Board of Commissioners of Ohio County
Minutes of a Meeting
Tuesday, October 6, 2026, at 8:00am

County Commission meetings are held in
Room 215 of the City County Building, 1500 Chapline Street, Wheeling, WV 26003
County Commission meetings are open to the public

County Commission Members Present

Commission President Zachary T. Abraham
Commissioner Donald A. Nickerson, Jr.
Commissioner Randy Wharton

Staff Members Present

County Administrator Randy Russell
County Solicitor Donald J. Tennant, Jr.
Finance Director Becky Coyne
Executive Assistant Jennifer Hastings

Other Elected Officials Present

Ohio County Sheriff Nelson Croft, Jr.
Ohio County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Kent Lewis
Ohio County 911 Director Rickie Pritt

Other Members Present

WVU Extension Agent Lewis Honaker

- **Call to Order**

  Commission President Abraham called the meeting to order at 8:00am in Room 215 of the City County Building. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

- **Delegations**

  There were no delegations.

- **Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

  Public Hearing of September 22, 2026
  Regular Meeting of September 22, 2026

  Administrator Russell reported an error in the September 22 regular meeting minutes that were approved on completion of the correction. The correction clarified that the WV Division of Multi-Modal Transportation grant was for the Air Traffic Control Tower Rehabilitation Project, not the Runway 3-21 Rehabilitation Project.

  The minutes were reviewed by Commissioners. Commission President Abraham made a motion to approve the prior meeting minutes and public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

- **Grants**

Airport, DMTF Grant Agreement for Runway 3-21 Rehab and Extended Safety Area
Administrator Russell reported that the WV Department of Multimodal Transportation Grant Agreement, in the amount of $28,870, represents the State's contribution toward Runway 3-21 Safety Area Extension Project. The grant represents reimbursement of 2.5% of the County's 5% project share. Approval was requested to execute the agreement and accept the grant.

Commission President Abraham made a motion to approve the grant agreement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

- **Community Grants**

Augusta Levy Behavioral Services, Dancing with the Ohio Valley Stars
Administrator Russell informed the County Commission that Augusta Levy Behavioral Services is requesting financial support for its 15th Annual Dancing with the Ohio Valley Stars event, which will be held on November 14, 2026, at the Capitol Theatre. Proceeds from the event will benefit Augusta Levy Behavioral Services and its programs serving individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities.

Following discussion, the Commissioners noted limited funding availability and agreed to provide sponsorship support in the amount of $100.

Commissioner Wharton made a motion to approve sponsorship of $100. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

WPHS 50th Anniversary Celebration
Administrator Russell stated that Wheeling Park High School is requesting financial support for their 50th Anniversary Celebration. They have several events planned centered around homecoming weekend, October 15 – 17. These events include a homecoming parade, pep rally, alumni social, alumni tailgate, football game, fireworks display, and school tours.

Following discussion, the Commissioners agreed to provide sponsorship support in the amount of $500.

Commission President Abraham made a motion to approve sponsorship of $500. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

- **Unfinished Business**

Ritchie Elementary School, assistance with new playground
Administrator Russell reminded the Commission of the previously tabled request for financial assistance toward a new playground at Ritchie Elementary School.
Following discussion, the Commissioners requested that additional information be obtained from the Ohio County Board of Education and the City of Wheeling regarding

their respective contributions and support for the project before further consideration of the request.

Commission President Abraham made a motion to table the playground funding assistance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

Wheeling Area Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Fantasy of Lights Parade
Administrator Russell also reminded Commissioners of the previously tabled request for financial support from the Wheeling Area Chamber of Commerce for the 2026 Main Street Fantasy of Lights Parade. He asked if there was any action to be taken at this time.

Commissioner Wharton made a motion to approve sponsorship of $250. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

Review and Approval of Proposed Order for Stenger Estates Road Maintenance Association Limited
Administrator Russell advised that, following the public hearing on September 22, 2026, concerning the Stenger Estates area, Attorney James McClure, representing the Stenger Estates Road Maintenance Association, submitted a proposed order establishing the Association for the Commission's consideration.

Solicitor Tennant reminded the Commission that each party had been given ten (10) days to submit a proposed order reflecting their position. He noted that Attorney McClure was the only party to submit a proposed order and that he had reviewed the document.

