Ohio County Commission
1/25/2022

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, January 25, 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, Finance Director Rodd Archey, Solicitor Don Tennant, and Administrator Randel Russell.

Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of January 11, 2022. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Grants

HIDTA Award

Finance Director Archey reported that this grant is for overtime for the Drug Task Force Officer. The Sheriff has already signed off on this, but Mr. Archey advised the Commission that they have awarded $19,000.00 for the over time. The County Commission will have to pay $4,370.00 in matching funds. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to accept the grant award. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

County Records Management & Preservation Grant Award

Finance Director Archey reported that this grant award is for the Circuit Clerk's office. The grant funds are in the amount of $10,000.00. The required match is $1,000.00, but with what was submitted as the proposed project there will be an additional $5,000.00 needed to complete the project. He reported that if approved he will put this in at budget time. Commissioner Abraham made amotion to accept the grant award. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

NPWDB Board Appointment

Administrator Russell reported that there is a letter in the Commissioner's packet from Rosemary Guida at NPWDB. The Commission's appointee Michelle Olejasz resigned; she was replaced by Michael Crown, the Office Manager of the Wheeling Work Force Office. Rosemary Guida recommends that the Ohio County Commission appoints Michael Crown to replace Michell Olejasz on the NPWDB Board. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the appointment of Michael Crown to the NPWDB Board. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Hotel Tax Requests

Administrator Russell reported that this request is for the Ohio County Archery event, "A Shot in the Park" that was held on Saturday, January 15, 2022, at the Highlands Sports Complex. He understands that there were over 400 participants at this event. Many came from West Virginia and Ohio. The amount of the contribution would be $2,000.00. Commissioner Nickerson reported that there was a large attendance of local and out of town participants. Commissioner Abraham stated it is a good event. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the Ohio County Archery event. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Community Grants

Administrator Russell reported that the Moundsville Honor Guard is requesting $3,000.00 this year. They are anticipating major expenses for van insurance, purchasing uniforms and equipment. The Commission has contributed $2,000.00 -$3,000.00 in the past. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve a $2,000.00 contribution to the Moundsville Honor Guard. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Administrator Russell reported that there is no old business for tonight's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Administrator Russell reported that the Commissioners have before them for consideration, the Wheeling Ohio County Airport Runway 3-21 Crack Seal & Seal Coat Engineering Fees in the amount of $242,928.00. In the packet is the proposed project budget which could potentially amount to $1,134,313.00. The County would have to generate a match of $56,715.00. This $242,928.00 is the design fees to Jacobs Engineering. Commissioner Abraham asked Administrator Russell if the FAA has already approved the amount. Administrator Russell reported that they have not approved the total contract; this is the design fee. Administrator Russell reported that we already have one Runway repair that will start in the Spring. This is to rehab the second runway and were just going into design now. Commissioner Nickerson asked if the total cost is the $56,715.00. Administrator Russell responded yes if the Airport gets the grant. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the contract for the design fees. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

T-Hangar Lease #2-Todd Balcar

Administrator Russell reported that Todd Balcar would like a second T-Hangar at the Airport. Commissioner Abraham asked if the Airport manager is tracking the insurance for the T-Hangars. Administrator Russell reported yes, he is. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the second T-Hangar lease for Todd Balcar. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor. Administrator Russell attached a list of seven other people who are interested in a T-Hangar at the Airport.

Letter of Support-Comcast

Administrator Russell reported that last week the Governor announced a $17.5 million dollar grant award or series of awards to expand broadband in the State of West Virginia. Comcast was awarded $4.7 million to expand broadband roughly 120 miles through Ohio, Brooke, and Hancock Counties. This will provide service to 1,447 unserved residences in that region. In Ohio County that amounts to 436 unserved customers that will now have access to broadband services. Comcast is now making application for a second grant called the MVPS grant program and their hope is to serve an additional 250 unserved residents in Ohio County, and they have asked for a letter of support. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the letter of support. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Sheriff-Donation of Vehicles

Administrator Russell reported that Sheriff Howard has asked to donate some vehicles. On the list are two vehicles he would like to donate to Calhoun County. Calhoun County is in desperate need of vehicles there. What the Sheriff has found is when he sells these vehicles at auctions the money received does not account for what he must pay to strip the vehicles of all the equipment and lettering. So, he thought a better use of the money would be to give the vehicles to a sister County in the State of West Virginia. Calhoun County's total budget is about $3 million dollars, so they do not have a lot of money to spend on new vehicles. The third vehicle the Chevy van he would like to donate to the Ohio County Development Authority. At this point it will not pass inspection, but if can be used as a site vehicle. Solicitor Tennant reported that we should ask Paull Associates to make sure it can be covered if not inspected for use at the Highlands. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the donation of the vehicles with the stipulation to sell the vehicles for $1.00 to Calhoun County and to check the insurance for the van. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

STAFF/ ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORTS

Administrator Russell reported that he would like to introduce the Commission's new accounts specialist, Becky Coyne to the Commission Office. She started on Monday, January 24, 2022.

Administrator Russell reported that the West Virginia Association of Counties meeting is February 6, through February 8, 2022. He believes that he and Commissioner Abraham are going to be attending.

Administrator Russell reported that the ARP input Committee is about halfway complete and by the next meeting he will have the remaining members in place.

Administrator Russell reported that the Animal Shelter Manager position is expected to be finalized by the end of the week. Then once the manager is selected, he will move forward with selecting an Animal Control Officer.

Administrator Russell reported that the HVAC project is still moving forward, and he is putting together documents to put it out to bid soon.

