

Morgantown Riverfront Revitalization Task Force

Meeting Notes

September 15, 2022

I. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Status of kayak rental facility

Nathan Harlan gave an update, stating that they are having their 'soft opening' this fall, with limited hours and equipment. Hours of operation are on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. They are getting a feel for public wants and needs. The goal is to become more family friendly, with more children's equipment, bikes, and boats. They plan to offer guided river trips and pre-scheduled trips on river outside of regular hours. The facility will be getting a new garage door. At this time, to pay for a rental, one must have a device that can scan a QR code for payment. They are looking into other options so as not to exclude anyone if they do not have the ability to scan.

- b. Westover bridge mural is finished!
- c. Update on mural on the back of Hugharts in Wharf District – also finished!

II. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Hydropower proposed at Hildebrand Dam

Ella Belling explained that the proposal for hydropower at Hildebrand Dam would include a maintenance road that may cross and interfere with the rail trail. Rye Hildebrand Hydroelectric, LLC filed a notice of preliminary permit application and FERC is accepting comments until September 26. Frank pointed out the necessity of lodging any concerns during this initial comment period to preserve them for the future.

Comments can be made via this link:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/08/03/2022-16594/rye-hildebrand-hydroelectric-llc-notice-of-preliminary-permit-application-accepted-for-filing-and#:~:text=Rye%20Hildebrand%20Hydroelectric,6717%2D01%2DP>

- b. Amendment 2 on November ballot would substantially reduce Mon County revenue

This amendment would give the legislature the power to make changes to taxes on business personal property, machinery, equipment, and inventory, along with personal property vehicle taxes, which would reduce revenue collections for all of the levying bodies, excess levies included. WV Legislative leadership has discussed ways to supplement lost revenue to the

county, but no proposed mechanism to do so is part of the Amendment that the voters across the state are being asked to consider. Read more about it here:

<https://wvpolicy.org/amendment-2-and-tax-cut-efforts-would-exacerbate-state-staffing-crises/>

This is a statewide ballot measure that needs 51% of the vote to pass. People may easily be lured to vote Yes if they hear messaging promising No More Car Tax.

If the exemptions under Amendment 2 are enacted, the Monongalia County government would lose an estimated \$6.045 million in revenue, or 14% of the county's general revenue budget. This includes an estimated loss of levy funds of \$489,267 for mass transit, **\$258,167 for parks and trails**, \$169,144 for fire protection, and \$120,181 for library. These estimates from the WV Center of Budget and Policy are based on assessed property values over several years. The School District impact would be considerably more.

III. ADJOURN