donald A. Nickerson. The Pledge of Alliance was recited.

Delegations:

- Valerie Piko of the Regional Economic Development Partnership spoke concerning the local economic development grant. She also stated REDP would like to continue working with the Ohio County Commission as the Economic Development Agency of 2024.
- Melissa O'Brian from CityNet spoke concerning the large demand for broadband services in Marshall, Wetzel, and parts of Ohio County. She stated $1.2 billion will be available through a broadband grant. CityNet has submitted their third application for the LED 3 project in the amount of seven million dollars.
- Michael Kelly spoke concerning the TIF District the Ohio County Commission recently approved. His office collected $94,000 in one day and $214,000 in the month of December. Most counties in the state do not make $214,000 in one year. He applauded the Ohio County Commission's work on establishing this TIF and working to bring business and development to the area.

Election of Officers:

- President – Mr. Abraham nominated Mr. Nickerson for Ohio County Commission President, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried with Mr. Nickerson abstaining.
- Vice President – Mr. Wharton nominated Mr. Abraham for Ohio County Commission Vice President, seconded by Mr. Nickerson. Motion carried with Mr. Abraham abstaining.

The minutes from December 19, 2023, were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Staff Appointments:

- County Administrator – Mr. Abraham appointed Mr. Randy Russell for the County Administrator post with a second made by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Dog Warden – Mr. Abraham appointed Mr. Chester Bise for the Dog Warden post with a second made by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- County Solicitor – Mr. Abraham appointed Mr. Don Tennant for the County Solicitor post with a second made by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Commissioner Board and Committee Assignments:

- Bel-O-Mar Regional Council – Commissioner Abraham
- Northern Panhandle Workforce Development Board – Commissioner Nickerson
- Ohio County Development Authority – Commissioner Wharton
- Ohio County Fire Board – Commissioner Wharton

- Ohio County Personnel Advisory Committee – Commissioner Abraham
- Ohio County Public Service District – Commissioner Wharton
- Ohio Valley Regional Transportation Authority – Commissioner Abraham
- Regional Economic Development Partnership – Commissioner Abraham
- Wheeling Area Convention and Visitors Bureau – Administrator Russell
- Wheeling Creek Watershed Corporation – Commissioner Nickerson
- Wheeling National Heritage Area Corporation – Commissioner Nickerson
- WVU Cooperative Extension Committee – Commissioner Wharton

Grants:

- WV DEP Recycling Assistance Grant – The City of Wheeling was provided with $150,000 under the grant, while the Ohio County Commission was awarded $75,000. This money will be used to purchase a recycling truck. Each organization will be responsible for completing grant paperwork and attending classes.

Old Business:

- Board of Review – Board of Review will be held on the following dates and times: February 6, 2024 following the Ohio County Commission meeting; February 20, 2024 following the Ohio County Commission meeting.

New Business:

- Opioid Settlement Funds – Ohio County has received its first direct payment. Mr. Russell has reached out to Marshall County, Brooke County, and the City of Wheeling to see how they plan to expend their funding. Mr. Abraham stated he would like to see a focus group formed to further investigate the matter, while Mr. Wharton stated he would like to see the funds truly address the problem. The Commissioners would like to see Dr. Steven Corder, the Region 1 representative, invited to a County Commission meeting.
- WV Local Economic Development (LED) Grant Program Resolution – The resolution was approved by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Staff / Elected Official Reports:

- Administrator Report - Mr. Russell – Mr. Russell provided several updates:
  - A county vehicle policy will be presented at the next meeting.
  - A salary study RFP will be written and presented.
  - A P-Card policy will be presented at the next meeting.
  - The County Commission Association meeting will meet in Charleston January 20-23, 2024.
  - The Audit was issued last week.
- Facilities Update - Ms. Marco – It was reported lower ballasts were removed on the west side of the corridor, they commenced with the removal of existing gravity ventilator and patching of holes in the lower roof, the penthouse was prepped for existing equipment, demolition of existing equipment pads in 601was completed, new boilers and equipment was set in room 601, they commenced with layout for duct chase through the floors, and the openings in the ceilings were patched from the engineer's investigation.
- EMA – Mr. Vargo – Mr. Vargo was not in attendance.

- Sheriff Howard – A representative from the Sheriff's Office was not in attendance at the meeting.

Finance:

- Mr. Archey reported the bills are up to date. Motion to approve the bills made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Unpaid invoices – Some of the invoices were awaiting grant funding. This funding has now been received and the invoices will be paid by the next meeting. No further action is required.
- The audit had one finding.

Commissioner's Comments:

- The Shot in the Park Archery Tournament now has over 850 kids registered. The event was moved from Wheeling Park to The Highlands Sports Complex.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Donald A. Nickerson, President

Randel A. Russell, Administrator