Ohio County Commission
February 20, 2024

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, February 20, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by President Donald A. Nickerson. The Pledge of Alliance was recited.

A moment of silence was observed for Daryl Kline, a retired dispatcher with over twenty years of experience.

Delegations:

- Dr. Stephen Corder, the Region 1 representative for the West Virgnia First Foundation, was at the meeting to provide an update on the progress to date. The Foundation has not been able to hire an Executive Director and it is hampering progress. They have now become a working board. He is serving on the Expert Panel, while other representatives are serving to search for an Executive Director and on Banking and Investment. Dr. Corder asked the Commission to consider people who could serve on statewide committees in prevention, healthcare systems, treatment, lived recovery, and law enforcement.
- Mr. Joe Young from the Thrasher Group stated the company now has a presence in Wheeling. They are located above the Bridge Tavern in downtown.
- Mark Griffith - Mayor of West Liberty – The town is trying to purchase new playground equipment for children with disabilities but are finding it to be very expensive. They do not want children to be left out. Mr. Randy Russell asked if the town had used the ARPA funds provided by the County. The mayor stated he felt there were funds remaining.
- Chief Michael Lough of the West Liberty Police Department stated there has been an uptick in criminal activity in the town. In February, there were 41 law enforcement interactions. As of now, the town only has one patrol vehicle. Chief Lough has found vehicles under $10,000.00 and is asking for the County Commission's assistance and support to purchase another vehicle. Mr. Abraham asked Mr. Russell if the same ARPA funds could be used for the purchase of this vehicle. Mr. Russell will check into both purchases and touch base with the mayor and the chief.

The minutes from February 6, 2024, were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Grants:

- Climate Pollution Reduction Grant – Mr. Russell recommended approval for the Ohio County Commission to participate in a regional application for a Climate Pollution Reduction Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The City of Wheeling and Marshall County have committed to participating in this collaborative effort. This grant would provide funding for property owners in both residential and commercial environments, and for products and services that would provide greater energy efficiency. This would include appliances, thermostats, HVAC, windows and

doors, and home solar systems. Motion to approve participation in the grant made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Community Grants:

- Bordas and Bordas Amateur Golf Classic – The event will take place on June 8 and 9 at the Crispin Golf Course at Oglebay Park. Proceeds from the event benefit the Oglebay Foundation's Access to the Parks Program where low-income Ohio County children are provided year-round admission to all park activities. They are requesting a $250.00 sponsorship, which is below the threshold for submitting financial data. Mr. Wharton made a motion to approve a $250.00 donation, with a second by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.
- American Legion Auxiliary Unit 1 – The American Legion Auxiliary is requesting a sponsorship to send one or more candidates to the 81st annual Rhododendron Girls State to be held at Davis and Elkins College June 9-15. The sponsorship fee for each participant is $300.00. At this time, the American Legion Auxiliary does not have a number on how many plan to participate. The request was tabled to gather more information on how many students plan to attend and if the Prosecutor's Office will be sponsoring students as in year's past.
- Ogden Newspapers Wellness Weekend – Odgen Newspapers is requesting a $5,000.00 gold sponsorship for their Wellness Weekend held in conjunction with WVU Medicine on May 25 and 26, 2024. This event includes the 47th annual running of the half marathon in downtown Wheeling. They provided some details on the event but have failed to provide all the financial information requested. Mr. Wharton had a conversation with race leadership and he was satisfied with the information provided and stated it brings quite a bit of people to downtown Wheeling for the event. A motion to approve a donation in the amount of $3,000.00 was made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

New Business:

- Bel-O-Mar Regional Council Dues – Dues for the organization are $4,403.63 which represents a 13% increase from past years. The dues have not been increased in 18 years. Mr. Abraham inquired if the dues had a clerical error or if the County paid in arrears because the invoice was dated July, 2023. Mr. Russell will call the organization. A motion to approve the invoice once the dates were checked was made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Wheeling-Ohio County Airport / United States Department of Agriculture – Mr. Russell recommended entering into a cooperative agreement between the Wheeling-Ohio County Airport and the United States Department of Agriculture for wildlife hazard management services in the amount of $5,441.00. Last year was the first time we utilized this service to keep wildlife off the runways at the Airport. Motion to approve the cooperative agreement made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Ohio County Commission New Hire Kimberly Lemley – The advice and consent of the Commission is sought to hire Kimberly Lemley as an accountant in the Commission office. Ms. Lemley would come to the office with a Master's Degree in Accounting and 34 years of experience of accounting experience at various levels. With the impending

retirement of Mr. Archey, the office finds itself one person short. Motion to approve the hire made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Elections:

- The ballot drawing was held this morning, and the results are included in your packet. No further action is required.

Staff / Elected Official Reports:

- Administrator Report - Mr. Russell – The check from the EMS Salary Enhancement and Crisis Response funding has been received. This will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Facilities Update - Ms. Marco – Work continues at the Ohio County Animal Shelter. As previously noted, the painting is complete, and the grooming sink is installed. The beds approved at the last meeting were ordered and have arrived on site. The flooring has been ordered and the date for installation will be announced at the next meeting. We are currently performing general maintenance at the jail complex and to the lighting around the campus. The porches will go out for bid this week. The HVAC project is progressing with the roof scheduled to be finished this week, weather permitting. Work in the penthouse continues and the first scheduled move of the project will occur in April.
- EMA – Mr. Vargo – No report.
- Sheriff's Department – A representative from the Sheriff's Department was not in attendance at the meeting.

Finance:

- Mr. Archey reported the bills are up to date. Motion to approve the bills made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Unpaid invoices – Some of the invoices were awaiting grant funding. No further action is required.
- Exonerations – After review, the exonerations were approved by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
- Certificate of Re-entry – After review, the certificate of re-entry was approved by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Donald A. Nickerson, President

Randel A. Russell, Administrator