OHIO COUNTY COMMISSION
6/28/2022

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, June 28, 2022. 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.

Delegation-A.C. Weithe

A.C. Weithe from Belomar announced that he came to the meeting to represent the Town of Triadelphia & the Village of Valley Grove. As a response to the County Commission's request from the municipalities of Ohio County to submit potential projects to be paid through the ARPA grant funding, he noted that both Triadelphia and Valley Grove submitted funding requests to the County for preliminary expenses for their water and sewer projects. He advised that Belomar is assisting Triadelphia with a submission in the amount of $4.4 million in funding from the West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council (IJDC) for their project. He noted that Belomar will also be assisting Valley Grove with their funding request, as well. Mr. Weithe went on to explain that the water and sewer infrastructure for these two municipalities are in bad shape and funding opportunities are based on a formula involving each municipalities current utility rates and that municipalities median household income. He knows the median household income is wrong which skews the numbers. But the median household income numbers are not able to be changed. He is asking the Commissioners grant Triadelphia's request of $175,000 and Valley Grove's request of $40,000 to cover their preliminary expenses for these necessary projects.

Minutes

Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 14, 2022, Commission meeting. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Grants-FY 2023 Court Security Grant Application

Mr. Russell advised the Commissioners that their packet contains a copy of the proposed Court Security Grant Application. He noted that the second page itemized the list of equipment requested which totals $39,191. Commissioner Abraham asked if any of this equipment would replace existing equipment. Mr. Russell responded by noting that the walk-through detectors would replace existing equipment and all other equipment would be new additions to the security. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the submission of the Court Security Grant application. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Hotel Tax Requests

Circus Saints & Sinners Party on the Plaza

Administrator Russell reported that the Saints & Sinners are having their Party on the Plaza again this year. He stated that it will be held Saturday, July 9, 2022, from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Market Plaza. Commissioner Nickerson questioned who would benefit from the $500 contribution as it denotes a different organization in the flyer. It was then determined that the contribution benefits the West Virginia Children's Hospital, and the match benefits the other organization. Commissioner Nickerson

made a motion to approve $500.00 for the Party on the Plaza. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

ARPA Funding Update

Administrator Russell reviewed the budget for the ARPA funds with the Commissioners.

ARPA Funding Request-Town of Triadelphia

Administrator Russell reported that the Town of Triadelphia is requesting $175,000.00 to cover their costs of Mapping, the Preliminary Engineering Report, and the Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Study.

ARPA Funding-Village of Valley Grove

Administrator Russell reported that the Village of Valley Grove is requesting from the Ohio County Commission the amount of $40,000.00 to cover the cost of their Preliminary Engineering Report. That way the Village could use their ARPA funding for other pre-development costs.

Commissioner Abraham noted that the ARPA budget already includes funding each of Ohio County's municipalities in the amount of $100,000. He made a motion to officially approve $100,000.00 from the ARPA funds for the municipalities of Valley Grove, Bethlehem, West Liberty, and Clearview and $175,000 for Triadelphia. Commissioner Nickerson asked if the grant committee needed to be consulted. Commissioner Abraham responded that the committee was only reviewing community projects. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Ohio County Building Commission

Administrator Russell reported that the Commissioners still needs to appoint two more persons to the Building Commission, and this can be done as a phone meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

OCC Property, Casualty and Liability Insurance Renewal

Administrator Russell reported that the Travelers Insurance is up for renewal. The Travelers premium is a 3% increase for fiscal year 2023 mainly due to an increase in worker's compensation, which is the result of the increase in payroll. If wages would have remained flat, there would have been a 2.5 % decrease in overall premiums. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the renewal of Travelers. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

IRS mileage rate-July 2022 to December 2022

Administrator Russell reported that the IRS mileage rate increased to 62.5 cents per mile, a four-cent increase from the current 58.5 cents per mile rate through the end of 2022. Commissioner Nickerson made a motion to approve the new mileage rate. Second by Commissioner Abraham. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Prosecutor New Hire-Kevin Day

Administrator Russell reported that during the March 2022 budget hearings, the Prosecuting Attorney's office requested to hire an additional attorney to assist with abuse and neglect cases that continue to increase. Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Shawn Turak, reported that their office interviewed several candidates and would like to hire Kevin Day as an Assistant Prosecutor. He was a deputy in Ritchie County and recently passed the Bar. He has specialized in child neglect and abuse cases. Although he lives in Marietta, he is willing to drive to Wheeling daily. Eventually, he may be able to do some work

remotely. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the hiring of Kevin Day to the Prosecutor's office. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

OC 911 New Hire-David Root Jr.

