Ohio County Commission

March 7, 2023

The Public Hearing for the Northern Panhandle HOME Consortium was opened at 6:00 p.m. and closed at 6:02 p.m. as there was no public comments.

Melissa Thompson, the Community Development Specialist, reported the City of Wheeling is the Lead Agency for the Northern Panhandle HOME Consortium which is made up of Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, and Marshall Counties as well as the cities of Wheeling and Weirton. For 2023, the allocation of HOME funds will be $385,214. Of that, 10% is for administration and 15% for a required Community Housing Development Project. The First Time Homebuyer Program will receive $288,910 to provide up to $10,000 for a downpayment and closing cost assistance to low and moderate income first time homebuyers in the Northern Panhandle. It is a loan that is forgiven if the buyer occupies the home for five years. Since 1998, 87 homebuyers have been assisted by the Ohio County program (not including 284 buyers in the City of Wheeling’s program.)

The Ohio County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 6:07 p.m. The meeting was called to order by President Donald A. Nickerson. The Pledge of Alliance was recited.

Present at the meeting: President, Donald A. Nickerson, Commissioner Zach Abraham, Commissioner Randy Wharton, Solicitor Don Tennant, Finance Director Rodd Archey, and Administrator Randy Russell.

Delegations:

* Paula Calvert from Family Services of the Upper Ohio Valley addressed the Commission. She stated over 100,000 meals are served in Ohio and Marshall Counties and SNAP benefits are being reduced. The program is donation based and at this time they have a $90,000 deficit. She is asking for assistance to feed people in Ohio County, where 85% of the meals are served. The cost per meal is over $10.00 and the organization is reimbursed $7.50 per meal.

The minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

Grants:

* Emergency Management Performance Grant (2020) – We have been awarded this grant for over 30 years. The award is for $75,000 with a $75,000 match. Motion to approve by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.
* Emergency Management Performance Grant (2021) – With approval, Mr. Archey will request $125,000. Motion to approve made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
* HIDTA – This grant is used to fund overtime for law enforcement officers. Motion to approve made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.

Community Grants:

* A motion was made by Zach Abraham and seconded by Randy Wharton to approve $3,000 for the Wheeling Health Right’s Chef’s Auction.

Old Business:

* ARPA Funding – Each organization was called to inform them of the Commissioner’s decision with regards to funding. In the coming days, we will send an MOU to each organization awarded funds.

New Business:

* Emergency Medical Services Retirement System – A resolution is required before they can consider Ohio County. If approved, any employee hired after July 1, 2023 would have to enter EMSRS. Motion to approve made by Mr. Abraham, seconded by Mr. Wharton. Motion carried.
* Board Appointments – Ohio County Development Authority – Due to his move outside the county, Mr. Evans has tendered his resignation. It was recommended that Mr. Mark Griffith, Mayor of West Liberty, be appointed to serve out the remainder of his term. Motion to approve made by Mr. Wharton, seconded by Mr. Abraham. Motion carried.

Staff / Elected Officials Reports:

* Administrator – Mr. Russell reported the Commission office has an opening for an Accounts Payable Specialist. Mrs. Sondra Elson tendered her resignation with her last day scheduled for March 16, 2023.
* Facilities – Ms. Marco reported we had a kick-off meeting with Cattrell Companies this morning for the HVAC project. The roof at the Ohio County Animal Shelter has been ordered and will arrive in the next six weeks.
* Emergency Services – Motorola has upgraded the statewide system. There were no issues with downtime. On Sunday, March 12, the Mountaineer League coaches will receive AED and CPR training. At the end of March, Man & Machine training will be held. Last week, ten emergency calls were received in one hour and 911 handled the calls very well.
* Payables – The Commissioners were provided with up-to-date bills. Mr. Abraham inquired into two invoices; Scan Mark, which relates to the County Clerk’s scanning project, and Jacklyn Bentz, which was a parking invoice. Motion to approve the bills made by Zach Abraham, seconded by Randy Wharton. Motion carried.
* Budget Revisions – None at this time.
* Exonerations – After review, Mr. Abraham made a motion to approve the exonerations with a second by Randy Wharton. Motion approved.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

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Donald A. Nickerson, President Randel A. Russell, Administrator