

A LOOK AT THE CANDIDATES

Editor's note: Early voting begins today. For a look at the sample ballot, go to spiritofjefferson.com or pick up the Spirit's Oct. 31 print edition.

JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSION

HARPERS FERRY



Peter Onozko



Ralph Lorenzetti

MIDDLEWAY



Jane Tabb



David Tabb



Robert Barrat

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

65TH DISTRICT



Jill Upson



Sammi Brown

66TH DISTRICT



Paul Espinosa



David Dinges

67TH DISTRICT



Riley Moore



John Doyle

U.S. SENATE



Patrick Morrisey



Joe Manchin

CONGRESS



Alex Mooney



Talley Sargent



Danny Lutz

STATE SENATE



Mike Folk



John Unger

Rockwool opponents file suit seeking county documents

By TIM COOK
Special to the Spirit

CHARLES TOWN — Emails sent to the Jefferson County Commission and members of the Jefferson County Development Authority have become the basis of one of two lawsuits filed this week by a citizens group that opposes the construction of an insulation factory in Ranson.

Jefferson County Vision filed separate but similar lawsuits Monday seeking government communications and other documents from the JCDA and the JCC related to the construction of a Rockwool factory and the behind-the-scenes economic development work intended to support it.

The JCV requested the documents through formal Freedom of Information Act requests that were either denied or only partly provided, according to papers filed in Jefferson County Circuit Court.

One suit seeks complete emails between JCDA board members and county commissioners. In that case, separate emails from two JCDA board members — Julia Yuhasz, a staff member with the Hospice of the Panhandle, and farmer Lyle Tabb —

were released but with some portions blacked out.

Content not blacked out in those emails, however, show concerns both have regarding what they saw as pressure made against JCDA board members to vote on Rockwool-related items without what they considered to be complete or timely information.

"I would have had many more questions if I had seen even a simple picture of this planned facility with smokestacks or been provided any amount of company marketing materials," Yuhasz wrote in a Sept. 12 email to JCDA Chairman Eric Lewis.

The JCDA has a 21-member board of directors—including Yuhasz, Tabb and a recently added labor representative — that votes to approve formal actions of the development authority. The JCDA board has been debating whether to authorize a \$7 million public utility bond to finance a water line that would serve Rockwool and other future development at the former Jefferson Orchards site.

The JCV's other suit seeks documents related to an Aug. 8 closed-door meeting several government officials, including JCDA representa-

tives, had with Rockwool executives and employees at the Bavarian Inn in Shepherdstown to discuss opposition to the Ranson factory.

That case challenges a JCDA decision to deny access to emails exchanged between Rockwool and government officials about the meeting on the grounds that state law is designed to protect proprietary information of corporations involved in economic development projects. JCDA board member Dan Casto said the emails shared by Tabb and Yuhasz with the county commissioners were redacted because they contained confidential information from the JCDA's Aug. 28 executive session.

"In its lawsuit against the Jefferson County Commission, the Jefferson County Vision alleges certain information requested pursuant to the FOIA request should be released," Casto said. "But several members [of the JCDA] have expressed concerns about the release of that information."

In the JCC case, County Administrator Stephanie Grove wrote JCV's attorney that the email related to the session needed to be withheld until a complaint pending (See ROCKWOOL Page A11)

It's Our One-Year Anniversary!

Mention this post & get one-dollar off your order!

M Street Bakery
618 N. Mildred Street
Ranson, WV

The Charles Washington Chamber Music Society

Presents

René Schiffer
Bach Cello Suites Nos. 1, 3 and 4

Performance
Sunday, November 4, at 2 pm
Happy Retreat • 600 Mordington Ave. • Charles Town, WV

Tickets available at www.happyretreat.org

Downsizing?

No admin. fee or insurance required.

Rockwell www.RockwellMiniStorage.com
Mini Storage 165 Philip Ave., Charles Town, WV 304-724-7867
EXPANDED BOAT ■ RV STORAGE ■ CLIMATE CONTROLLED