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## Local Port Authority receives \$175,000

By KATIE MATZ, Times Leader Staff Writer

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A CHECK made for \$175,000 was presented by State Sen. Jason Wilson to the Belmont County Port Authority Wednesday at the weekly commissioners' meeting.

With this check, the Port Authority will be able to begin the development of the East Ohio Regional Industrial Park located in the Village of Barnesville and Warren Township.

"We have the money, and this is day one of the Industrial Park becoming a reality and being able to bring employment to Belmont County," said Larry Merry, director of the Port Authority.

Several 'thank you's' from the Belmont County Commissioners went out to Merry and Bill Morgan, assistant director of the Port Authority, as well as Oxford Mining, a private company that partnered with the public for the development.

"This is a very unique opportunity that Belmont County has because of the generosity of Oxford Mining, and it is greatly appreciated," said Mark Thomas, Belmont County commissioner.

Chuck Ungurean, president and CEO of Oxford Mining, thinks this development will bring in several manufacturing jobs.

"On behalf of Oxford Mining, we're proud to be a part of this development," Ungurean said. "I think it will really be a big boost to Belmont County."

"This property has been used for farming, used for mining, and now it will be used for industry to employ people," Merry said. "I think it's a very good use of property."

Wilson also stressed the importance of the amount of teamwork that was involved in this project.

"It's sort of like the idea of when we put a man on the moon, everyone is engaged; everyone has the same goal; everyone sacrifices and does what they have to do to get that man on the moon," Wilson said. "And that's the mentality I believe has been brought to this development."

In other matters, Dwayne Pielech, director of the Belmont County Department of Job and Family Services, informed the commissioners of the county's selection of participation to undergo the Children and Family Services Review, a federal review conducted under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families and the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau.

"In August, a team of 18-20 reviewers from all over the United States will go into our children's service files and randomly pick files and then go through them to make sure that we're meeting best principles and practices so that we're properly serving children and families," Pielech said.

Three counties in Ohio, including Belmont, Franklin and Lorain, will undergo this review, which will last through the week of Aug. 18.

Toward the end of the review, the 18-20 state employees who are conducting the federal review, will hold an exit conference and interview the commissioners.

This is a time-consuming process and not very many counties pass this review, according to Pielech.

"We are happy to forge that cause regardless of the circumstances," Thomas said.

Pielech said this is "truly a learning experience" and noted that he is "pleased and proud" that the federal reviewers had confidence in Belmont County.

Additionally, Jane Keyser, director and extension educator at Ohio State University Extension Office, as well as camp counselors, invited commissioners to the Belmont County 4-H Camp at Camp Piedmont and informed them of the great things 4-H Camp has to offer.

Also, commissioners approved the motion to enter into contract with Carr Concrete Corp., on behalf of the Belmont County Engineer in the amount of \$35,423 for the project of supplying and installing bridge beams.

The motion for an increase of \$.50 per hour for Travis Vensel, Belmont County Sanitary Sewer District, effective May 27, 2008, was approved as well.

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