

Annex

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the bullet and be the bad guy," said Rogers.

Backus noted the responsibility is on the commission's shoulders and they will have to show the citizens that the right decisions are made.

The same company that submitted the proposal for the elevator/stairwell also supplied the skywalk design from years ago.

"We have a copy of the original blueprints," said Backus.

"I hate to think of the cost of a skywalk. Just to put in an enclosed stairwell is \$1.8 million, with the elevator, mechanical room for sprinkler system and access to three floors," said Worden. He wants to reevaluate and look at the original proposal in today's dollars.

"There shouldn't be a criminal element for those reporting to coming into the courthouse. It interferes with those coming in for everyday purposes. What better way than to put it where the sheriff's office is?" asked Backus.

Worden said no price was discussed on the Torbeck properties. "There hasn't been a decision to see if it qualifies. I don't want to put this county into major debt for 30 years. I can't feel comfortable doing it."

Backus said sitting and not saying anything was not doing justice.

In the end, Commissioner Worden stated Rural America has to spend more money for less population. "There is a 4.2 percent decline in population in West Virginia, but we need to expand government because of mandates. I can't wrap my head around it. I don't know the answer. There are no decisions made. We are compiling data and ideas, and this is another idea in the pot."

Indexing System

Rick Olexo, representative of CSSI (Complete System Support Inc.), Parkersburg, has been working with the Ritchie County Clerk's Office in an effort to switch the indexing system of that department and submitted a quote comparable to the current structure.

The price included new hardware to access all vital packages — birth, land indexes, marriages and abstractor ability to view documents — and is used in 43 of the 55 counties.

There is a charge to print, due to state code, but articles are free to view.

Currently, a fee is paid to see records. Now there will only be

an expense to print.

Olexo stated as soon as information is filed, it is available to the general public with instant replication.

All records from July 1, 1985, to the present will be available online.

Copies can be printed; however, they are not certified. Individuals must come to the courthouse to receive official documents.

"This will not cost us any more money and will be 100 percent better," said County Clerk McDonald. "And they call us back when we need them!"

CSSI is targeting June 1st as the go live date. A one-week training period is planned, and abstractors, attorneys and the public are encouraged to attend to watch a system demonstration.

Commissioners authorized the contract.

Sound System

The Ritchie County 4-H Assembly Hall and Ritchie County Courthouse will be receiving new sound systems in the near future.

After an initial bid of \$21,000 to install a sound system at the 4-H grounds, the calculations were redone and the total cost was dropped to \$9,822.44.

The reason for the drastic change was stated as less powerful speakers being used.

Most deejays bring their own equipment and the higher quality devices were deemed unnecessary.

The speakers can be used in the main building or outside, but they do not project into other rooms. Radios are provided in cabins in case of emergency.

It was mentioned that the current public address setup was purchased in 2005 and has been used everywhere by everyone — fire departments, court house lawn, weddings and more.

The commissioners voted to purchase the assembly hall sound system from Creative Audio.

The total for a portable system in the basement is quoted as \$4,200, and will be reviewed.

It was decided to utilize the moveable courthouse unit to try at the 4-H grounds to see how it works before purchasing another.

A new quote of \$5,840.70 — down \$149 — for a wireless sound system at the courthouse was accepted; however, no date was given for installation.

Block Grants

Reports were submitted by Tim Meeks, Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council, concerning local active projects.

Construction is underway on

the Victory-Union Ridge project and Stonegate Construction has started road bores. Progress meetings are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month.

A bid opening was conducted last week for the generator at the Beatrice site; however, low bid was over budget. Three Brothers of Poca submitted a cost \$60,000 above the anticipated \$106,000 total.

The engineer can be awarded for one generator — \$93,000, which will provide power backup supply at one booster station.

It has been determined electric upgrades are needed at the substation.

A request was made at the development office to use additional funds so the contract could be awarded, but it was declined. Hopefully, remaining funds will be available from another project.

Meeks said proposals are being collected for the Highland-Hebron design and there has been lots of interest. Reviews, interviews and evaluations will be conducted following the Apr. 28th due date.

In other business, the Ritchie County Commission did the following:

- Set Apr. 21st, 8:00 a.m., to lay the levy for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. The day is set by code and cannot be changed.

- Adopted 2015-2016 fiscal budget at \$3,941,522. The total has been approved by the State Auditor's Office. The budget reduced from 14.3 percent to 13.98 percent, due to rising revenue from oil and gas, which will reflect in a minimal decrease in taxes.

- Approved Taylor Haddox for summer help at the WVU Extension Office, Harrisville, beginning May 18th. Pay will be \$9 per hour. Although she is considered a county employee, the Ritchie County Board of Education is invoiced for payment.

The Ritchie County Extension Office will re-post the position for full-time employment. After candidates were screened through the Morgantown office and interviews conducted, the search failed.

- Authorized vehicle maintenance payments and budget revisions for Sheriff Bryan Backus. He stated savings of \$7,500 were reported for the year, using the Fuelman card program. The regional jail amount was \$12,400.25.

- Approved invoices for payment, \$173,124.54; and 18 vacation orders.

- Accepted revisions to budget: Sheriff's Office, \$1,200, from training/education to mainte-