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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Chuck Parker, *President* | Dave Efaw, *Secretary-Treasurer* | Steve White, *Director*

# WV State Building Trades Holds 2021 Convention

On September 8th, the West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council (SBT) held their annual convention in Roanoke, WV at Stonewall Lake.

Over 80 representatives from the trades plus guests attended in person. The last convention in 2020 was a virtual event.

This year's speakers included Congressman David McKinley; Chris Beam, President and Chief Operating Officer of Appalachian Power; Dan Hendrick, Head of External Affairs for Clearway Energy; James Kunz III, Administrator of the Pennsylvania Foundation for Fair Contracting; Sam White, Professor at the WVU Institute for Labor Studies & Research and Director of the Apprenticeship Pathway Degree Program; and Andy Walters, Secretary-Treasurer for the WV AFL-CIO.

Congressman McKinley talked about the need for a federal infrastructure bill that focused on hard infrastructure like roads and bridges and included important Davis-Bacon prevailing wage provisions. He also stressed the importance of coal

power generation to the economy of the state.

The Congressman's statements on power were echoed by Chris Beam, President of Appalachian Power, who explained that a large majority of their power output still heavily relies on coal.

Beam laid out the situation sur-

rounding the Mitchell, John Amos, and Mountaineer coal-combustion power plants during his presentation. Beam explained the complexity in ownership of the plants by different companies has proven difficult, as the approval of West Virginia, Virginia, and Kentucky are all necessary to ensure they are operational be-

yond 2028 due to new environmental regulations.

Dan Hendrick of Clearway Energy provided insight as to the future for wind power in West Virginia. Hendrick explained the collaboration between organized labor and renewable energy would result in a win-win as

**Cont. on p. 2>>**



Congressman David McKinley speaks to delegates at the annual WV State Building Trades Convention held on September 8.

# WV DOH Rejects Four Bids from Florida-Based Company Seminole Equipment, Inc.

When the WV DOH bids were announced for August 10, Seminole Equipment, Inc. from Tarpon Springs Florida was the apparent low bidder on four bridge painting projects valued at a combined \$1.85 million.

However, in what is seen as a major victory for local workers, contractors, and taxpayers, all four bids were rejected by the DOH on August 23.

According to letters sent out to other bidders by the DOH, the Di-

vision "is rejecting all bids" for each project.

While the DOH did not elaborate on the exact reasons Seminole's low bids were rejected, the company's past performance on public projects

does not resemble a shining example of a model employer.

The most recent problem is their work on the Phil McDonald Memorial Bridge in Raleigh County. The

**Cont. on p. 4>>**

# Trades Donate \$19,500 \$62 Million Cabell Huntington Hospital Medical Office Building Project Goes Union

On August 24th, Cabell Huntington Hospital (CHH) held a groundbreaking ceremony for a new medical office building.

Officials say the \$62 million, 75,000 square foot facility will be five floors and entirely union-built. Construction is scheduled for completion in August of 2024.

On the same day, the Tri-State Building and Construction Trades Council joined with IBEW Local 317, SMART Local 24, and UBC Local 439 to collectively contribute \$19,500 to the endeavor.

“We are proud to partner with the

Cabell Huntington Hospital Foundation and St. Mary’s Medical Center Foundation to help bring this new facility to the people of the Huntington, WV area,” said Mark Johnson, Business Manager for the Tri-State Building and Construction Trades Council.

While the facility was primarily constructed for physician offices, it will also house multiple other services such as physical therapy, neurology services, mammography, laboratory and imagery services, as well as an entire floor dedicated to a new endoscopy center.

Public records show the health provider’s areas designated for neurosurgery, ultrasound, mammography, X-ray, and EKG services will all see a significant increase in size. In addition, spaces for neurology, CT, and MRI services will be more than double their original capacity.

In addition to the increased quality of healthcare services offered to

the community through this project, hospital officials also tout the economic stimulus it will provide.

