

Wyoming County Planning Commission
February 8, 2012 Meeting Minutes
Wyoming County Campus of Southern WV Community & Technical College

Present: Christy Laxton, David Lord, Steve Clark, Dvon Duncan, Jeffrey Hylton and Larry Mathis, Jody Cook, Susan England-Lord, Sue Cline. Guests included Megan Smith – Groundwork Wyoming County, Dale Stewart – Wyoming County CVB, Jeff Curtis – VISTA member for Groundwork, Tim McGraw – GET, and Joanna Swanson – VISTA member for GET.

Ms. Laxton, President, called the meeting to order at 12:35pm.

Ms. Laxton stated that a quorum had been established and asked if there were any changes to the October 2011 meeting minutes. No changes were voiced, so Ms. Laxton asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Motion was made by David Lord and seconded by Larry Mathis. Motion carried.

Under new business Ms. Laxton discussed the Planning Commission Board Terms for 2012 and provided a copy of the member list and terms.

The by-laws were handed out and reviewed with any changes to be made at the April meeting.

Ms. Laxton discussed the nominating committee for the election of officers. The motion was moved to have all current members present at the meeting be the nominating committee by Larry Mathis and seconded by Sue Cline. Motion carried.

Ms. Laxton then opened the floor for nominations for the office of President, Vice President and Secretary. Mr. Jody Cook nominated Ms. Laxton to remain as President, Ms. Parker to remain Vice President, and Ms. Duncan to remain Secretary. With no other nominations, Mr. David Lord moved to close the floor for nominations and Ms. Cline seconded. Mr. Cook moved to accept all nominations as discussed with Ms. Laxton remaining President, Ms. Parker remaining Vice President and Ms. Duncan remaining Secretary. Ms. Lord seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The next item of new business was the discussion of the Scenic Byway Application. Dvon and Sue provided an update on route, requesting additional information for six (6) intrinsic qualities. Planning Commission members should look at the provided narrative and let Dvon, Sue, or Christy know of any additions. Anyone wanting to help on this project should contact Dvon right away. There are 80+ Boy Scout applications that need to be completed for the byway. It was agreed that once cleared by Rick Staton, the County would use their eligibility. The

Planning Commission cannot act as board of directors, but anyone on the planning commission wishing to participate can do so. Sue has received the maps from the county commission – population density, residential, recreational, commercial/business and points of interest.

The next item of new business was to discuss and approve the Wyoming County Community Fund \$250 Scholarship Application. All members were provided a copy of the scholarship application. Two changes were noted 1) Specify that an adult with a GED would be eligible to apply and 2) change the website address to the new application. A motion was moved by Ms. Duncan to approve the scholarship with those changes, seconded by Mr. Lord. Motion carried. Additional conversation: This award could be presented at the school awards assembly if the person awarded was from Westside or Wyoming East High Schools. Only one scholarship will be awarded this year for the Fall 2011 semester. Eligibility will be advertised in all county newspapers and sent to each High School, Southern WV Community and Technical College, and the Wyoming County CTC. This scholarship is meant to provide additional education money to those students who might not otherwise receive a scholarship, with a focus on community service.

Under old business:

Brownfield Assessment Grant: The EPA Assessment Grant application was submitted by Megan Smith on behalf of the Wyoming County Commission to assess the remainder of the county. The Wyoming County EDA is still awaiting word on the \$200,000 Clean-up Grant for the new Industrial Park site at Tralee.

Ms. Swanson provided an update on GET. Joanna advised that they are waiting for approval from Pocahontas Land Company. They are working through liability issues. They welcome any ideas. GET is starting to have meetings of the TuGuNu hiking club – they have no insurance/neither does the GET. Pocahontas' biggest concern is about lawsuits. Sue talked with Heartwood who has expressed an interest and they wish to support the GET effort through Wyoming County. Christy asked for an electronic map that she could mail out to the members. Joanna said that once GET gets permission, the trails only need to be marked. Dale asked how other trail systems handle liability. Joanna said they have a paying membership base. There are a few examples where land owners rely on the existing recreation statute. Steve said that the requirement for liability insurance is unique to this area.

Ms. Laxton provided an update on the Wyoming County Land Use Plan. Maps are available electronically. The narrative needs updated. An organization from WVU is interested in assisting with this, it will be something to work on over the next year or so.

Ms. Laxton gave an update on the Wyoming County Community Fund. Raffle tickets are available for a 40" flat screen TV at \$10/each. 100% of the proceeds go to the community fund; drawing is March 1st at county courthouse. Christy said we are about half way toward achieving the anonymous donor's goal of \$1,000. Total assets in the fund now are about \$19,000. All of this is tied to the BAF. There is a 1% fee paid to the BAF for administration of fund, no other operating dollars are pulled from the fund.

Ms. Laxton also gave an update on the Strategic Plan. The Plan will be updated in 2013. It must be updated every three (3) years. We may have to pull together a working group committee for this update. Many of the goals and objectives have been accomplished over the last few years.

Under other business not on agenda:

Industrial access road project through the Wyoming County EDA to change the curve at Marianna has been approved. Alpha paid the fee for this grant at \$150,000 cash, which will then be sent to DOH. There are right-of-way issues to be worked out/working with Heartwood at this time. This will then be sent directly to DOH from Heartwood. Hope by April or May work will start in Marianna.

2. Boy Scouts: those project applications are due March 31, with work done July 2013. Another meeting is scheduled for the CTC at 10am, February 23rd. Can be public or private projects. Each day will have about four (4) hours of work. Projects should take this into consideration. Wyoming County citizens must come up with all materials, tools, water, and port-a-lets or rest room facilities.

3. MountainHeart Community Services provides free tax service as long as they are simple returns. People must make \$49,000 or less.

4. David asked if there was an update on cell coverage on the Saulsville tower. Larry advised that they are still waiting for bids from AT&T. David said that Verizon wanted to put cell all over the county by end 2012. Larry advised they were pulling together a committee to work on this. Boy Scouts have been promised 4g service in every county by July 2013.

5. Frontier is putting fiber optic all over the county. Internet is promised at the industrial park/Welch Pineville road by end of year.

6. Update on Coalfields Expressway: Design has been paid to Wyoming County. They are working in Helen now/grading. Highway will not be opened until it gets to Mullens. Bills are in the works now that will probably make it to the legislature next year.

7. 2013 Wyoming County Day: the good thing about Mondays is that you have the weekend to prepare. David said we should move it from Monday because the legislature has moved their meeting to the afternoon on Mondays – why be there on Monday if there is no legislator to talk to. Starting later is an option. Fridays are not an option. Tuesdays are very busy days for legislators/harder to visit with them/but they are there. Session next year is moved back a month because of the election – starting late when they swear in a new governor. Probably in February next year. If the governor is reelected, he has raised the funds to build a permanent structure near the capitol for receptions. The governor’s mansion is nice, more formal, no clean-up.

8. Susan said they are recruiting for energy express interns for Berlin McKinney and Mullens. They need college students to apply – a seven (7) week commitment. She needs 10. Mentors start on June 11th. Program runs through end of July. \$1850 living allowance, and another \$1175 as a Segal education award.

9. A Career Fair at Concord College was announced.

10. Market Feasibility Study – an electronic copy sent to everyone. County needs land to put it on, with Pineville the recommended location.

Motion to adjourn at 1:46pm.

Many thanks to Dale Stewart for providing lunch refreshments.

Respectfully submitted
Christy Laxton and Dvon Duncan