The Board of Commissioners of Ohio County, West Virginia
Minutes of a Regular Session for Tuesday, February 17, 2026

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

Staff Members present:
County Administrator Randel A. Russell
County Solicitor Don Tennant
Facilities Director Melissa Marco
Director of Emergency Management Louis Vargo
Assistant Director of Emergency Management Anthony Campbell
Chief Deputy Kent Lewis

Elected Officials present:
Sheriff H. Nelson Croft
Assessor Tiffany Hoffman

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

- Commission President Abraham convened the meeting in Room 215 of the City County Building at 8:00 a.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

Delegations

- A representative from H3LLC spoke to the Commissioners concerning tax bills on parcels on and the company currently owns. She stated the parcels are not currently active at this time, but feels they should be receiving tax bills for the properties. Assessor Tiffany Hoffman and Mineral Clerk Jessica Klinger stated they receive information directly from the drilling companies. Since the wells were not drilling, there no nothing to tax at this time. The representative felt that if they did not pay taxes on the minerals, the land could be sold at a Sheriff's Tax Sale. Ms. Hoffman stated that was not true. Even if the company would be in this situation, they would receive multiple notices that the land would be going to the Sheriff's Tax Sale. President Abraham asked if the Assessor's office could look into how other counties are completing this process. Ms. Hoffman stated each county is different to which H3LLC agreed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- The minutes from February 3, 2026 were approved by President Abraham, seconded by Commissioner Wharton. Motion carried.

Community Grants

- Opioid Funds, Laughlin Chapel, $25,257.55 – The Laughlin Chapel presented an opioid grant application in the amount of $25,257.55 for their Still We Rise Program. This program empowers students to learn basic life skills like first aid, how to manage their money, etc. These basic skills are the reason that many people in public housing are removed. By teaching these skills at a young age, the children have a leg up to succeed later in life. President Abraham made a motion to approve the opioid grant, seconded by Commissioner Wharton. Motion carried.
- Opioid Funds, Sheriff's Department, K9 Cage and Equipment – Chief Deputy Kent Lewis explained that one of the new Tahoe's would be used for the new canine, Orry. The cost of the

cage and equipment is just over $16,000.00. President Abraham made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Commissioner Wharton.. Motion carried.

- General County, RT 2 / I-68 Authority Contribution – The Commissioners made a motion to table the $4,000.00 contribution and asked if Mr. Bob Miller would be able to provide an update on the Authority at the next meeting.

New Business

- Personnel Matters, County Solicitor – This matter will be moved to Executive Session at the end of the meeting.
- Resolution, RED as LEDA for LED Grants – Each year, RED asks for a resolution to be the LEDA for LED Grants. Motion to approve the request made by President Abraham, seconded by Commissioner Wharton. Motion carried.
- Addressing
    - Road Name Change – Fitz's Lane to Vog's Lane – Mr. Russell asked that this issue be tabled until the next meeting. Multiple people live on this lane, and he would like to ensure they are aware of the name change. Issue tabled.
    - New Road Name, Fire Lake Drive – Mr. Dave Weaver has presented the Commissioners with paperwork to create a new road name called Fire Lake Drive. President Abraham made a motion to approve the new road name, seconded by Commissioner Wharton. Motion carried.

Staff and Elected Official Reports

- County Administrator Randy Russell – Mr. Russell stated the City is currently up to date on their jail bill commitments. He will review the next bill once it is available and provide it to the City.
- Projects Coordinator Melissa Marco – Ms. Marco stated the HVAC project is 95% complete. The work on the first floor is 90% complete and then paint and carpet will begin. She anticipates having each office back in their original location by the end of March to early April. The Apron project at the Airport is 90% complete as well and we will be scheduling a final inspection. The Tower Project at the Airport will kick off in March and will last through the end of 2026.
- Sheriff Nelson Croft – Sheriff Croft reported they recently held testing for new deputies and had a good turnout. They are currently down two deputies.
- EMA / EMS Director Louis Vargo – Director Vargo reported they are preparing several tabletop exercises that will occur in the next few weeks throughout the community.
- 911 Director Rickie Pritt – Mr. Pritt stated that the two new hires are doing well but are still in training.
- Senior Fiscal Officer Rebecca Coyne – Ms. Coyne presented the payables to the Commissioners. There were no questions, therefore President Abraham made a motion to approve the payables, seconded by Commissioner Wharton. Motion carried.
- Ms. Coyne presented the unpaid invoices. No action is needed.
- Ms. Coyne also presented a budget revision for review. There were no questions and President Abraham made a motion to approve the revision, seconded by Commissioner Wharton. Motion carried.
- There were six exonerations presented for review, all which reduced taxes. President Abraham made a motion to approve the exonerations, seconded by Commissioner Wharton. Motion carried.

At 8:50 a.m. the Commissioners entered Executive Session.

Executive Session was adjourned at 9:15 a.m. with no further comments to add to the record.

There being no further business to address, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Zachary T. Abraham, Commission President

Randel A. Russell, County Administrator