

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

RANDOLPH COUNTY COMMISSION SS:

At a regular session of the County Commission in and for the aforesaid County and State, at the Commission Annex, on the 6th day of August, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Randolph County Commission President, David Kesling and Commissioners Chris Siler and Kenna Barger.

Meeting called to order by Commissioner Kesling

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Commissioner Kesling said the issue that the person wants to speak about is not on the Agenda for today, but the Commission can vote to allow it. Commissioner Siler moved to allow the person to speak under public comment, as requested. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

Lauren Johnson appeared before the Commission. She said she is a lifelong resident of Randolph County. She said she was there to speak about her concerns with the Valley Link Transmission Project. She said the landowners in the Montrose area were mailed fliers in early June that outlined that our properties were being considered as a study segment for the new high powered line. The largest ever to be constructed in West Virginia. She said this was sold to us in a brochure as a way to provide growth in our State. She said this is basically a land grab and exploitation of West Virginia to power Virginia's massive data center expansion. She said some of the plants in Virginia have been closed so now they are looking West to West Virginia to build coal fired plants. She said the proposed line will cut through her property and her parent's property. This would lower property values. She said this is all for a project that would not benefit West Virginia. She said she understands the Commission does not have the authority to approve or deny this project, however she does believe they have a responsibility to represent the people of this County and they have a civic duty to protect the interest of the residents and a moral obligation to stand up for the families and landowners whose lives may be permanently changed by this project. She said she is asking the County Commission to join other County Commissions in passing a Resolution opposing the Valley Link Transmission Project.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Barger moved to approve the minutes from the regular meeting that was held on July 15, 2026, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

REPORTS:

Rhett Dusenberry from Congressman Riley Moore's Office welcomed new Commissioner Kenna Barger and said they were glad to have her on board to serve the Citizens of Randolph County. He also reported that the Congressman's office is involved in the clean up for Upshur and Lewis Counties from the recent flooding. He said during disasters like this they are all hands on deck. He also reminded the Commission that they will help with letters of support when the County needs one to apply for grants.

Commissioner Siler said for Rhett to pass on to the Congressman the feelings of the Citizens of Randolph County regarding the Valley Link Transmission Project.

Commissioner Kesling said they will be discussing this issue at the next County Commission meeting. He said they already had that in the works.

Court Security Officer, Kenvv Hamrick gave a report. He said they scanned 2,231 people in June at the Courthouse Complex. He said they had 28 knives, no guns, 2 pepper sprays and 22 vapes. He said in the month of July they scanned 3,984 people and found 327 knives, 1 gun, 3 pepper sprays and 41 vapes.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Commissioner Kesling said the Commission received a Thank You letter from Kingwood Ambulance Service for helping with Ambulance Service when needed.

Commissioner Kesling said the Commission received a Thank You letter from Harman VFD for the donation they made for the 4th of July event.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Kesling announced that the next County Commission meeting will be held on Thursday August 20, 2026 at 1:30 pm.

Commissioner Kesling announced that County Clerk, Brenda Wiseman will be retiring on September 2, 2026 after 35 years of service to the County. He said she has been a true asset to not only the Commission but the County. He said she will be missed. He said the Commission will have to appoint someone to fill the vacancy. He said the person has to be of the same political party as the person vacating the position and had to be of that party for 60 days prior to the appointment. He said the Commission will do that after September 2nd when the vacancy occurs. He said they will have it done within the 30 days as WV Code says.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION:

KENNA BARGER SWORN IN AS INTERIM COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Circuit Judge David Wilmoth appeared before the Commission. He swore in Kenna Barger as interim County Commissioner to fill the seat vacated by Commissioner Chris See who recently passed away. This appointment will run from August 6, 2026 through December 31, 2026. Commissioner Barger signed the Oath of Office and it will be recorded in the County Clerk's Office.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONER BOARD APPOINTMENTS (See attached copy)

Commissioner Kesling read over the Commissioners Board Appointments. Commissioner Siler moved to approve the Commissioners Board Appointments, as presented. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RANDOLPH COUNTY AMBULANCE AUTHORITY COUNCIL BOARD RE-APPOINTMENTS

