Ohio County Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
October 22, 2024

I. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by County Commission President Donald A. Nickerson, Jr. at 6:00 pm. Those in attendance included: President Nickerson (by phone), Commissioner Zach Abraham, Commissioner Randy Wharton, County Administrator Randy Russell, County Solicitor Donald Tennant, Facilities Director Melissa Marco, Senior Accountant Becky Coyne, Emergency Management Director Lou Vargo, Deputy Chief Nelson Croft, Deputy Director of 911 Rickie Pritt, and Accountant Kimberly Lemley.

President Nickerson led those in attendance with a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Delegations

Buster Tominack spoke about establishing a Veterans Council for Ohio County. He would like to hold monthly meetings with organizations throughout the valley. He hopes the County can help with job training and the services of an attorney. He also would like to establish a food pantry for Veterans in our area. Mr. Abraham asked if a charter had been established and what the statistics were for Ohio County. Mr. Tominack stated he is working on both items and would like to report back to the Commissioners in the future.

III. Approval of Meeting Commissions

Commissioner Abraham: Before you are the minutes of the regular meeting held on Tuesday, October 1, 2024. Please take a minute to review the minutes. The minutes were approved by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

IV. Grants

Pass Thru, State of West Virginia for the Arthur Borman Statue – The state granted $8,500.00 for the Arthur Boreman Statue project. The Commission will, in turn, write a check to the Community Foundation for the $8,500.00. Motion to approve made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Nickerson. Motion carried.

READY Grants to Grow Initiative – The grant, which aims to build community leaders and capacity building, is for $125,000.00. The grant is a 1x1 match. It would also build out a team to support outsourced materials. Although the Letter of Intent is due on November 1, 2024, the Commissioners would like more details. Motion to table.

EDA Build to Scale – This grant would allow for space for technology, high skill, high paying jobs to have an area in which to grow their ideas. It is also a 1x1 match. The grant is

due October 28, 2024. Motion to table until information on the build out of the space is provided.

Eward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) – In this grant, we partner with the City of Wheeling to provide funding for the Drug Task Force. No match is required. Motion to approve made by Mr. Nickerson, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

V. Community Grants

North Wheeling Youth Center Annual Thanksgiving – In lieu of playing in the basketball game, the Commissioners have decided to donate $1,250.00 to the Thanksgiving Dinner. Motion approved by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Nickerson. Motion carried.

Scouting America Ohio River Valley Council – In past years, the Commissioners have donated $500.00 to the event. The Commissioners again decided to donate $500.00 to the Council. Motion made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

United Way Building a Better Community Breakfast – The Commissioners tabled this request. At a previous meeting they awarded $5,000.00 to the United Way for programming.

Dancing with the Ohio Valley All Stars – The Commissioners donated $500.00 to the event on a motion made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

VI. Unfinished Business

Ohio County Sheriff's Department – Purchase of 2024 Cruisers – The cars were purchased, delivered and outfitted by Bearcom in November. Motion to approve the purchase made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

VII. New Business

Letter of Support – Comcast BEAD grant application – Motion to approve the letter of support made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

New Hire – Savanna Petway – Motion to approve the new hire made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Department of Highways Right of Entry – The Department of Highways wants to access the County Farm property off of Dixon's Ridge Road. Motion to approve made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham.

VIII. Staff and Elected Official Reports

Administrator Russell:
Mr. Russell had nothing further to report.

Facilities Director Marco:
Tomorrow, a crane will be on site to for the new HVAC unit for the Jail and the Heat Exchanger for the Annex. Masonry will be completed next week on the West side of the building. There are four relief angels that need repaired. The Portico project is progressing. The West Porch is 99% complete. Caps will be placed on the columns when the masonry work is completed. The South porch is experiencing a delay. The stone should arrive in Mid-November and will be completed by the end of December deadline. We are still interviewing for the Animal Shelter. The HVAC project has gained momentum, and we should be able to kick off in early December.

Chief Deputy Croft: The new hammers for the cruisers have arrived. Chief Deputy Croft and Sheriff Howard attended a meeting in Clayville, PA to assess how the Tunnel Ridge shutdown of the eastbound lanes of I-70 will affect the department. The shutdown will last 30 days.

Emergency Management Director Vargo: In November, the department will be moving from MEDCOM to WESCOM located out of Camden Clark in Parkersburg, WV.

911 Deputy Director Pritt: The four new hires have finished their mandatory training and received their certificates. They are now at full staff.

IX. Finance

County Disbursements:
Senior Accountant Coyne: Before you are disbursements from the County accounts payable Department. We recommend your approval to make these disbursements. Motion to approve the disbursements made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

Unpaid Accounts Payable:
There is no action necessary

X. Assessor

Exonerations: Administrator Russell presented the exonerations. Motion to approve made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

XI. Commissioner Comments
Mr. Nickerson attended the opening ceremonies of the Ohio County Country Fair.

Mr. Abraham attended an OVRTA Meeting. They are selling six buses, three of which are in decent shape. They may be able to be used for shuttle service at the Highlands.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Donald A. Nickerson, President

Randel A. Russell, Administrator