Following discussion, Commission President Abraham requested Solicitor Tennant's recommendation regarding the proposed order. Solicitor Tennant recommended approval and that it be filed with the County Clerk.

Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the proposed order. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

- **New Business**

Ohio County Circuit Clerk, Advice and Consent for New Hire, Sydney Dellget
Administrator Russell advised that the Circuit Clerk has an open Deputy Circuit Clerk position and requested advice and consent to hire Sydney Dellget. As the position was included in the FY 2026-2027 budget, the administration recommended approval.

Commission President Abraham made a motion to approve the new hire. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

MOU with REDP, Midwest Shooting
Administrator Russell presented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Ohio County Development Authority, the Ohio County Industrial & Business Development Corporation (d/b/a The Regional Economic Development Partnership), and the Ohio County Commission. This MOU provides for a $1 million grant from the excess Special District Excise Tax revenues to OVIBDC for the purchase of shooting range equipment

located at the former Guntry property. The acquisition would facilitate OVIBDC's lease of a portion of the facility to Midwest Shooting.

> Commissioner Wharton made a motion to approve the MOU. The motion was seconded by Commission President Abraham. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission, with Commissioner Nickerson abstaining.

WVFF Region 1 Director Election, County Delegate Designation
Administrator Russell reported that the County is required to participate in the election of the Region 1 Director to the West Virginia First Foundation. As the most populous county in Region 1, Ohio County has been selected to organize the election, which will be held on October 13, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Highlands Event Center. A delegate must be designated to cast the County Commission's vote.

Commission President Abraham suggested publicly posting the opportunity to receive nominations for the position.

Due to a lack of availability among other potential designees, Solicitor Tennant volunteered to serve as the County Commission's voting delegate for the election. Following discussion, the Commissioners agreed to designate Solicitor Tennant as the County Commission's delegate to cast the County's vote in the Region 1 Director election.

> Commission President Abraham made a motion to approve Solicitor Tennant as the County Commission's delegate. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

Assessor, Equipment Lease, Copier
Administrator Russell advised that Assessor Hoffman had previously requested approval to lease a replacement copier for a machine that had become obsolete. He reported that the Assessor arranged to lease a copier from Richardson Copy Concepts for a term of 60 months at a monthly cost of $170.

Solicitor Tennant reviewed the agreement and noted that the document incorrectly identified the Assessor as the contracting party. Administrator Russell advised that the copier lease agreement would be a County Commission contract rather than an Assessor's Office contract. A motion was made to approve the lease agreement contingent upon correcting the contract to reflect the Ohio County Commission as the contracting entity rather than the Assessor's Office.

> Commission President Abraham made a motion to approve the equipment lease reflecting Ohio County Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

Fort Henry SDEX Series 2025A Requisition #2
Administrator Russell presented Requisition No. 2 requesting that the Trustee disburse $1,210,480.82 from the Special District Excise Tax Bonds, Series 2025A Project Fund. He explained that the funds will be used to reimburse the Ohio County Development Authority for costs associated with the WVU Medicine Wheeling Hospital Rapid Care Build-out.

Commissioner Wharton made a motion to approve Requisition No. 2. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

Fort Henry SDEX Series 2025A Excess Requisition #1
Administrator Russell presented Requisition No. 1 requesting that the Trustee disburse $1,000,000 from the Special District Excise Tax Excess Fund. He explained that the funds will be used for a $1,000,000 grant in support of the Midwest Shooting project.

Commission President Abraham made a motion to approve Requisition No. 1. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission, with Commissioner Nickerson abstaining.

- **Staff and Elected Official Reports**

  - **County Administrator**

Administrator Russell reported that the technical difficulties affecting the County Commission's live-streaming system have been resolved and that the current meeting is being broadcast live.

He also advised that early voting for the upcoming November 3 election will be conducted from Wednesday, October 21, through Saturday, October 31.

Administrator Russell further noted that some important election-related dates have been added to the County Commission calendar. He pointed out that the Election Canvass is scheduled for Monday, November 9. He also explained that the Certification of Election Results remains to be determined, as certification cannot occur no sooner than forty-eight (48) hours after the last county in West Virginia has completed and declared its results. As a result, the certification date is a floating date and will be scheduled accordingly.