Administrator Russell reported that 911 Director Russell would like to hire David Root Jr. to fill a pending vacancy. He is a Cameron Police officer. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the hiring of David Root Jr. to the 911 Center. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

NPWIB board appointment-Melissa Evick

Administrator Russell reported that Rosemary Guida from the Northern Panhandle Workforce Development Board reported that Tate Blanchard has resigned from the board and Melissa Evick is interested in replacing him. She is an account executive with Visiting Angels. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve Melissa Evick to the NPWDB board. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

STAFF/ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORTS

ADMINISTRATOR/ FACILITIES

Administrator Russell reported that the HVAC project is about ready for bid. That is the urgency in completing the Building Commission appointments. The Annex elevator repair is still not under way due to the inability to get some of the chips needed. The HVAC at the Courthouse Annex is now starting to present us with some problems. Although it has been repaired for now, we may have to look towards replacement.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Emergency Management Director Lou Vargo stated that the Health Department is reporting that COVID numbers are still low; and they have now started the vaccination for the 6-month to 5-year-old group. He advised that Mr. Gamble warned about ticks this time of year, as they have had some cases of Lyme disease in Ohio County. And one final note from the Health Department is that they are expressing concerns about monkey pox, even though there have been no cases in Ohio County. Mr. Vargo also reported that the EMS trailer arrived and should be able to be used around the 1st of July. As part of the EMS training program, he attended a class with other first responders at the Highlands Event Center for Hybrid vehicle extraction last weekend. The 911 phone system is up and running. 911 Director Russell had training for the staff and herself last week. He also reported that at the Sheriff Camp they will be having an ALICE Drill and CPR instruction. The current estimated attendance for the Sheriff's Camp is 107.

President Wharton asked if we have the resources to put a task force together to inventory potential flooding issues due to the downed trees from the Derecho in the creeks and streams and asked Mr. Vargo if there was any way to alleviate these issues. Mr. Vargo advised that the National Guard is not allowed on private property. He stated that the Southern Baptist Church is helping to clean up areas in Bethlehem now and there are other similar organizations that do this kind of work. Mr. Vargo stated maybe the Soil Conservation, Workforce or the City of Wheeling might be able to assist. He also reported that the DOH assisted in the cleanup when it involved a road. Mr. Vargo also reminded the Commissioners that we have limited access to the creeks and streams per the State.

FINANCE DIVISION

BILLS-Finance Director Archey reported that the Commissioners have a copy of the bills as they are up to date. Are there any questions? Commissioner Nickerson stated that he asked his questions prior to the meeting and is fine with the bills being paid. Commissioner Abraham noted he had a question about a couple vendors. He stated the first vendor is Compiled Technologies. Mr. Archey explained that was the IT company for the County Clerk's office. The payment was for 2 invoices. The first invoice was about $4,000 and represents the annual off-site backup costs. The second invoice was for a couple new computers. Commissioner Abraham said that the other was TJ Velas. Mr. Archey advised that this was for training for the Ohio County dive team and that the Sheriff had those costs covered by a grant. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the bills to be paid. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. The motion carried with all in favor.

BUDGET REVISION

Finance Director Archey reported that he has the Coal Severance Budget revision #1 for the 2022 – 2023 carryover which is due by July 15, 2022. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the budget revision for Coal Severance. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

ASSESSOR

Exonerations

Finance Director Archey explained to the Commissioners there are 18 exonerations tonight. Fifteen are credits reducing a tax, three are debits increasing a tax. He advised that the Assessor did not have all paperwork attached tonight but if we do not do these, the tax bills will not be correct when mailed. Commissioner Nickerson asked about the 2 exonerations concerning county court split. Mr. Archey explained that if a property is being utilized for both residential and non-residential purposes, the Assessor will split the property so it can be properly taxed. Commissioner Abraham made a motion to approve the exonerations once all paperwork is received and reviewed. Second by Commissioner Nickerson. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

COMMISSION BOARD REPORTS

Nothing from the board.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Nothing from the board.

FUTURE MEETINGS

President Wharton reported that the next Commission meeting will be on Tuesday, July 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. meeting adjourned.

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President, Randy Wharton Administrator, Randel Russell