OHIO COUNTY COMMISSION
7/26/2022

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, July 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Present at the meeting was President Randy Wharton, Commissioner Don Nickerson, Commissioner Zach Abraham, Administrator Randel Russell, Finance Director Rodd Archey, and Solicitor Don Tennant.

Delegations-Darlene Nolan

Ms. Nolan stated she was born and raised in Wheeling, attended Ohio Valley Hospital Nursing School, and has been a registered nurse, social worker, drug and alcohol counselor and psychotherapist at Northwood. She believes things are bad in our area. She began reading US code 1325-inproper entry by an alien, stating any individual who knowingly establishes a commercial enterprise and purposely invading any provision of the immigration laws shall be imprisoned for not more than five years and fined in accordance. Those laws are still on the books and yet this Administration is violating these ordinances and laws. She is very concerned with how many illegals ae being brought into this Country without our consent. She feels that we need to step up and save this Country. This is against our laws, and we should not fund it. She reported also about some national laws as well. She feels the schools are going to be impacted because we must put these people somewhere, and of course crime has going up. She has heard they're expanding the shelter system in Wheeling which she thinks is a huge mistake. Downtown businesses won't be able to stay open because of vandalism, drugs etc. She reported that she wants the federal government not to send these people here. She is concerned about the voting laws. She feels paper ballots are the way to vote and hand count all votes. She said Dominion machines are no good. Also make sure the voter registration lists are cleaned up daily. She stated she is concerned about the red flag law that went through our Congress recently. She is concerned about what is going on in our schools, and she feels more police are needed in the schools. At the Board of Education meeting last month, the board stated that they share police officers at the schools, and she feels they need one in every school. The government spends millions of dollars, and she feels it should be spent on officers at the schools and not sharing officers between schools. She asked for what we are using the old OVMC building. President Wharton told her that is with the City of Wheeling and you would need to speak to the City. She reported that she would like the Commission to find places for the homeless if they are American citizens.

Scott Sonda

Mr. Sonda reported that he lives on the northeastern border of Ohio County. There are about sixty homes in the area. He is the fourth generation on a farm that he has been operating for thirty-five years and he is a licensed contractor. He reported he is here today to speak on the issue of residents that have parties, and side by sides on the roads where he lives. He has called the Sheriff when the noise gets to be too much, but they can only do so much. He reported that there is a party coming up at his neighbors on August 6, and if you have any questions about the severity of it, there will be 200 plus people there throughout the day. It generally winds down about 4:00 a.m. He has a friend in Bethany who can hear it four miles away, so you can imagine what it's like at his house ½ mile away. To put in perspective, we

are out of power a lot, and he has a 600-acre farm, and he has a lot of heavy equipment. He can set a tractor that powers his generator fifty feet from his house and the noise at his house is no louder than an oscillating fan, but when they party and ride four wheelers and wake the dead, it rattles the windows. He had to call the Sheriff a few weeks back because of riding the four wheelers at midnight. The Sheriff lets me know there is no noise ordinance so that is why he is here tonight to ask if Ohio County could possibly enact a noise ordinance in the County. He brought a copy of the noise ordinance from Brooke County to show the Commissioners. Brooke County adopted this about twelve years ago. It is very simple, and straight forward. It does not restrict; it guarantees people like me to have some peace and quiet. He stated he is asking the Commission to help him preserve his enjoyment of his property.
Commissioner Nickerson stated he is in total agreement with Mr. Sonda, and he feels people should never be able to hear their neighbors while in their own house.

Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 28, 2022, Commission meeting. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Hotel Tax Requests

2022 Annual Heritage Music Bluesfest

Administrator Russell reported that the 2022 Heritage Music Bluesfest is scheduled August 12, 2022, through the 14th at Wheeling's Heritage Port. The request is for $5,000.00 for this year's event. In past years the Commission has awarded $2,500.00. They had a Winter Blues Festival that the Commission gave $1,000.00 back in March of 2022. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve $3,000.00 for this year's event. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Ancient Order of Hibernians Road Bowling

Administrator Russell reported next there is a request from the Ancient Hibernians Road Bowling event. He reported that this event is scheduled for September 24, 2022, and typically attracts seven hundred fifty to one thousand people to the region. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve $2,500.00 for the road bowling event. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Community Grants

American Legion Post 1

Administrator Russell reported that first is the American Legion's request for a $50,000.00 grant for renovations toward the facility they recently purchased. This is the old Italian American Club in Elm Grove. After reviewing their request this does not appear to fit in the ARPA guidelines as we had thought. So, he has brought it back to the Commission as a Community Grant. He has spoken with John Powell and Keith Howard; both are looking to cut back on some of the renovations that are needed and or phasing the project to get all of the renovations done with additional fund-raising efforts. President Wharton also reported that he spoke with both, and they may be able to get some type of construction loan. Commissioner Abraham reported that they are going to open it up to all twelve veteran's organizations so they can meet there and have their fund-raising events. They also reported they will rent it for wedding receptions, steak fry, events etc. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve $50,000.00 for the American Legion Post 1. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

11th Annual Celebrate Youth-Youth Services System

Administrator Russell reported the next request is from Youth Services Systems for a community grant for the Celebrate Youth event at Wheeling Park that is held every year. The Commission normally gives them $2,000.00. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve $2,000.00 for this event. Commissioner Nickerson stated that his children volunteer for this event to help. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Holy Family-Touch A Truck

Administrator Russell reported that the next request is from Holy Family Child Development & Child Care. This is a first-time request. They are planning a fund raiser at the Wheeling Ohio County Airport on August 13, 2022, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This will be a touch a truck event, and they have arranged at this point to have about twenty pieces of equipment at the Airport that youngsters can touch, feel, smell, sit in and enjoy. Rusty Escue, Airport Manager, has also the recruited the Black Hawk to be brought over and a few other Aircraft. They are requesting $2,500.00 for this event. Commissioner Abraham reported that he would like to have a template to share exactly the information we want to know in advance of these requests. Like supportive information too, and who else is giving funding. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve $2,500.00 for the Touch A Truck event. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Ohio County Building Commission

Administrator Russell reported that he now has three people to serve as members on the Ohio County Building Commission. Also, he has the order, and he will read it to the Commission. Administrator Russell stated that the members are Mike Trabert, Michael Caruso and Elisabeth Slater. Mr. Trabert will serve a one-year term to expire July 26, 2023, Michael Caruso to serve a two-year term to expire July 26, 2024, and Elisabeth A. Slater to serve a three term to expire July 26, 2025. This order is adopted today, July 26, 2022. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to accept the Ohio County Building Commission order and the members. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

ARPA Funding Update

Administrator Russell reported to the commissioners that he is working on the application for the nonprofit and small business portion of this and he has enlisted Susie Nelson to assist him. Hopefully by next meeting he should have the application.

NEW BUSINESS

Election Precinct Location Change

Administrator Russell reported that he was asked by members of the community to relocate the election day polling place that sits in the Courthouse to a center outside of the Courthouse. St. James Lutheran Church at 1409 Chapline Street will be the new polling location. He is seeking the Commission's approval to move the polling place from the Courthouse to St. James Lutheran Church. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the precinct change location from the Courthouse to

St. James Lutheran Church just up the street. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

WV Association of Counties Annual Dues

Administrator Russell reported that he has the WV Association of Counties annual dues in the amount of $6,500.00. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to pay the annual dues. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

County Commissioners Associations Annual Dues

Administrator Russell reported that he has the County Commissioners Association dues in the amount of $3,900.00. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to pay the dues. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Rabies Clinics Results-July 2022

Administrator Russell reported that next is the Rabies Clinics results for this past July. He stated the vets vaccinated 425 pets, collected $3,400.00, and the Ohio County Commission will pay Dr. Yurko $355.00 and Dr. Harrold $1,770.00 for their services. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the payment to the vets. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Sheriff's Settlement (2021-2022)

Administrator Russell reported that the Commissioners have a file with the Sheriff's settlement. No action needed.

