

REGULAR ADJOURNED SESSION OF THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF BROOKE COUNTY,
WEST VIRGINIA, HELD TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2019

-0-

The County Commission of Brooke County, West Virginia met in regular adjourned session this 2nd day of April 2, 2019 at 10:30 a.m. at the Courthouse.

-0-

Present: Tim Ennis, President
Stacey Wise and Andrew J. Thomas, Commissioners
Sylvia J. Benzo, County Clerk

-0-

The Commission held their preliminaries before the meeting including a prayer and pledge of allegiance.

-0-

A motion was made by Stacey Wise, seconded by Andrew Thomas and unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 26, 2019.

-0-

The Commission room was filled with ambulance employees, friends, and family to express concerns about the ambulance department not receiving the same pay raise as all other county employees. Commissioner Wise stated that during the process of approving budgets and increased wages for county employees the Commission was made aware that the Ambulance Service was in a deficit. The Commission had to approve the budget because of deadlines but they are still working diligently with the Ambulance Service Director and Assistant to come up with a resolution before the new fiscal year starts on July 1, 2019. Commissioner Ennis stated that the Commission has continually been working with the Ambulance Director and Assistant on a way to compensate the ambulance personnel. He stated the Commission is committed to the ambulance personnel so that an equal pay raise can be given. There is another meeting scheduled with the Director and Assistant after the Commission meeting today.

Marlene Whitco was present and stated that she previously worked for the EMA and was not happy with how the Levy operates. She stated there are about thirteen (13) entities on the Ambulance/Excess Levy with all the entities getting a share of the Levy, not just Ambulance. She felt it was sad that the Ambulance employees did not get a raise. Commissioner Ennis stated that the Commission and Directors are working toward a resolution.

Mr. Casinelli felt that even though the Commission indicated their willingness to work with the Ambulance Service employees there are ways today to fix this situation and give them a raise. He felt the Commission had to fund the Ambulance Service to get them to keep working and have good people on board.

He also felt that the Business Development Corporation takes care of the industrial portion in the county and the EDA is more for the local communities.

Janice McFadden was present and indicated that the EDA does an Agriculture Day at Brooke Hills Park and she supports them.

Ms. McFadden also felt the Senior Citizens would have to cut services if not given money, she asked the commission to also re-think the request of the Senior Center for funding. Commissioner Wise felt we have a great need for services, however; services sometimes cost more than the money coming in. She felt the employees were working hard to fix this situation.

Commissioner Wise stated that the county has made much progress with our great volunteers and the Commission appreciates all of them.

-0-

This being the first regular meeting for the month of April, 2019, fiduciary matters were presented to the Commission for approval after having been cared for in the absence of the Commission by the County Clerk. The meeting will remain open until the end of the regular meeting and if no objections are filed will close at the end of the regular meeting.

-0-

A copy of the following correspondence was ordered filed in the County Clerk's Office:

A letter was received from the Brooke County Committee on Aging requesting financial assistance from the County in the amount of \$25,000.

A copy of the Hammond Public Service District minutes of their March 20, 2019 meeting was received.

Information from the West Virginia Association of Counties for free informational seminars to be held concerning purchasing, programs and services available to governmental agencies on surplus property and contracts.

Andrew Thomas made a motion, seconded by Stacey Wise and unanimously passed to approve the following budget revisions:

Budget Revisions:

Sheriff Palmer - \$1,415 to various line items in the Courthouse Security Commission - \$1,000 to Materials & Supplies

The above correspondence was ordered filed in the County Clerk's Office.

-0-

A Proclamation was drafted for Fair Housing in Brooke County. A motion was made by Stacey Wise, seconded by Andrew Thomas and unanimously passed to adopt the Proclamation declaring April, 2019 as "Fair Housing Month" in Brooke County.

-0-

A Resolution was presented to the Commission asking if they would adopt April 2, 2019 as being "National Service Recognition Day". Commissioner Ennis stated the Commission's appreciation for all their hard work. A motion was made by Andrew Thomas, seconded by Stacey Wise and unanimously passed to approve the Resolution.

