

IN THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF WOOD COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

IN RE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2009

PRESENT: RICK MODESITT, PRESIDENT
DAVID BLAIR COUCH, COMMISSIONER
WAYNE DUNN, COMMISSIONER

On this date, the County Commission met in regular session. They signed purchase orders, invoices and other correspondence.

The County Commission of Wood County approved Erroneous Assessment Applications in regard to real property for Sharon R. Herridge – Clay District (2009) and David Null – Lubeck District (2009).

The County Commission of Wood County approved Erroneous Assessment Applications in regard to personal property for Cecil O. Dotson – Union District (2009); Rosalie A. Varner – Vienna District (2008); James J. Woodward – Lubeck District (2009); Gregory Hardman – Parkersburg City District (2009); Valerie A. Malone – Lubeck District (2009); Violet Elam – Union District (2009); Anna L. Jackson – Williams District (2009); Gina Jenkins – Walker District (2009) and for Little Kanawha River Rail – Parkersburg City District (2009).

At 9:30 A.M., West Virginia State Senator Frank Deem presented a Governor's Community Participation Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00 for the Taste of Parkersburg.

At 10:45 A.M., Sheriff Jeff Sandy presented the Helicopter Advisory Board members to the Commission: John Pfalzgraf, Dan Kimsey, Joe Kincheloe and Terry Moore. Terry Moore acted as spokesman for the group. He stated they began meeting in November of last year and the Sheriff has remained independent of the group. He further stated this is a

viable program and the Board made several recommendations. See attached report that is attached to these minutes and shall be made a part thereof.

At 11:00 A.M., Gary Farris from the Wood County Veterans Museum met with the Commission to request funding for the "Honor Flights", a service that provides transportation to area World War II veterans to Washington D.C. to visit the World War II Memorial. He is asking for \$550.00 to allow him and an assistant to ride along to assist with the flight. The County Commission of Wood County, upon a motion made by Wayne Dunn, seconded by Rick Modesitt passed, did hereby APPROVE a donation of six hundred dollars and zero cents (\$600.00) in funding for The Veteran's Museum of the Mid-Ohio Valley. Said funds will be paid out of the General Fund Lottery Account and be used for the "Honor Flight" Veteran Program. An Order was prepared regarding this matter.

The County Commission of Wood County, upon a motion made by Rick Modesitt, seconded by Wayne Dunn and passed, appointed Tommy Nutter and Kevin Postlewaite to the Wood County Community Corrections Board. Said appointments are pursuant to an Order appearing in Order Book 51, at Page 433 and bearing the date of April 1, 1991, dealing with the procedure policy for appointments to Boards and Authorities. An Order was prepared regarding this matter.

The County Commission of Wood County, upon a motion made by Rick Modesitt, seconded by Wayne Dunn and passed, put Robert Goldenberg in nomination to fill a vacancy that exists on the West Virginia Route 2 and Interstate 68 Authority. Said vacancy is due to the fact that the term of Michael Matheny expires June 30, 2011; however, he only agreed to serve until June 30, 2008. Said vacancy is pursuant to an Order appearing in Order Book

51, at Page 433 and bearing the date of April 1, 1991, dealing with the procedure policy for appointments to Boards and Authorities. An Order was prepared regarding this matter.

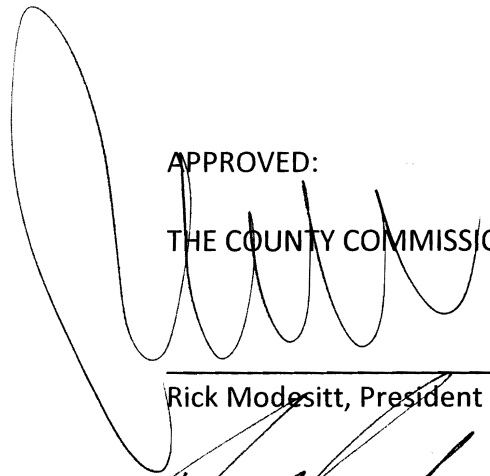
The County Commission of Wood County, upon a motion made by Rick Modesitt, seconded by Wayne Dunn and passed, did hereby AUTHORIZE an Amendment to the Wood County Commission Innovative Programming Grant Fund Application. Said Revision is the addition of the following language under the section labeled "Grant Fund Overview". Under the "Grant Fund Overview" section the following paragraph was added: Emphasis will be given to events that create overnight hotel stays. An Order was prepared regarding this matter.