Commissioner Kesling said they received a list of names to choose from for the Randolph County Ambulance Authority Board. He said they kept some but have made some changes to the Board. He said these will all be 3 year terms beginning on July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2029. The names are Dave Crawford, Mike Mullens, Belinda Toms, Diana Lansford, Abby Haddix and Trevor Kiess. Commissioner Siler moved to approve the re-appointments and appointments to the Randolph County Ambulance Authority Board, as presented. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RUSSELL MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Commissioner Barger moved to appoint Robert Haddix to the Russell Memorial Public Library Board for a 5 year term beginning on July 1, 2026 and ending on June 30, 2031. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CAMP PIONEER NEW HIRE FOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS POSITION

Commissioner Siler said the Commission has been trying for quite some time to find a Director for Camp Pioneer. He said it has been a nightmare. He said they had people that were going to take the position but then backed out. He said they have finally found someone and thinks they will do a great job. Commissioner Siler moved to approve the hiring of Gladys Moore for the position of Director of Operations at Camp Pioneer. She will begin working on August 17, 2026 and this will be a full time 37.5 hours per week position and her beginning salary will be \$14.50 per hour. She will be hired as a temporary employee for 90 days and then transition to full time with standard County benefits after the 90 days. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF COMMISSION NEW HIRE FOR DOG WARDEN POSITION

Commissioner Kesling said this item will need to be tabled until the next meeting. Commissioner Barger moved to table item F on the Agenda until the next meeting. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF FY 27 TOWER SITE LEASE AGREEMENT

Commissioner Kesling said this item will need to be tabled until the next meeting as the Prosecuting Attorney is still working on the agreement with the other parties involved. Commissioner Siler moved to table item G on the Agenda until the next meeting. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER RATIFICATION OF SIGNATURE ON SMOKE ON THE WATER'S WV ABCA LETTER OF SUPPORT

Commissioner Kesling said Smoke on the Water was having an event scheduled for July 18, 2026 and needed a letter of support from the County Commission to send to the WVABCA. He said since the event was scheduled before this meeting he went ahead and signed the letter of support for them. He said it just needs to be ratified today. Commissioner Barger moved to approve the ratification of signature on the WVABCA letter of support for Smoke on the Water, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER RATIFICATION OF SIGNATURE ON BLACKWATER ADVENTURE'S WVABCA LETTER OF SUPPORT

Commissioner Kesling said this is a letter of support that Blackwater Adventure needed for their event at Camp Pioneer that is held every year. He said this year they wanted to offer legal beverages in the evenings from 5:00pm-9:00pm on Friday and Saturday. Commissioner Siler said this is a great event that brings in a lot of tourism to the County. Commissioner Siler moved to approve the ratification of signature on the WVABCA letter of support for Blackwater Adventure, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF OUT OF COUNTY 911 ADDRESS ASSIGNMENT

Commissioner Kesling said they have been approached by someone that lives in Pendleton County near the Randolph County line. He said they would like to have Harman to be the first responder unit in case of an emergency. He said the 911 Center/OEM Office have agreed to this. Commissioner Siler moved to approve the use of an out of County 911 Address assignment, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RANDOLPH COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Commissioner Siler said the Commission does a Memorandum of Understanding every year with the Randolph County Humane Society. He said they are not an entity of the County. He said the humane society is an independent non-profit agency. He said the memorandum of understanding with the County Commission is the help with their funding. He said they had to make several cuts this year when they did the County Budget. He said the humane society was cut to \$60,000.00. Commissioner Siler moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Randolph County Commission and the Randolph County Humane Society. This is effective July 1, 2026 and will end on June 30, 2027. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF WV DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS FY 2026 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TA) GRANT RESOLUTION

Commissioner Kesling said the Commission is applying for a grant through the WV Division of Highways grant program and needs a Resolution signed to send in with the application. He said this would be for repairing the front and side steps at the main Courthouse building. They are starting to fall apart. The amount the Commission is applying for in the grant is \$450,000.00. Commissioner Barger moved to approve the Resolution to apply for the WV Division of Highways FY 2026 Transportation Alternatives Program Grant, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF WV DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS FY 2026 RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP) GRANT RESOLUTION

Commissioner Kesling said the Commission is applying for a grant through the WV Division of Highways grant program and needs a Resolution signed to send in with the grant application. He said this would be for the cost of the design stage for Camp Pioneer's Trail Improvement Project and the amount they are applying for is \$50,000.00. Commissioner Siler moved to approve the Resolution to apply for the

