Ohio County Commission
March 19, 2024

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, March 19, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by President Donald A. Nickerson. The Pledge of Alliance was recited.

Mr. Nickerson opened The Ohio County HOME Public Hearing. The City of Wheeling is the lead agency for the Northern Panhandle HOME Consortium, which is made up of the counties of Hancock, Ohio, and Marshall, as well as the cities of Wheeling and Weirton. Each year, a public hearing is required in each of the jurisdictions to receive public comments regarding housing needs and how HOME funds should be used for affordable housing. The Consortium overall has now assisted 1,100 homebuyers, using $9.8 million of the HOME funds and $61 million in lenders' mortgage money.

Delegations:

- Debbie Guzek lives in Mt. Echo in Ohio County. She spoke to the Commissioners and stated she does not have public sewage but would like to see what could be done for her stretch of road to obtain the service. She has approached the Ohio County Public Service District, and her water bill comes from the Service District as well.
- Sharon Kesselring from the Red Cross Ohio River Valley District stated their territory has been changed and they now support 19 counties; fifteen in West Virginia and four in Ohio. They responded to 51 emergency responses in three years, with the vast majority being home fires. In 2023, 1,300 units of blood were collected in Ohio County. She asked that the Commission proclaim March as Red Cross month. On a motion made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton, the Commission signed the proclamation.

The minutes from March 5, 2024, were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Grants:

- Courthouse Facilities Grant – At the March 5, 2024, meeting, the Commissioners asked Ms. Marco to reach out to other companies to try to acquire another bid on the project. Ms. Marco reached out to three companies, and all stated they would not be bidding. The work is very specialized. Mr. Abraham made a motion to approve Angelina Stone and Marble's bid for $187,580.00, with a second by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Rural Emergency Medical Services Training – Mr. Vargo would like to apply for $150,000.00. This money would provide valuable training to EMA personnel and the community. The funds do have a 10% match and only 52 awards are given through the federal grant process. Motion to approve the application made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Community Grants:

- Elm Grove Civics – The organization is looking for assistance to help with the cost of their HVAC system. The new system costs $17,000.00. Mr. Wharton will reach out to the organization for more information. Consideration tabled.
- Waterfront Fest – This new event will be held on May 4, 2024. Motion to approve $500.00 made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

New Business:

- Fire Board Appointment – Third Magisterial District; Timothy Campbell – On a motion made by Mr. Wharton, and seconded by Mr. Abraham, the Commission approved the appointment of Timothy Campbell.
- Review of Community Grant Applications – The Commission office has received several Community Grants for review. The office will go through the grants, build a spreadsheet, and make recommendations to the Commissioners.

Staff / Elected Official Reports:

- Administrator Report - Mr. Russell did not have anything further to report.
- Facilities Update - Ms. Marco stated the flooring at the Animal Shelter started on Monday and will be completed by Wednesday. On Thursday, a work crew will begin moving equipment and supplies back into the Shelter. The Tower Renovation at the Wheeling-Ohio County Airport will be completed by mid-May. The HVAC project update is as follows: the windows on 16th Street are completed, while Chapline Street is partially completed. Steel beams arrived today. The new boilers are in and are awaiting commissioning. Furniture for the swing space has arrived. We will need to clean up, as well as set up, both swing spaces. The first moves will begin in late April or early May. A communication plan will be sent to all Department Heads every Monday alerting them as to the work that will be completed throughout the week, the anticipated noise levels, etc. The building repairs on the north end will start again on Monday and the west end repairs will likely start in mid-April.
- EMA – Mr. Vargo – Each school in the County now has two Stop the Bleed kits which were purchased locally. On Saturday, the department held a fire extinguisher training at Valley Grove for volunteers and their families.
- Sheriff's Department – A representative from the Sheriff's Department 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. No further action is required.
- Exonerations – After review, the exonerations were approved by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Commissioner Comments:

- Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Abraham attended the Gifted World Premier.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Donald A. Nickerson, President

Randel A. Russell, Administrator