Ohio County Farm Permit July 2022 to June 2023)

Administrator Russell reported that next the Commissioners have a copy of the hunting permit for the period beginning July 1, 2002, through June 30, 2023. No action needed.

NPWDB Executive Committee Appointment

Administrator Russell reported that the Commissioners recommend Kevin Coulter to the Northern Panhandle Executive Committee. This appointment is to be made by Commissioner Nickerson. Administrator Russell stated this is just to ratify the appointment. Commission Nickerson made a motion to appoint Mr. Coulter to the NPWDB Executive Committee. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

WesBanco/ Main Street Pledge Agreements (2022-2023)

Administrator Russell reported that the Commissioners have a copy of the WesBanco/ Main Street Pledge Agreements. Finance Director Archey reported that we are required by code to cover our deposits with these collateral agreements, and he has received these two back already and has three other banks from which to still receive paperwork. Some banks send their own agreements and some sign the ones we send. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the Pledge Agreements. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Ohio County Sheriff Deputy New Hire

Administrator Russell reported that the Sheriff is seeking the Commission's approval for a deputy new hire. He is Blake Roar. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the new hire of a deputy to the Ohio County Sheriff's Department.

Ohio County Sheriff Security Officer's New Hires

Administrator Russell reported that next the Sheriff is seeking the Commission's approval for two new hires for security officer positions. The two gentlemen are Isaac Wiley and Chris Flowers. Administrator Russell asked the Sheriff if he was still short some deputies. Sheriff Tom Howard reported that he has

had seven security officers leave. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the new hires. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

STAFF/ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORTS

Administrator

Administrator Russell reported that the County Commission Association Annual meeting starts Sunday, July 31, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. at Wilson Lodge.

Administrator Russell stated that he is starting to make rounds at the Council meetings within the County. He was at Triadelphia last Wednesday, and he was at West Liberty last night. He has been talking about the ARPA funds that the County Commission has generously allocated to the Communities. He reported that they talked about what they could use the money for and discussed the possibility potentially using a page on our website for their online payments. The legislature requires that by March 1, 2023, all County governments that accept some form of payment must have an online presence for residents to make those payments. None of the communities have a website of their own so he is offering this alternative.

Administrator Russell reported that he is going to post the Project Manager position sometime tomorrow and hopes to have that filled in the very near future.

Administrator Russell reported that all the County employees are on the time keeping system. Commissioner Nickerson asked if this changed the twenty-six weeks to twenty-four. Administrator Russell explained no it did not, it is still twenty-six weeks of pay.

Administrator Russell reported that he did meet with Bob Herron, Kim Miller and Rick Jones about the Director of Diversity Inclusion position. The schoolboard appears to be on board with it and it would be shared with all three entities. He is working on an MOU to be shared with the Commissioners.

Administrator Russell reported as appeared in the paper this morning, he has sent the Board of Education the PRO contract for them to review, and they agreed to it at the board meeting last night. They agreed to the same amount as last year, which is three PRO officers and they will reimburse the County $180.000.00.

Facilities

Administrator Russell reported that the HVAC project is 99% ready to bid. He is hoping to have the bid out the end of August. He has been meeting every week with the underwriter and council to make sure we have the financing in place. Of course, an important piece for us was to get the Ohio County Building Commission in place. Administrator Russell reported that as part of this we will have to do an electrical service upgrade here at the Courthouse that may mean we have a one-day outage here at the Courthouse. They have yet to meet with the contractor but as soon as we do, he will bring back the information. Commissioner Abraham asked if it would have to be a weekday. Administrator Russell reported probably.

Administrator Russell reported that on the Courthouse Annex elevator project it is still down due to supply chain issues. He also reported that there was an HVAC issue in the Magistrate Building that has been resolved, and there is an electrical issue here at the main breaker that serves the 911 center. It has been short circuited, but we are changing that breaker first thing in the morning.

