

The Powell County Fiscal Courts regularly scheduled meeting was held on January 8th at 6pm. All members of the court were present for roll call. This was the first meeting with newly elected magistrates, Dennis Combs and Chad Patton. They join the returning three magistrates: Timmy Tipton, Donna Gabbard, and Mike Lockard. During this meeting we welcomed new members and also thanked outgoing magistrate Kenneth "Goat" Rice and Keith Hall for their service. All court members had been sworn in on December 21, 2018 in preparation for this term which started on January 7, 2019.

We had one person who came to speak during the public comment section. Kara Lewis came as a representative from Appalachian Wireless to inform the court and employees of some plans and incentives they had available that may be attractive to them.

Following the public comment portion of the meeting the court commenced with the financial portion of the meeting and then moved on to the old business section which only had one item. In a previous meeting information had been presented and then approved to take advantage of sweep accounts in order to capture higher rate of returns on our checking accounts. An update was made that we had moved forward with their approval and should start seeing those benefits within the next month.

At the first meeting of the year we always have the privilege of having the Powell County Extension Service staff come and provide an update on the activities they have undertaken over the last year, with the added bonus that they always provide those present with country ham/biscuits and Ale-8's. Their presentation is always professional and informative as well as a good example of transparency by a taxing district. It's always good when citizens are able to see what their tax dollars are going for. We'd like to thank all the staff for the work they do and for annually making their presentation.

Another thing that is accomplished at the first meeting of the calendar year is that fee offices present their budgets and salary caps for approval. These offices include our County Clerk's Office and the Sheriff's Office. Jackie Boone Everman, our newly elected county clerk, was the first to present her budget and salary caps. Mrs. Everman's budget was \$2,796,660 which was the same as number as the previous clerk's budget. Mrs. Everman's salary cap was \$233,000 versus the previous year of \$229,155 and this minor increase is attributed to budgeting for increases to the retirement and health insurance. After these were presented the court voted to pass both. Mrs. Everman also gave the court some thoughts on things she was going to work toward to hopefully save the money and be able to turn over additional excess fees in the future. She said her goal will be to have clean audits which with a fee office will prevent them from having to have a full audit the preceding year. This can mean savings of thousands of dollars. There was also a discussion about how the clerk's office is self-sufficient despite the fact they cover all their employee benefits and turning over excess fees to the court. This means the fiscal court isn't butting any money toward this office except providing the office space including utilities. We look forward to working with Mrs. Everman and also thanked her for having presented her budget to our office for review prior to the meeting.

Next, Sherry Skidmore came for the Sheriff's office to present their tax collections, state advancement request, budget and salary caps. Their budget for this year was \$436,000 versus \$416,300 the previous year. On the revenue side this increase is listed to come from commissions on taxes collected, on the expenditure side the increase is listed to be spent in the following lines: \$5,000 more to Sheriff's gross salary, \$5,000 more to deputies gross salaries, \$2,500 more to part time gross salaries, \$1,000 more to overtime gross, \$1,400 more vehicle maintenance and repair, \$500 more to office materials and supplies, \$3,000 more to gasoline, \$1,500 more to training, and \$100 more to xerox copier. The salary

cap remained the same as the previous year at \$199,500. After Miss Skidmore presented the budget, the court voted to accept the advancement, budget and salary cap. It should be noted that beyond this budget this office receives a little north of \$350,000 from the fiscal court.

Following this item was the discussion of positions that needed be filled within some of the departments, and the processes that would be used to help select these individuals. We hope to have most of this completed within the next couple of months. There was no action needed at this time.

At the beginning of each term, it is also required that all employees and appointments be redone with the exception of the county treasurer who is to be done separately as their term lasts through June to insure continuity should there be changes within the administration. This was done at this meeting with all current staff and salaries remaining the same.

The court had accepted bids for a new pickup truck. In response to the notice we only received one bid. That bid was accepted from Mann's.

Over the last several years there has been discussion about the necessity of Powell County having a site ordinance to better protect ourselves from unwanted dumps located within our county. A few months ago, we had had the first reading on Ordinance 18-29-07 which is titled An Ordinance Regulating the Siting of Solid Waste Management Facilities in Powell County. In order to complete the process of getting this ordinance enacted is to have it published and meeting scheduled for the second reading to be considered. This meeting has been scheduled for our meeting room on January 18, 2019 at 4:00pm and we announced this at the meeting.

Tiny Jones Road (CR-1240) was the next item discussed. The question has arisen in the last couple of months regarding how much of this particular road is a county road. In answering this question, we looked at what is included in our current maintained system and it showed a distance of .1049. Further questioning and digging revealed that as late as 1998 that road was at a length of .35. In order to establish where we were our staff and myself reviewed the records from 1998 forward to determine if there had ever been any court action to remove any portion of this road from the county road system. This research indicated that no action has been taken to alter it from its status in 1998. With this and the vote the previous meeting reaffirm the .35 length contingent that there had been no court action to change it means that this road is now back in the county system at its full length.

The County Clerk's Office was an agenda item as well and this pertained to facilitating the previous clerk in what she needed to close out the 2018 accounts and allowing our new clerk to be able to operate in her budget. This appears to be an issue throughout the state when there is a transition in a fee office. The majority of the issues stemming from the fact that despite these fee offices operating on a calendar year budget, their terms transcend the end of the year and bleed into the new year. I would encourage any of you who talk with one of your legislators to ask them to give some consideration to correcting this and having the terms align with the budgets. The current scenario is not ideal for either the outgoing office holder or for the incoming one. In an effort to assist both ladies' effected by this unfortunate circumstance, the court voted that they would take care of paying the outgoing clerk for the closeout process to keep it from having to complicate the new clerk's budget. This will be covered by the excess fees turned over as well as statute dictates it has to be provided for.

In an effort to continue to improve in efficiency and effectiveness the court voted on an array of items for our department heads and supervisors. This list was discussed in a workshop proceeding the regular

meeting and the items on the list are things that are necessary to enable us to continue improving your government. This list will be gone over in an upcoming meeting to insure all departments are doing what's needed.

There was one item pertaining to the Jail and that was getting court approval for a jail payment, which was done.

Another item that has to be done at the start of each new term is assigning magistrates to committees. Serving on a committee is part of the requirement for a portion of their salary as well as a vital way of having all members of the court engaged on county business. In this effort we have five functioning committees with each magistrate chairing one and they are as follows: Transportation-Timmy Tipton, Emergency Services-Dennis Combs, Administration-Donna Gabbard, Building and Grounds-Mike Lockard, and Jail-Chad Patton. This term we will strive to have each chair submit a report each month.

Following all the above business we had our department heads come with their updates and upon completion of those the meeting was adjourned.

I'm excited to have the opportunity to serve you another term as well as looking forward to working with this new court to work towards the ever-important responsibility of moving Powell County forward. I would encourage each of you to communicate with the court on any ideas, concerns, or questions you may have as this helps us keep in tune with what we need to be work on.