WV Division of Highways FY2026 Recreational Trails Program, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF VOLUNTEER RELEASE OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

Commissioner Kesling said out behind the DMV the County owns some property and there were homeless people living there. He said himself and the Sheriff went out there and the Sheriff ran them off. He said the grass was high and they had tents set up in it. He said some of the grass has been mowed down now. He said they have a volunteer, Jamie Witek, who lives near the property and he has agreed to keep it mowed and weeded. Commissioner Barger moved to approve the volunteer release of liability, assumption and risk and hold harmless agreement, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL EMS FUNDING

Commissioner Kesling said the Commission has already given the EMS \$110,000.00 in funding and are going to give them another \$70,000.00 to help them out with payroll and other expenses. He said they will be doing this as a budget revision from Courthouse Contractual to EMS Funds. He said it will be dispersed as needed, not given out as one lump sum.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY TO RC AMBULANCE AUTHORITY

Commissioner Kesling said they met with Attorney Harry Smith and he conducted a Deed search of the property in question. He said the Commission can do the conveyance and he has prepared the Deed. The Deed states that if the Grantee (Randolph County Ambulance Authority) shall cease to use the property for EMS purposes it will revert back to the County Commission. Commissioner Siler moved to approve the conveyance of property to the Randolph County Ambulance Authority, as presented. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF EXCESS LEVY FOR THE RANDOLPH COUNTY AMBULANCE AUTHORITY PLACEMENT ON THE NOVEMBER ELECTION BALLOT

Commissioner Kesling said the Commission imposed an Emergency Ambulance Service fee and it was suspended on July 4th. He said it was only in effect for one month. He said they had an outside Attorney to work on this and they spoke to the State Tax Department before it was implemented and was told it was okay. He said then they found out it was not okay. He said they have taken this to the Attorney General to ask what can they do? He said they received a letter back last week just basically saying the Attorney General's office has received it and are reviewing it. Commissioner Kesling said that is not helping us, we need it now. He said we need ambulance service to continue and something is going to have to give. He said the County doesn't have the money to continue funding the EMS. He said they did start transports back at Davis Medical this week so that will help some.

Heather Brown from the Randolph County EMS along with Phyllis Yokum, retired Randolph County Assessor, appeared before the Commission. Ms. Brown said the shell of an ambulance costs 200-250 thousand dollars and fully equipped is a half a million dollars. She said they are stressed to the max and since 7 am today they have had 20 calls. She said they have shut down the Harman station for the past 10 days and have been getting calls which they have to go from Elkins. Commissioner Kesling said we have got to do something and people need to pass this Levy if they want to continue having ambulance service. Phyllis Yokum said she was contacted by Curt Galner to help with this. She said she crunched the numbers and got help from Tiffany Hess at the WV State Auditor's Office. She said it is a \$950,000.00 per year Levy and it would be for 5 years. She said after that it would have to be put back on the ballot again. This will be going on the November 3, 2026 ballot and it has to have 60% of the votes to pass. Phyllis said they use the assessed value of property and for Class 2 which is what most people are in it would be \$3.88 cents per every 100 dollars of value. She gave an example of Class 2 property with an assessed value of \$18,000.00 would cost \$6.96 per year for the Levy. She said if your property is assessed at \$60,000.00 it would cost you \$23.28 per year for the Levy. She said if your property is assessed at \$210,000.00 it would cost you \$81.46 per year for the Levy. She said property in Class 4 is for rental or commercial property and they pay a higher tax so if that property were assessed