“We are pleased to support our local economy through hiring local contractors and subcontractors, such as MIRC [Construction Services LLC.],” said Tim Martin, COO at CHH. “This keeps local dollars local.” ■

## 2021 SBT Convention

*Continued from Page 1*

much needed jobs are provided when renewable energy sources are built in West Virginia.

Hendrick went on to explain Clearway is working on several early-stage wind development sites in West Virginia including both new projects like the Black Rock Wind project currently underway in Grant and Mineral Counties and “repowering” projects like the Pinnacle Project underway now where existing towers, turbines and blades are replaced with new and improved ones.

James Kunz of the PA Foundation for Fair Contracting (PA FFC) outlined the recent, historic \$21 million wage theft settlement by road contractor Glenn O. Hawbaker (GOH). Kunz and the PA FFC, involved with the case since the early stages, provided the PA Attorney General’s office with much needed evidence, which led to last month’s plea and conviction of GOH of four felony counts of wage theft.

Kunz went on to explain that while wage theft is still occurring in the construction industry, this sent a much-needed signal to bad actors, showing these kinds of practices will

not be tolerated in the future.

Sam White of the WVU Institute for Labor Studies & Research talked about the Apprenticeship Pathway Degree Program. The goal is to provide two-year associate college degrees to all graduating apprentices. The Carpenters have led the way with partners at WVU and WVU-Potomac State College.

Andy Walters, Secretary-Treasurer of the WV AFL-CIO discussed the importance of participating in local Labor Councils.

In addition to the speakers who gave presentations, SBT officials gave reports as well.

Being the first non-virtual convention since 2019, members were excited to finally attend an in-person event.

“It was great to finally have everyone get together,” said Chuck Parker, President for the WV State Building Trades. “These conventions are always more valuable when folks can meet face-to-face.” Parker explained while it was good to be back to business as usual, a number of precautions were put in place to ensure the safety of participants. ■



(Left to Right) Jeff Rowe, SMART Local 24; Chad Lovejoy (D-Cabell); Randall May, UBC Local 439; Steve Williams, Mayor of Huntington, WV; Jeremy Jeffers, UBC Local 439; and Kevin Yingling, CEO of Mountain Health participate in the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Cabell Huntington Hospital project on August 24th.



Dan Hendrick, Head of External Affairs for Clearway Energy, speaks to Trades members about the future of wind power in West Virginia.

# Virginia, Kentucky Reject Environmental Improvements AEP Petitions to Reopen Power Plant Case

On September 8th AEP subsidiary Appalachian Power Company (APCo) filed a petition with the WV Public Service Commission (PSC) to reopen their rate increase case associated with keeping several coal-fired power plants federally compliant and operating past 2028.

While the PSC had already approved the rate increase to cover the costs associated with two EPA requirements, similar agencies in Kentucky and Virginia rejected the second phase of improvements known as Effluent Limit Guidelines, which are national wastewater discharge standards developed by the EPA.

By refusing to pay for the environmental improvements, all three plants would be shut down by 2028 unless a way can be found for WV ratepayers to foot the bill.

According to their petition, APCo asked that the WV PSC acknowledge “additional investments and [op-

erational & maintenance] expenses at the plants will be needed prior to 2028, and will be the responsibility of West Virginia customers...”

In addition, the petition states the WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) must be notified by October 13, 2021 if the company plans to make environmental upgrades to their units.

If the company fails to give this notice, operations must permanently cease by December 31, 2025.

West Virginia, Virginia, and Kentucky all have a separate stake in these plants.

The John Amos and Mountaineer plants are subject to regulation by both the PSC and the Virginia State Corporation Commission while the Mitchell plant is under the jurisdiction of the WV PSC and the Kentucky Public Service Commission.

The Virginia ruling came on August 24 only weeks after the PSC

granted the rate increase.

