

Garrett Transit seeking nearly \$2.9 million in grant funding

by Renée Shreve
STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND — Garrett County Community Action's fiscal year 2020 Transportation Plan grant application request totals nearly \$2.9 million, Garrett Transit Director Mike Hill told the county commissioners during their public meeting Tuesday afternoon.

"This will be presented to the Maryland Transit Administration," Hill said. "Part of that is to the Federal Transit Administration, as well."

He noted the application is due this week, and that he was still "crunching the numbers."

"The operating assistance for this year that we'll be asking for is \$2,331,009," the director said.

The capital request for vehicles for FY 2020 is \$222,546 to purchase three eight-passenger buses and two minivans to replace two current ones that are used for out-of-town trips to Cumberland, Baltimore and Morgantown, W.Va.

"If we only have one or two clients to take there, we utilize

a minivan," Hill said. "It saves everyone money, from the federal government all the way down."

He noted the grant funding may not come through for a while because the state is currently in a "procurement situation," trying to figure out the best way to purchase minivans.

Hill said a one-year-old bus was recently totaled in an accident, and two minivans have more than 200,000 miles on their odometers. The vans are still running, he said, but might not be before their replacements arrive next year.

The transit director reported he is also applying for \$327,508 for his preventative maintenance budget to take care of current vehicles.

The commissioners approved Garrett Transit's application, which will be forwarded to MTA officials, who will provide some of the funding through the Federal Transit Act.

In other county business Tuesday afternoon:

- The commissioners signed resolutions authorizing funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the Friendsville sewer equalization tank and the Bloomington water treatment plant. Public hearings on the issue were held March 4 at the courthouse.

The county has secured a \$658,695 grant and \$263,000 loan for the Friendsville project. For the Bloomington plant, the county is slated to receive a \$949,286 grant and a \$376,000 loan from USDA.

- A public hearing was held for the Keyser's Ridge Business Park Enterprise Zone designation application.

Economic development specialist/business tax credit administrator Kim Durst said the Garrett Department of Economic Development believes the designation will help promote the park, bring new business to the county and provide space for local companies that want to expand operations in an area where infrastructure is available.

GRANT

(Continued from Page A1)

No one objected to the idea of the 268-acre park being designated an enterprise zone, and the commissioners signed a resolution giving Durst the authority to submit the application.

She said the paperwork had to be filed with the Maryland Department of Commerce by April 15 and that she normally hears back from the state within two months.

- The commissioners signed a proclamation declaring April 1-7 as National Public Health Week in Garrett County.

The commissioners' next public session is 4 p.m. April 1 in their meeting room at the courthouse.