at \$210,000.00 it would cost them \$162.96 per year. Commissioner Barger said it has always been a misconception that taxes are paid on the appraised value, not the assessed value. Commissioner Kesling said his mother would complain so he had hers figured up and it is going to cost her \$19.00 more per year. Phyllis said she suggested to Curt Gainer that he be available to people to explain it to them. Commissioner Kesling said the money will go into the EMS fund budget line and then they will have to submit invoices or paperwork to the Commission as to what the money is going to be used for before they get it. Commissioner Siler said this is a small price to pay. He said the people that work for the EMS are professional and do a good job and always show up when needed. Heather Brown said they are their own business and run off of insurance payments and co pays. She said they do a lot of public assists and those are not charged because she feels that is their job. She said the payroll and expenses are their own responsibility and they do have an Randolph County Ambulance Authority Board. She said they have 3 stations, Elkins, Mill Creek and Harman. She said Harman is shut down right now. Commissioner Kesling said we want to be transparent with everything. He read over the Levy out loud. It would begin on July 1, 2027 and continue in 2028, 2029, 2030, and 2031. He said in the event the EMS is dissolved for some reason the money would be used for some type of emergency services for the County. He said the Randolph County Commission is calling for this Levy. He said the money will be deposited into the EMS Funds and as he said before they would have to submit an invoice or some other type of document to get those funds. He said they will be transparent with this money. He said it will be on the November 3, 2026 ballot. He said they will provide the Levy on their website and it will be in the paper 2 weeks prior to the Election. Commissioner Kesling thanked Heather Brown and Phyllis Yokum for working on this and he said now they are ready to take it to a vote. Commissioner Siler said he has been pushing for this since last fall. Commissioner Siler moved to approve that the Excess Levy be put on the ballot on November 3, 2026, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

FINAL SETTLEMENTS:

Commissioner Siler moved to approve the (11) final settlements, as submitted on the following estates:

Eileen Ruth Been

Josephine Lina Clark

Ruby Coberly

Jacquelyn Grace Ervin

Norma Jean Klonowski

Eunice Arlene Kwasniewski

Ottis Louk

Ross Hunter Morgan

James William Rawson

Ira Junior Vandevender

Brandon Leslie Wilfong

All yes – Motion passed unanimously

BUDGET REVISIONS:

Commissioner Siler moved to approve an In-House Budget Revision to move \$70,000.00 from Courthouse Contractual line into the Special EMS line. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

Commissioner Kesling moved to approve a State Budget Revision in the amount of \$9,350.00 for a grant award adjustment. Commissioner Kesling voted yes, Commissioner Siler voted yes, Commissioner Barger voted yes – Motion passed

Commissioner Kesling moved to approve a State Budget Revision in the amount of \$50,000.00 for a grant award adjustment. Commissioner Kesling voted yes, Commissioner Siler voted yes, Commissioner Barger voted yes – Motion passed

DIVISION OF PROPERTY/ERRONEOUS ASSESSMENTS:

Commissioner Siler moved to approve the division of property and erroneous assessments, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

DISTRESSED PROPERTIES: None

ZONING LETTERS: None

FIRE FEE ADJUSTMENTS: None

EMS FEE ADJUSTMENTS: None

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Commissioner Siler moved to pay the bills, as submitted. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

ADJOURN THE MEETING:

Commissioner Siler moved to adjourn the meeting. All yes – Motion passed unanimously

Attest: _____

Commissioner Board Appointments 2026

Revised August 6th, 2026

Commissioner Kesling

Randolph County Development Authority 1st Wednesday @ 4:00 p.m.
Forest Festival – 4th Tuesday
Elkins Welcome Center Board of Directors – 1st Tuesday @ 5:15 p.m.
Community Corrections – Varies from month to month
Midland PSD – 4th Tuesday @ 5:00 p.m.
Corridor H Authority
Chamber of Commerce – 4th Tues @ noon

Commissioner Barger

Solid Waste Authority – 1st Tuesday @ 5:00 p.m.
Extension Service Committee – (called only)
Region VII – quarterly 4th Monday @ 12:00
Norton PSD – 2nd Monday @ 7:00
Recreation Board – 2nd Tuesday @ 6:00 p.m.
Ambulance Authority – last Tues. @ 5:00

Commissioner Siler

Leadsville PSD – 3rd Wednesday @ 1:00 p.m.
Airport Authority – 2nd Tuesday @ 5:00 p.m.
E911 Advisory Board
Huttonsville PSD – 2nd and 4th Monday @ 10:00 a.m.
RC Unsafe Buildings and Lands Enforcement Agency – 2nd Thursday at 4:30
Local Emergency Planning Comm. – 2nd Wednesday @ noon
Fire Board – 2nd Thursday @ 6:00

Employee Assignments

Kesling – Custodians/Maintenance

Siler – 911/OEM

Barger – Dog Warden