OHIO COUNTY COMMISSION
1/11/2022

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, January 11, 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, Solicitor Don Tennant, and Finance Director Rodd Archey.

Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the minutes with one correction to be made to them. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Election of Officers

President Wharton stated at the first meeting of the year the County Commission normally elects a President, and traditionally a Vice president also. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to nominate Randy Wharton as President for this year. Second by Randy Wharton. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

President Wharton made a motion to nominate Zach Abraham as Vice President for this year. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Staff Appointments

President Wharton stated that the Commission needs to appoint a County Administrator, County Solicitor and Airport Manager. President Wharton made a motion to re-appoint the County Administrator Randel Russell, Don Tennant as Solicitor, and Rusty Escue as Airport Manager. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Boards & Committees

Administrator Russell stated that the Commissioners have a sheet in their packet with the boards and committees that each sits upon now. If the Commissioners desire to make changes, they may. President Wharton states that he serves on the Ohio County Fireboard, the OCDA, the WV Extension Committee and the Public Service District. Commissioner Nickerson serves on the REDP board, the OCDA, Wheeling Heritage Area Corporation, and the Wheeling Creek Watershed Committee, and Commissioner Abraham serves on Bel-O -Mar regional Council, OVRTA, the OCDA, Personnel Advisory Committee and the Northern Panhandle Workforce Investment Board.

President Wharton made a motion to approve the boards the way they stand now. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Grants

Homeland Security Awards

Ohio County EMS Training Project

Emergency Management Director Vargo reported that last year Homeland Security Grants for West Virginia were open for bids. Two of those received awards. The training project is in collaboration with the new paramedic program at Northern Community College. Which is a simulator lab that includes an adult manakin that is lifelike with breath sounds, just like a paramedic would need to use in real life emergencies. The amount is $58,000.00 and this is an award. Commissioner Wharton made a motion to

approve the EMS Training Grant award. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Ohio County Critical Infrastructure Camera Project

Emergency Management Director Vargo reported that the second grant is in the amount of $27,000.00 for the camera system that we have throughout the County. Some of the cameras are fourteen, fifteen years old and this will be used to replace them and increase some of our access points on one of the towers. President Wharton made a motion to approve the Ohio County Critical Infrastructure Camera Project. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

ADDRESSING

Blend Hill

Dave Weaver from the Addressing Committee reported that he had one road for the Commission's consideration tonight. Eric Blend is requesting the name of Blend Hill. He is currently building a home there and, in the future, he wants to build a barn where he will teach people to farm in Ohio County. President Wharton made a motion to approve the road name. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Hotel Tax Requests

Foundations Baseball

President Wharton stated that we had Doug Costain speak about Foundations Baseball at the last meeting. President Wharton made a motion to approve $1,000.00 for the Foundations Baseball Clinic. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Mountaineer Brewfest

Administrator Russell reported that the Commission has a request from Mountaineer Brewfest. The Commission has given to this event in the past. President Wharton made a motion to approve $2,500.00 for the 2022 Mountaineer Brewfest. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

EMS

Administrator Russell reported to the Commissioners before them tonight is the recommendation to expand the Ohio County Emergency Medical service to a 24 -hour a day service from the current 12 - hour a day service. President Wharton stated that the Fire Chiefs have talked about this endlessly at the Fire Chief's meeting, and this has also been talked about quite a bit at the County Commission level. President Wharton is in favor of making a motion to approve the EMS to a 24-hour service. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Tow District Policy

Administrator Russell reported that before the Commissioners for approval is the recommendation of the Ohio County Commissioners for emergency towing services. Attached is the policy itself which was prepared by the 911 Director and Mr. Dave Weaver, which coincides with what was discussed during the public meeting with all the tow companies and emergency providers. The tow service must be an authorized wrecker service recognized by the West Virginia Public Service Commission and they must provide the Commission with documentation of that on an annual basis. They must possess at a minimum one licensed tow vehicle for each type of service to be provided whether it be light tow or heavy tow and they must provide two years of verifiable non-emergency towing services with Ohio

County before they can make application for new service. Maps are attached. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the Towing Policy. Second by President Wharton. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Redistricting Map Correction

Finance Director Archey reported that presented is a correction to the map. An error was found on the previous map. So, a new map was prepared with the area corrected and it is still within our guidelines of 5% plus or minus in all areas. Finance Director Archey stated that he sent the corrected map to the Commissioners showing that is a small area in the Stone Church area of Maple Davis Lane. There is no approval needed as it is just a correction to the map.