-0-

Luke Diserio was present and announced that he is President of the Wellsburg Chamber of Commerce, member of the EDA and of the West Virginia Manufacturers Extension Partnership Organization, which are run by volunteers. He felt the Economic Development Authority helps organizations grow and are currently expanding services and he named a few. Mr. Diserio stated the Commission set up the Economic Development Authority (EDA) in 2003 and set their By-Laws. He felt the decision of the Commission, not to fund the EDA for 2019 was done without the Commission being aware of all they do. He felt that if the EDA is not funded for next year, they would have to eliminate programs or stall them and it would diminish the volunteer program. He stated that the EDA takes blame for not educating the Commission but requested the Commission re-visit the EDA request for funding. After his presentation Commissioner Wise thanked him and the EDA for their passion and will have a decision by next week.

Dr. Crook, Superintendent of Brooke County Schools was present and stated that the EDA has worked with the schools and they have a lot and plans with them. Some youth do shadow them and take tours which makes for a talented work force.

John Casinelli was present and stated there was more than \$119,000 in the PA Fashion Fund which can only be used for economic development. He felt this money was not spent on the EDA.

Commissioner Wise stated that the Commission did fund the Economic Development Authority and they had not expended all of their funds from this year. She stated that they took the time to go over the budget, line by line, to see if it could be more efficient. The Commission did not take the request lightly. The Commission does support the endeavors of the EDA group

but did not want to have over lapping services doing the same thing. Commissioner Wise has attended almost all of the EDA meetings and stated that the EDA had asked for a year to show their progress. She stated that in looking at their budget, items are completed and expended from the funds that were there with money still left. The vote was not a vote of no confidence but just asking to show progress. The County has a lead economic development agency, the Business Development Corporation. John Casinelli thought there were mis-conceptions on the budget, that economic development funds go into the budget and are to be used only for economic development. Commissioner Wise felt the committed funds go to economic development.

Bud Billiard expressed concerns about the funding for the EDA and felt some members are discouraged because of not being approved for funding. He felt they have an opportunity to move forward. Commissioner Thomas stated that they made their decision with the understanding that most expenses were already paid. He would like statistics on jobs created and how much money was invested. He feels he has been fiscally responsible.

Commissioner Wise explained that Ag Day at Brooke Hills Park runs on its own and was not on our Levy, however; a lot of other services are costing more. The county could not start this fiscal year knowing we are running in a deficit in the Ambulance Service. The Commission is working on a solution with Bob Fowler and Andy Nickerson. She explained that carry-over money has been set aside for capital improvement projects and feels the commission are good stewards of the county and of tax payer money. She explained under the Levy there are not additional funds the first year.

There were very long discussions on both the EDA and the Ambulance Service with Commissioner Ennis stating the taxpayers have been good to Brooke County and felt they pay enough in tax dollars and will not apologize for being fiscally responsible.

Commissioner Wise stated that we have many great programs in our county with great volunteers and the Commission appreciates all of them. The Commission looks at every agency but sometimes the services costs more than the money coming in but it does not mean they are not fiscally responsible.

-0-

Melanie Wilharm and Melanie Acosta, representatives from First National Bank were present to give the Commission information on our deposits and ways they feel they can save the County money by banking with them. They will meet with the Commission after the regular meeting.

-0-

Invoices and vouchers were approved and the following checks were ordered written:

General County Fund - Check Nos. 22562 through 22578 for \$15,703.96
Payroll withholding - Check Nos. 22579 through 22581 for \$114,110.78
ACH - \$39,141.11
E-911 - Check Nos. 2121 through 2125 for \$3,136.28
Ambulance Fund - Check Nos. 4190 through 4196 for \$3,785.85
Dog Fund - Check No. 1401 for \$717.47
Shelter Levy - Check Nos. 841 through 843 for \$21,537.87
Valuation Fund - Check Nos. 1385 through 1386 for \$14,562.70

-0-

No further business to come before the Commission a motion was made by Andrew Thomas, seconded by Stacey Wise and unanimously passed to adjourn.

-0-

Timothy R. Ennis, President

Teste:

Sylvia J. Benzo, Clerk

