

AT A COUNTY COMMISSION HELD FOR PENDLETON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA, AT THE COURTHOUSE, ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021 AT 9:00 A.M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: GENE McCONNELL, PRESIDENT; CARL HEVENER AND CAROLE HARTMAN

COUNTY EMPLOYEES PRESENT: KAREN PITSENBARGER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR; ELISE WHITE, COUNTY CLERK; APRIL MALLOW, PROSECUTING ATTORNEY; SHALEE WILBURN, CIRCUIT CLERK; SANDIE SMITH, ASSESSOR; CHAD BOWERS, SHERIFF

PUBLIC PRESENT: SHAWN STINSON, THE PENDLETON TIMES

The Commission proceeded to elect a President for said Commission to serve for a period of one year beginning January 5, 2021, and Gene McConnell having been chosen by unanimous vote, it is ordered that the said Gene McConnell, be, and he is hereby elected President of the Pendleton County Commission for the term of one year beginning January 5, 2021.

Minutes of the December 15, 2020 meeting of the County Commission, on motion of Carl Hevener, were unanimously approved.

Maintenance:

Eddie Simpson has been working on putting together the furniture for the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. April Mallow, Prosecuting Attorney, stated that the phone lines and internet have been installed. She inquired as to whom would be doing the cleaning of the office. Karen Pitsenbarger, County Administrator, will contact Joyce Moats with J&L Reconditioning to see if she can add this office to her cleaning contract.

Gene McConnell questioned if the county had an official policy for the renting of the two community buildings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Karen stated that we do not have an official policy but have been following the state guidelines. Gene suggested we should have a policy stating that the community buildings will not be rented to the general public until the state lifts their guidelines.

Karen will contact Derrick with Mountain View Lawn Service again as there still appeared to be some excessive use of salt.

No representative from the Pendleton County Health Department attended the meeting as they were giving COVID-19 vaccines today.

Diana Mitchell, 911 Director, was unable to attend the meeting as she was assisting the Health Department with the vaccines.

Gene McConnell stated that the issues that were brought up in regards to the class action opioid lawsuit were addressed at the last meeting. He made a motion, vote unanimous, for our county to stay in the lawsuit with the understanding that the law firm, Motley Rice, would handle the discovery process.

On motion of Carole Hartman, vote unanimous, one sheep claim was approved at the rate of \$75.00 per sheep killed by dogs. The claim had been properly verified by the Sheriff's Office.

Mileage reimbursement rates changed to 56 cents per mile as of January 1, 2021 in accordance with Internal Revenue Service rates.

The Commission signed a resolution for the Pendleton County Economic & Community Development Authority to obtain a grant with a \$27,000 local match for the fiscal year 2020/2021 under the Local Economic Development (LED) grant program.

The annual contract from Global Science and Technology for maintenance of all county computers was reviewed. There was no increase in the rate. The rate remains at \$680 per month. On motion of Carl Hevener, vote unanimous, the Commission approved and signed the new contract.

Dates were set for Board of Review and Equalization as follows:

February 1, 5, 11, and 16, 2021. Anyone wishing to meet with the Commission during Board of Review must make an appointment with the County Clerk.

THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS OF ADMINISTRATORS, EXECUTORS, ETC., DONE BY THE CLERK IN VACATION OF THE COMMISSION, WERE THIS DAY PRESENTED TO THE COMMISSION, APPROVED ON MOTION OF CAROLE HARTMAN, AND UNANIMOUSLY CONFIRMED.

The appointment of Connie Hartman as Administratrix of the **Estate of John Kennedy Pennington, deceased**. Bond in the amount of \$2,500.00 with Theodore Hartman, Jr. as Surety.

The probate of the Last Will and Testament of the **Estate of Martha G. Hevener, deceased**. The will was wholly written in the handwriting of the deceased and, upon oath, was proven to be her own signature and handwriting by Sandie Smith and Kim Grace. The appointment of Herman Hevener as Executor of the **Estate of Martha G. Hevener, deceased**. Bond not required per Last Will and Testament of deceased.

The probate of the Last Will and Testament of the **Estate of Mary Ruth Armentrout, deceased**. Witnesses by affidavit, Tamara J. Smith and Boyd Kimble. The appointment of Cynthia Ann Puffenbarger as Executrix of the **Estate of Mary Ruth Armentrout, deceased**. Bond not required per Last Will and Testament of deceased.

There were no final settlements.

There were no exonerations.

ORDERED THAT THE FOLLOWING ALLOWANCES BE MADE PAYABLE OUT OF:

GENERAL COUNTY FUND:	Check Nos. 31768 - 31800	\$28,389.67
DOG AND KENNEL FUND:	Check No. 421	\$675.00
MAGISTRATE COURT FUND:	Check No. 300083	\$212.24
911 FUND:	Check Nos. 3468 – 3476	\$30,672.20
PARKS & RECREATION FUND:	Check No. 1119	\$10.77
PENDLETON COMMUNITY BLDG:	Check No. 1167	\$90.00
COVID-19 FUND:	Check No. 154	\$564.50

The Commission discussed with each elected official the needs and concerns they may have with the COVID-19 pandemic and ways to make their offices more automated and any other needs/concerns they may have.

Shalee Wilburn, Circuit Clerk – The Judge had requested that there be only one employee in the office per day unless there is court at this time. They have been using the court e-file system for the past few years. She does not anticipate any additional expenses as their computers are covered under the Supreme Court.

Elise White, County Clerk – The Clerk’s office has gone online this week with their recorded documents. They will also begin accepting credit and debit cards this week. She will be getting the information to Karen Pitsenbarger to place on the County website.

April Mallow, Prosecuting Attorney – The office should be up and running fully within a couple of days. She has no secretary at this time (is under quarantine).

Sandie Smith, Assessor – They currently do not have any of their farm or assessment forms online, but she will check into the possibility of doing this. She explained the exoneration process. She stated that she would like to hire a full-time appraiser deputy and a part-time data clerk. She also inquired about the Commission setting a pay scale for deputy clerks. Gene asked her to check with other assessors to see what is paid in other counties. Sandie also inquired if when the weather is questionable, but she is here and tells her employees to stay home, can that be classified as a “snow day”. Gene said he did not feel that there should be a policy in regards to that issue. If it is the employee’s choice to stay home, then they can take a vacation day. The other Commissioners concurred with him. Sandie has appointed Kim Grace as the Chief Deputy in her office.

Chad Bowers, Sheriff – Chad has hired and appointed Andrew Hinkle as Chief Deputy. His salary will start at \$38,852. He would like to hire a third deputy. Gene requested that he wait until they look at the budget for next year before starting the hiring process. The starting salary would be approximately \$30,500. The law enforcement vehicles are accumulating some high mileage. The new vehicle that was purchased recently should be ready next week. He is going to check into some lease programs that may be a better option than purchasing a new vehicle. He questioned about the possibility of the County going back into PEIA for health insurance as currently Blue Cross does not have an option of keeping the insurance when an employee retires.

Gene requested Elise White to contact our insurance broker, Dave Barton, to have him look into what the cost would be with PEIA and with any other insurance companies.

ORDERED THAT COMMISSION DO ADJOURN ON MOTION OF CARL HEVENER, VOTE UNANIMOUS, UNTIL TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021.

President