The County Commission of Wood County, upon a motion made by Wayne Dunn, seconded by Rick Modesitt and passed, did hereby AUTHORIZE Rick Modesitt, in his official capacity as President and on behalf of the County Commission, to EXECUTE a Maintenance Agreement on the Wood County Definity telephone system. Said Agreement commences on September 22, 2009 and expires on September 22, 2010 at a rate of eight hundred eighty-one dollars and sixty cents (\$881.60) per month. An Order was prepared regarding this matter.

Having no further scheduled appointments or business to attend to, the County Commission adjourned.

APPROVED:

THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF WOOD COUNTY



Rick Modesitt, President



David Blair Couch, Commissioner



Wayne Dunn, Commissioner

To listen to this meeting, please refer to CD labeled August 6, 2009.

Wood County Commission Meeting
Held August 6, 2009

Please Print

1.	Ron Collett
2.	Jeff Sandy
3.	Terry Moore
4.	John Pflatzgraf
5.	W.A. Kinsey
6.	Joe Kincheloe
7.	Gary Farris
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August 6, 2009

From: Helicopter Evaluation Committee
To: President, Wood County Commission

Subject: Evaluation of Wood County Sheriff's Helicopter Program

The Committee reviewed information that had been gathered during their investigation and formed opinions in response to questions posed by the Sheriff in his original letter. The Committee's conclusions are based upon interviews with personnel directly involved with the operation of the helicopter, telephonic interviews with Sheriff's departments in three other states and a review of material provided by the Sheriff's department.

The Committee found that the Sheriff's helicopter program is viable, safely operated and cost effective for the County for at least the next three years.

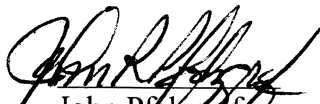
The Committee was asked to address specific questions posed by the Sheriff. The Committee response to these questions is included as an enclosure to this letter, as well as other areas where the Committee has decided to provide comments and observations.

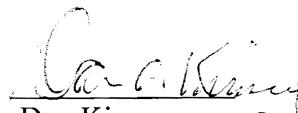
The Committee would like to commend Captain Rick Woodyard and Lieutenant Gary Parsons for their personal dedication in developing and operating this program effectively over numerous years.

While there are several recommendations for the Sheriff's consideration the following concerns were of particular interest to the Committee:

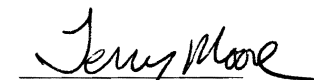
1. The principal pilots are both eligible for retirement. The loss of these pilots without trained replacements will place this program in jeopardy.
2. Additional flight hours would benefit the pilots and the safety of the program.
3. The launch and recovery area should be less accessible by the general public.
4. The program should be reevaluated prior to 36 months to determine future viability.

Respectfully Submitted,


John Pfalzgraf


Dan Kimsey


Joe Kincheloe


Terry Moore

OPINIONS

1. Pilot training is largely imbedded in mission flight hours. There is little dedicated training time in the program other than the annual check ride. A formal refresher program doesn't appear to be in place. The lack of any emergency or incident in the history of this aircraft demonstrate that the maintenance is good and that the pilots do not exceed their capabilities.