NEW BUSINESS

Board of Review Dates

Administrator Russell reported that attached the Commissioners will find the legal ad planned to run for Board of Review and Equalization for Ohio County. He stated that the Commission is required to sit and review on these dates if a resident would want to schedule a Real Estate Hearing. Administrator Russell reported that the hearing for the Gas & Oil Board of Review is scheduled for Wednesday, February 9, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. The State Tax department will be here that evening for those hearings. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the dates for the Board of Review hearings. Second by President Wharton. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Airport-DBE Program

Administrator Russell reported that the Commissioners have before them a policy statement with grant applications through the FAA. There is a requirement to attempt to use disadvantaged business enterprises. This document establishes our goal at 10.25% of the total contractors working on site to be disadvantaged business enterprises. The Commission must put forth a conscious effort to reach that goal. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the DBE policy. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

OCPSD-Board Appointment

Administrator Russell reported that this is a ratification of the appointment that would have taken place in January of 2021. President Wharton's appointment was up in January of 2021. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the board appointment. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

STAFF/ ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORTS

Administrator Russell reported that he is still in the process of interviewing managers for the Ohio County Animal Shelter as well as an Animal Control Officer/ Warden. As soon as he is ready to make those decisions, he will advise the Commissioners. He stated that he has selected an Accounts Payables specialist. Rebecca Coyne will start with us on January 24, 2022. On the ARP committee he is still in the process of assembling that, and he has reached out to half of the names on the list and will work to speak with the others quickly. He has been involved in meetings about a regional broadband project that is being planned by REDP and City Net that will take a broadband internet trunk from Wetzel County all the way up to the top of Hancock County. He will get more information to the Commissioners as it comes available.

The County Commissioners Association meeting is scheduled to begin this Sunday, January 16th and run through January 18, 2022. He stated that he and Commissioner Abraham will be in Charleston to attend. He is hoping to meet with the legislators, the WVDOH, as well as the Governor if that's possible.
Administrator Russell reported that the HVAC design is 100% complete. He met with CMTA last week and is awaiting a proposal from them.
Administrator Russell reported that at the Airport the 16-34 project is due to start this Spring and regarding Runway 321 he is working on a design proposal right now. He stated that Airport Manager Escue will be speaking tonight also.

Airport- Rusty Escue

Airport Manager Rusty Escue reported that the 16-34 Project was postponed last year to this year. Also, the project to reseal and crack seal the main Runway 3-21 is scheduled for this year. The Commissioners were provided with a copy of the Airport Managers report, and Mr. Escue offered to answer any questions. He reported that some Managers in the State of WV and a former Airport Manager from a Colorado Airport have met and are looking for ways to improve activity at the Airports.

Public Safety

Emergency Management Director Vargo reported that since the last meeting the COVID statistics continue to rise and included a chart to follow. Last week Mr. Gamble reported 700 cases, 111 of those cases are children under 19 years of age and 4 deaths. Our vaccine testing at OVMC is still ongoing, and cars are waiting in line for two to three hours. The clinic is from 9:00 a.m. till 3:00 p.m. The vaccine clinic is tapering off, and boosters seem to be about 40 a day. He is considering reducing the days open to Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. He reported that he has been on a zoom call with the hospital, and they are still in a crisis mode. All ventilators were full last week and now about half are being used. ICU is full. The COVID unit is full. They have had positives waiting in the emergency room waiting for beds. Staffing at the hospital is an issue too.
Emergency Management Director Vargo stated that the County Fire and EMS, Emergency Management and 911 are mourning the loss of one of their own, Tori Gearry. She was from Valley Grove and was dedicated for many years. In addition to being a full-time mother and home worker she has served the Valley Grove community and surrounding areas for several years. In addition to being a very competent EMT she was just a very wonderful person.
Emergency Management Director Vargo reported that the CDC guidelines have changed. If you were exposed to COVID-19 and are not up to date on your vaccinations then you need to stay at home for five days, and wear a well fitted mask around others, even if you don't have symptoms. After the five days the individual should be tested and stay home till, they receive results. They should watch for symptoms for up to ten days.
If you were exposed to COVID -19 and are up to date with vaccinations or had COVID 19 within the last ninety days, then you may continue to work unless you develop symptoms. Get tested at least five days after your last close contact with the person that has COVID 19. Watch for symptoms until day ten.
If you test positive for COVID 19 or have symptoms regardless of vaccination status, then stay home for five days and isolate from others in your home. You may end isolation after five full days if you are symptom free and should wear and a well fitted mask for ten days after a positive test.

FINANCE DIVISION

Finance Director Archey reported that the Commissioners have a copy of the bills. Commissioner Abraham asked about the Ogden bills. Finance Director Archey stated those were for the Tax Office for

the land sale. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the bills. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.
Finance Director Archey reported that there are budget revisions for consideration tonight. Budget revision number two. Seven of those are Contingency, and fourteen are Revenue/ Disbursement adjustments. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the budget revisions. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

ASSESSOR
Finance Director Archey reported that you there are two exonerations to be considered tonight. They are both credits, both 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.

ELECTION
Finance Director Archey reported that there is a brief election calendar for the Commissioners. The first page shows we are currently in the filing period which ends January 29, 2022. The second page is a primary election calendar from the State. No action is needed.

COMMISSION BOARD REPORTS
Commissioner Abraham stated that he wanted to say congratulations to Commissioner Nickerson on his appointment. He apologizes for being late tonight.
President Wharton also wanted to congratulate Commissioner Nickerson on his appointment to the new Judge's position with the State of West Virginia

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS
Administrator Russell reported that there is a Holiday coming up on Monday, January 17, 2022, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. All offices will be closed except for those that are required to remain open.

FUTURE MEETINGS
President Wharton reported the next meetings will be Tuesday, January 25, 2022, and Tuesday, February 8, 2022, Wednesday, Tuesday, February 22, 2022, and for the Gas & Oil hearings, February 9, 2022. The Commission meetings are all subject to change.
Meeting adjourned.

President, Randy Wharton

Administrator, Randel Russell