Administrator Russell provided an update on poll worker training. He reported that Election Coordinator Erin Allietta has been conducting poll worker training sessions throughout the week at the Pine Room at Oglebay Park.

Administrator Russell also announced that the County Commissioners Association Leadership Academy is scheduled for Sunday, December 6 through Tuesday, December 8, at Glade Springs. He noted that the academy is intended primarily for newly elected county commissioners; however, all county commissioners are encouraged to attend.

  - **Facilities**

Courthouse Energy Savings Project, Update
Administrator Russell reported that Cattrell had recently been onsite as most of the building equipment was being transitioned from cooling to heating mode. He further reported that the Commission has enrolled in a demand response program stating that the grid operator, PJM, experiences periods of high electricity demand it issues notifications to reduce electricity consumption. If the required reduction

level is met during these events, the Commission will receive compensation for the reduction in energy usage.

Ohio County Corrections Center
Administrator Russell announced that the Correction Center is officially vacant and the keys have been turned over to the Commission. He further stated that a walkthrough of the facility will be scheduled for the Commissioners.

- **Emergency Services**

Sheriff of Ohio County
Sheriff Croft reported that the West Virginia Narcotics Officers Association Training held at the Highlands Event Center was successful. He stated that the association had already voted to return to Ohio County for next year's training event.
He also reported that they sponsored a rifle and shotgun instructor development course at the Highlands shooting range and it was well attended.

Sheriff Croft further stated that, with the holiday season approaching, the Sheriff's Office will continue to monitor call volume at the Highlands. Based on demand, overtime shifts may be implemented, primarily on weekends, to ensure adequate staffing and response coverage.

Ohio County E911
Director Pritt provided an update on staffing, reporting that four (4) new employees have been hired. He stated that these employees will undergo training over the next several months to prepare them to perform their duties independently.

WVU Extension
Agent Lewis Honaker made remarks regarding the Ohio County Country Fair and expressed his appreciation for the support provided by the County Commission. He reported that attendance and activity levels on Saturday were approximately 50% higher than those recorded on the corresponding Saturday of the previous year's fair.

- **Finance Director Becky Coyne**

Finance Director Coyne presented County Commissioners with a list of invoices that are to be approved for payment.

> Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the invoices. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

The unpaid invoices were presented to the Commissioners for review and there were no questions/inquiries about them. No action required.

Finance Director Becky Coyne advised that there were no budget revisions.

- **Assessor**

Exonerations
Administrator Russell reported that there are no exonerations to be considered at this time.

Certificates of Re-Entry

Administrator Russell reported that one Certificate of Re-Entry was presented for consideration. Approval was requested to re-enter a parcel located at 154 S. Park Street, Wheeling, to the tax roll in the names of Renee and Jason Fuller. He stated that taxes associated with the property have been paid dating back to 2016.

Commission President Abraham made a motion to approve the Certificate of Re-Entry. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

- **Commission Board Reports**
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There were no Commission Board Reports

- **Commissioner Comments**

Commission President Abraham expressed his appreciation to the Ohio County Country Fair Board for its efforts in organizing and conducting a successful Ohio County Country Fair. He commended the Board's dedication and acknowledged the fair's overall success.

Commission President Abraham requested changes on future meeting dates that are currently scheduled for October 20 and November 10. He stated that the revised meeting dates would be announced following further discussion by the Commission.

- **Executive Session**

Commission President Abraham made a motion for the County Commission to go into Executive Session pursuant to the Code of West Virginia §6-9A-4(b)(2)(A) to discuss Employment Matters, Investigation 1 (corrective action) and Employment Matters, Investigation 2. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission at 8:45am.

Commission President Abraham made a motion for the County Commission to come out from Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission at 9:43am.

Commission President Abraham made a motion to implement the corrective action as recommended by County Solicitor Tennant. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the County Commission.

Commission President Abraham advised those present that the next Regular Meeting of the County Commission would take place on Tuesday, October 20, 2026, in Room 215 of the City-County Building, 1500 Chapline Street, Wheeling, WV 26003, promptly at 8:00 am. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 am.

We do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct transcript of the minutes of a meeting of the County Commission of Ohio County conducted on Tuesday, October 6, 2026.

Zachary T. Abraham, President

Randel A. Russell, County Administrator