Administrator Russell reported that the Airport Runway 16-34 Crack Repair Project is set to start in the Spring, and the Airport is in design on the Runway 3-21 project.

Administrator Russell reported that the elevator in the AEP building is still down in the AEP annex. He is going to try to make one more attempt to get a second bid on the repairs for that, but at this point there has not been a lot of interest. President Wharton stated to go ahead and get the repairs completed.

Administrator Russell reported that there is a serious roof leak on the 5th floor in Judge Olejasz's Courtroom that is being worked on to be repaired and he is working on specifications for the Animal Shelter roof.

PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION

Emergency Management Director Vargo reported that regarding COVID-19, Mr. Gamble has made a change in his reporting mechanism. Due to the volume and getting positive cases recorded on the weekends and getting the information to the State, he is not collecting the data as he had in the past. He is referring us to the State webpage because there were inconsistencies in all Counties. Last week there were 700 new cases, but they are seeing nationally the numbers are getting better and hopefully locally too. On the State call they reported 88.5 percent of the cases are now Omicron. There is still testing at the old OVMC location, and vaccines are still being administered at Michaels at the Highlands but on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday only with walk ins available here at the Health

Department on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The Hospitals are still very busy and operating in crisis mode. Based on the Governor's agreement to start sending the National Guard to Wheeling Hospital, they were awarded ten soldiers.
Emergency Management Director Vargo reported that on EMS, he is working on developing a training schedule for the volunteers with some unique training opportunities. He has a fire chiefs meeting tomorrow and he would like to discuss and then give Administrator Russell the final budget. He thinks there are some good opportunities out there to enhance their training and keep their interest and help with improving retention.
He reported that in the past we have spoken about the mental health transports. East Ohio Regional has started a service mainly for hospital transport but by mid-February they will be West Virginia licensed and they have agreed to help the Sheriff with these transports. Commissioner Abraham asked how they will bill. Emergency Management Director Vargo reported that they will come up with a set rate for the Sheriff use. President Wharton explained that the WV Code states now that the Sheriff shall do the transports. He stated there is a bill in the legislature now by one of the Marshall County Delegates to change that so they can do contracted services.

FINANCE DIVISION
Finance Director Archey reported that the Commissioners have a copy of the bills, for consideration. Commissioner Abraham asked about the US geological Survey? Finance Director Archey stated that is the river gauge for the EMS, and that bill is paid on a quarterly basis. Commissioner Abraham asked about Northwood Health Systems charges. Finance Director Archey stated that is two months' worth of people in our care. Commissioner Abraham asked about Scan Mark charge. He reported that is the County Clerk's system for scanning of their documents. Commissioner Abraham asked about the Three Phase Excel Elevator. Finance Director Archey reported that is quarterly maintenance charge on all elevators. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to pay the bills. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

EXONERATIONS
Finance Director Archey reported that there are two exonerations for vehicles, and they are both credits and are recommended by the Assessor. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the exonerations. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

ELECTIONS
Finance Director Archey reported that there is an Emergency Absentee Voting Policy for consideration which means up until noon on Election Day if someone is in the hospital and did not get to vote, then the Election Office would send a representative from the Republican and the Democrat Party go to the hospital so the voter may vote. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to accept the Emergency Voting Policy for the May 2022 Election. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.
Finance Director Archey reported that next are the ballot commissioners for each party. The Republican Executive Committee has chosen Greg Smith and the Democratic Executive Committee has chosen William Larue. They have been ballot commissioners in the past. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the ballot commissioners. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor. Finance Director Archey pointed out that on the last day of filing there are no notaries available

in the Elections office and that office will be open from 9:00 a.m. till 12:00 p.m. Commissioner Abraham reported that the Commission should have a notary available in the office.

Elections Calendar
Finance Director Archey reported that the Commissioners have an updated Elections calendar in their packet for their information.

COMMISSIONERS BOARD REPORTS
President Wharton reported that he will have a board report at the next meeting concerning the PSD. Commissioner Abraham reported he will be attending the OVRTA meeting and will have updates from that at the next meeting.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS
Commissioner Abraham reported that he had a resident who had some issues with trees on some lines. EMA Director Vargo helped to put in a ticket in for the vendor to take care of the issue. He is very happy and thankful to Mr. Vargo and Administrator Russell on how well that was handled.
Assessor Hoffman reported that she is going to the WV Association of Counties meeting and while she is there, the Assessor's office is meeting with the State Property Department. The Assessors are having difficulty getting some mineral Oil & Gas numbers finished, and that is why she does not have the numbers yet. She wanted the Commissioners to know that. She also wanted to let the Commissioners know that there will be a week in April when her office will be closed because the office will be having training on the new IAS system. She is going to try to open if it's a possibility, but it is all online. She reported that she has contacted the newspaper, and it will be on the website in the next few weeks.
Assessor Hoffman reported that there are Oil & Gas hearing scheduled on February 9, 2022, but the letters have not even gone out yet so she does not know how that will happen. Administrator Russell reported that there are currently no requests for that evening. Administrator Russell reported that he would be remiss if he did not point out that Amy Wade the Ohio County Supervisor for the Soil Conservation District is with us tonight.
Commissioner Abraham asked the other Commissioners if the Commission meeting could be moved until February 10, 2022, since he and Administrator Russell will be in Charleston on February 8, 2022. The Commissioners agreed.

President Wharton reported the next Commission meeting will be on Thursday, February 10, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

President, Randy Wharton

Administrator, Randel Russell