2. Current direct cost per hour is \$150 based upon the \$15,000 dedicated to insurance, fuel and maintenance, divided by the 100 hours flown by the aircraft per year. There is no extra pay for the pilots and their duty flying is equivalent to or more valuable than operating in a patrol car. The committee is unable to quantify if any extra work hours are required to maintain the aircraft above that which would be used to prepare for a ground mission. There may be other small costs not captured like navigation charts, batteries, and other incidentals that are unique to flying that would slightly increase the hourly cost. The lack of significant parts costs and the ability to apply non-tax dollars to the operation significantly reduce the burden. If the monies from non-tax sources could have been applied to other law enforcement areas that would in turn reduce the Departments budget then those costs should be applied to the hourly cost as well.

3. The National Guard could assume a portion of the counter-narcotics mission. There is a unit dedicated to this mission located in Wood County and the approval level is held locally. The National Guard could not assume other law enforcement missions on a regular basis, they could help in an emergency search or resupply but short of a declared emergency they would not be as responsive as an in-house unit and they would not be able to perform other missions that fall more into a routine category. They can provide static displays at schools with prior coordination.

4. This program appears stable for at least three more years. There are no looming maintenance costs in this period and the pilots have not submitted for retirement. One pilot is in training so as he is qualified the program will have more flexibility. This program is currently cost effective and provides a unique law enforcement capability not readily available in other areas or through other means.

5. Once the third deputy is a qualified pilot, given the current usage, each of the pilots will get significantly under 100 flight hours each per year. This may not be enough to maintain proficiency for all pilots there-by increasing the risk of an incident.

6. The need for this program can best be determined by the Department itself. There is some data on specific successes attributable to this program that indicates that there is a distinct value added to the Department. These successes should be provided to the public whenever practical. In Wayne County, NC the Sheriff's helicopter provided resupply and rescue during a flood which endeared it to voters for the next 7 years. There is no clear cut line to determine need for the program. How do you quantify the number of drug busts or rescues are enough to justify a helicopter program. The opinion of the committee is that this program is valuable and should be retained until costs make it an

issue that will require specific justification and proof of success. This is not currently the case.

7. This program works because of the efforts and dedication of the pilots. In order to be successful in the future several measures should be taken to codify standard operation procedures, training requirements and safety requirements. Future pilots will inherit the program but not have the career commitment of the current pilots. Systems and methods will be in place that were built by the current pilots and past and present Sheriff's. These verbal processes need to be codified so the present system doesn't need to be reinvented at some point in the future. Recommend borrow and adapt an existing program from another department.

8. An opinion on the need for additional seats cannot be given without determining the missions that would require them. So far it doesn't appear to have been a negative factor in the operation of the program. Certainly, additional capacity would provide for a more, well rounded capability. Discussion with Wayne County, NC indicated that they had additional seating in their aircraft but has discontinued using it for SWAT type missions due to lack of use. It remains good for the extra storage and capability it provides to the program though. If the addition of extra seating can be accomplished without significant cost then it should be done, if the cost is high then mission requirements need to be identified to see if they justify the expense.

9. The parking, take-off and landing area behind the Sheriff's Office is of concern. History shows that this area can be safely used and that it is convenient. That being said, it remains a confined space with variable winds and no restrictions on personnel or vehicles. It would seem prudent to implement some safety features to ensure people and equipment are not injured or damaged by the helicopter and that the pilots have a safe location to return to at the end of a mission. The current site is at no cost, this will be difficult to duplicate elsewhere. Consideration should be given to establishing a helicopter spot on the proposed county building.

10. If additional funding is available by acquiring an airworthiness certificate then this should be pursued provided it is cost effective. This should not be a condition of retaining the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide upgrades when finances or opportunities are available to keep the program current and relevant.
2. If funding is available, increase the annual flight hour program to include training time and flight time for the additional pilot.
3. Develop a book of Standard Operating Procedures. This provides written policy and guidance so the Sheriff has positive control of the program and its purpose is well defined.

4. Provide safety measures in the take-off area. Measures for consideration include a flashing warning light, restricting lines on the asphalt, altered parking areas and radio controlled lighting. Alternative areas that provide the safety, security and convenience required should be considered.