

Monroe Commission Holds August Meeting

The Monroe County Commission met in regular session on August 3, 2011 at the Courthouse. Shane Ashley, President of the County Commission, called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer.

Members of the County Planning Commission appeared before the County Commission providing an update of the Commission's activities. Jim Menard said that the Prosecuting Attorney has reviewed the proposed Dilapidated Building Ordinance. One change was made to the ordinance and this was adding language that says a building must be unoccupied before it can be deemed "dilapidated". The County Commission agreed they needed to take some sort of action on this ordinance in the near future. Rod Graves, Chairman of the Planning Commission reported that the next Planning Commission would be held at Alderson.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that the county has received the check from their insurance company for damages suffered to equipment in the 911 Center during a recent storm. The Clerk said that since the original insurance claim was filed, it has been determined that lightning also struck the control panel to the chair lift in the Courthouse during the same storm. Damage to the lift is approximately \$2,500.00. The insurance company advised they would pay for these damages as well.

The County Commission agreed to send an email to each member of the House of Delegates advising they were opposed to House Bill 106, the House Redistricting Bill. Under this bill, Monroe County will be divided into three separate House districts. Monroe presently has one Delegate district.

Commissioner Gum reported that he had a couple of roofing contractors scheduled to come and look at the Courthouse roof and provide an estimate as to how much it will cost to replace such roof. The roof has begun to leak. Commissioners plan to submit a grant application to the West Virginia Courthouse Improvement Authority seeking funds to replace the roof.

Commissioners approved incremental pay increases for the county's Deputy Sheriffs as required by WV Code 17-14-17(c) and approved a request from Magistrate Nancy Crews to purchase some curtains and blinds for the Magistrate Office.

The County Commission again talked about purchasing gas for county vehicles from local businesses in the county instead of at the Department of Highway offices where purchases are now made. It was agreed that a decision on this matter would be made at the Commission's September meeting. County Clerk Donald J. Evans previously advised the County Commission that he thought the county could buy gas cheaper from businesses here in the county and by doing so, the county would also be supporting county businesses.

Mark Betler of Union appeared before the County Commission concerning the proposal by the House Redistricting Committee to split Monroe County into three House districts. Mr. Betler said counties have to be contiguous before they can be merged into a district and Monroe and Mercer aren't contiguous. Betler

presented the County Commission with maps confirming his statement. Commissioners told Betler they would check into this matter further.

Commissioners changed the date of the Meet & Greet reception in Peterstown from August 23rd to August 30th. This reception will be held at the Peterstown Public Library at 7:00 pm. The purpose of this event is to give those individuals who live in the southern part of the county an opportunity to meet their county officials and ask any questions they may have. Refreshments will be served. The Commission plans to have other Meet & Greet receptions in other areas of the county.

The County Commission appointed Teresa Johnson to the Monroe Public Library Board of Trustees and Susan Cobb as one of the county's Fiduciary Commissioners. John S. Porterfield was reappointed to the Red Sulphur Public Service District Board of Directors. The monthly meeting minutes of the Gap Mills and Red Sulphur Public Service Districts and the Monroe Board of Health were reviewed.

Larry Mann, representing Greener Pastures, Inc. met with the County Commission to advise them of a few National Electrical Code violations he found while installing new lighting in the Courthouse, 911 Center and Prosecuting Attorney's Office. These violations were related to fixtures that were not properly grounded. Mann said he has no authority to require the County Commission to address the violations but he had a duty to inform them of such. Mr. Mann also presented Commissioners with a proposal to install surge protectors in the electrical control panels in the Courthouse, 911 Center and Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Mann said these surge protectors would help prevent power surges throughout these buildings. Commissioners told Mann they would address the mentioned violations and agreed to discuss his proposal to install the surge protectors and get back to him. The County Commission accepted a proposal from Mann to install a light on the flag located on the Courthouse lawn and to replace the inoperable outlets in the Gazebo. The Gazebo is also located on the Courthouse lawn.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that new audio and visual equipment has been installed in the Circuit Courtroom. This equipment includes microphones, speakers, monitors, and a remote controlled projector with a retractable screen, a DVD/CD player and a mobile utility cart. Total cost of the equipment was \$35,000.00 and was paid for by the WV Supreme Court of Appeals.

Shirley Hall, Executive Director of the Family Resource Network, appeared before the County Commission and provided them with an annual report of the FRN. She also provided the County Commission with a copy of the Community Assessment for fiscal year 2011-2012. Commissioners thanked Ms. Hall for all she continues to do to help the families and children of the county.

The Commission adopted a resolution designating the Greenbrier Valley Economic Development Corporation as the county's lead economic development agency and authorized the Clerk to pay the annual assessment to GVEDC.

The County Commission approved the poll workers for the October 4, 2011 Special General Election and adopted a resolution of support for the

Monroe Animal League in their efforts to obtain a grant from the Governor's Community Participation Grant Program.

Richard Ellard of Union appeared before the County Commission offering information about a grant / loan program offered by the State of WV. Under this program, the state can award a grant to the county. In turn, the county could then make a loan from these grant funds, to a business just starting up in the county or to an existing business that might have a need for a loan.

Members of the Summers County Commission appeared before the County Commission concerning a piece of property owned jointly by both the Summers and Monroe County Commissions located near the county line. This property was acquired approximately 30 years ago and was paid for from a grant. The original proposed use of the property was to construct a recycling facility. The recycling facility never developed and now the Summers County Commission wants to construct a Class D landfill on a portion of the property. A Class D landfill is restricted as to what type of material the landfill can accept. Summers County is in the process of implementing a Dilapidated Building ordinance and they want to use the landfill to dispose of the material from the buildings that are torn down. Jerry Berry, President of the Summers County Commission, said the landfill could only be used by the County Commission for the purpose of disposing of the mentioned materials. Monroe Commissioners advised them that they weren't interested in becoming a partner in the landfill and they would rather sell their interest in the property to Summers County.

The County Commission reviewed a letter from the Monroe County Solid Waste Authority that the construction of a Class D landfill would not fill any unmet needs of county residents and in fact, such a landfill might have a negative effect on existing privately owned tax paying facilities in Monroe County. The Solid Waste Authority expressed concern over the county being responsible for potential environmental liabilities associated with a landfill. In closing, the Solid Waste Authority recommended that the Monroe County Commission sever its proprietary relationship with the Summers County Commission regarding the proposed landfill. The two County Commissions agreed to meet again to discuss this matter further.

The County Commission approved a drawdown request for the Greenville Water Project in the amount of \$310,139.40 and authorized incremental pay raises required by WV Code for the county's Deputy Sheriffs.

The Commission authorized the Clerk to place an ad in the local newspaper soliciting bids to make repairs to and paint the roof on the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Bid specifications can be obtained by contacting the County Clerks Office. The deadline to place a bid is September 5, 2011 by 4:00 pm.

Commissioner Ashley reported that he was working with the Governor's Office in an effort to obtain \$30,000.00 for the Prevention Resource Officer position at James Monroe High School.

The County Clerk advised Commissioners that Stephen Capaldo had called him and he was working with Verizon to find a suitable location for a cell

phone tower in the Gap Mills / Sweet Springs area. Capaldo said an engineer from Verizon has agreed to take a tour of the area with Capaldo.

The County Commission addressed two estate matters and approved eleven exonerations. The Commission will meet again in regular session on September 7th at the Courthouse.