Public Safety

Emergency Management Director Lou Vargo reported on an update from the Health Department. With COVID-19 there is expected to be an increase, West Virginia has peaked, and Ohio County is on a

decline. Mr. Gamble believes the next peak will be when school starts. He also reported that people are still coming to the Health Department for testing kits and to get vaccinated. The Health Department is not doing any COVID 19 testing. A person would have to go to Med Express to get tested. The Health Department has received the new vaccine. It is just a primary not a booster, so if someone has not been vaccinated at all that is what they would get. He reported one case of monkey pox in West Virginia, and there are thirteen in Allegheny County, PA. The State Health Department has offered the monkey pox vaccine. The Health Department requested forty doses and he was granted seven doses. Mr. Gamble is going to use probably two for his nursing staff. Mr. Gamble is also doing an educational meeting for first responders on Monkey Pox. Emergency Management Director Vargo reported that the Sheriff had an active shooter drill at West Liberty during his Sheriff's Academy.

Sheriff Howard reported on the Sheriff's Academy that was held at West Liberty. He reported it went very well. He stated next week is the PRO conference, and he wanted to ask the Commission President if he could come up to the opening on Tuesday, August 2, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. He stated he has one hundred twenty-four PROs signed up. He stated the JAG Board and others may attend so it may be about two hundred twenty-five people staying at the Highlands. He stated he did let some businesses know it would be busy next week up there. Sheriff Howard reported September 12, 2022, the Tax Auditor training will be at Oglebay so that will bring a lot of people to the area. Sheriff Howard spoke about the Trailer which is in operation now. The mining situation with Swank will be done after the first of the year. Temporary bridges will still be there until new bridges are complete, and he has been hearing of a lot of truck traffic on Stone Church Road and West Alexander Road.

Finance Division

BILLS

Finance Director Archey reported that the Commissioners have a copy of the bills as they are up to date. Commissioner Nickerson noted that he asked one question prior to the meeting but would like to inquire about the other payments to the Ohio County Development Authority. Mr. Archey explained the reasoning for the six checks made payable to the Authority. Commissioner Nickerson thanked Mr. Archey for the explanation and made a motion to pay the bills. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

BUDGET REVISIONS

Finance Director Archey presented the County's Fiscal Year 2023 General Fund budget revision number one for the Commissioners approval. He advised that this revision was required to be sent to the WV State Auditor's Office by July 31, 2022. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve budget revision one. Commissioner Nickerson seconded the motion and the motion carried with all voting in favor.

EXONERATIONS

Finance Director Archey reported that there are thirty-one exonerations for the Commission's approval tonight. They are all credits reducing a tax; twenty-two are property, nine are real estate and the Assessor recommends all for approval. Mr. Archey further explained that approximately $21,000 of the $26,000 in credits was due to a keying error by the Assessor's office that valued a Toyota truck at $765,000. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the exonerations. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

CERTIFICATE OF RE-ENTRY

Finance Director Archey reported that there is one certificate of re-entry for approval tonight. This is a property that has not been on the books since 2014 and if approved, the Assessor's office will send the certificate to the West Virginia State Auditor's Office for tax collection so the property can eventually be put back on the books. County Clerk Michael Kelly advised he has reviewed this property and agrees with the certificate of re-entry. Commissioner Abraham made amotion to approve the Certificate of Re-Entry. Second by commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

COMMISSION BOARD REPORTS

Nothing tonight.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Abraham just wanted to remind everyone about the Airport events, the first one is on Saturday, August 13, 2022, which is the Touch A Truck event, and the other is on Saturday, September 24, 2022, which is a Vintage Planes and Car show called Wings over Wheeling. Commissioner Abraham again thanked everyone for the time keeping system that is up and running and for all their work. Commissioner Abraham reported that he attended the Center Market Review and attended the State of the City address.

President Wharton reported that the next meeting will be on Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

President, Randy Wharton

Administrator, Randel Russell