Kentucky did the same, approving the first phase of work dealing with ash disposal but not the second phase about water discharges.

Virginia Power owns a little more than half of the John Amos and

Mountaineer plants in Putnam and Mason counties respectively.

Kentucky Power owns half of the Mitchell plant in Marshall County.

The PSC will hold an evidentiary hearing on September 24 in Charleston. ■



Chris Beam, President and Chief Operating Officer for Appalachian Power, speaks at the annual West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council Convention at Stonewall Lake in Roanoke, WV held September 8.

## Construction Trades Celebrate Labor Day



Members of IBEW Local 141, Wheeling, participate in the annual Paden City, WV Labor Day Parade.

Paden City, located in Tyler and Wetzel counties, is home to one of the oldest Labor Day events held in West Virginia.

IBEW 141 is one of many groups from the Building & Construction Trades that participated in a variety of Labor Day events around the region.

### Building Trades Hours Worked 2015-2020 AEP Coal-Fired Power Plants

Mitchell	1,553,469
John Amos	2,257,993
Mountaineer	974,115
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>*4,785,604</b>

ACT and the WV State Building Trades submitted comments in support of keeping the AEP plants open in a letter dated 03/19/2021. The letter highlighted the number of manhours worked at each location from 2015 to 2020. In addition, the quality of the jobs was noted. “These jobs are good paying, with important health and pension benefits. They also include opportunities for apprentices to learn their trade. The economic impact resulting from these local construction workers spending their paycheck in the local economy creates a multiplier effect which improves the economy for all.”

\*Source: The National Maintenance Agreements Policy Committee, Inc.

# Parkersburg - Marietta Trades Council Holds DADs Day Event, Nets \$4,000

On Saturday, August 21 the Parkersburg-Marietta Building and Construction Trades Council held their annual Dollars Against Diabetes Day (DAD's Day) Sporting Clay Shoot in Whipple, Ohio.

This year's event raised more than \$4,000 in funding for diabetes research.

The event was held at Hilltop Sports in Whipple, OH and featured around 30 shooters.

In addition, local business sponsors included: Davis Pickering Company; the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council; the Parkersburg-Marietta Contractors Association; the West Virginia AFL-CIO; the West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades

Council; United Bank; GCM Grosvenor; Conomos Industrial Painting & Construction Services; and Faulkner, Hoffman, & Phillips, LLC. Attorneys at Law.

In 1986 the General Presidents of North America's Building Trades Unions committed to sponsoring a multi-million-dollar fundraising activity for the Diabetes Research Institute at the University of Miami.

Since DAD's Day was first initiated in 1987, more than \$57 million has been raised to support research efforts aiming to put an end to diabetes.

Across the county, Building Trades Unions have come together on DAD's Day to promote the cause of finding a cure for diabetes.

Last year businesses, local unions, and contractors donated more than \$600,000 to DAD's Day.

Buddy Malone, Business Manager for the Parkersburg-Marietta Building Trades Council, explained the significance of this annual event.

"We are proud to help support the Diabetes Research Institute each year," said Malone. "Not only is the Sporting Clay Shoot a way to support a great cause, it also gives participants time off the job to get to know each other better." ■

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Shooters participate in the Parkersburg-Marietta Building Trades annual DAD's Day Sporting Clay Shoot Fundraiser at Hilltop Sports in Whipple, OH.

## WV DOH Rejects

### Continued from Page 1

\$8.3 million project, bid in May of 2017, was to be completed by October of 2018 and is only 73% complete according to the DOH website.

"They are three years late on the project they already have, and are a long way from getting it done.

"How could you give them four more projects?" asked Brian Stanley, Business Manager for Painters District Council 53.

In 2017, workers with Painters DC 53 rallied against the company for failure to pay state payroll taxes on more than \$10 million of state contracts over the course of a decade.

Shortly thereafter, according to a tax lien placed against the company on March 14, 2018, the state required

them to only pay back two years of the debt, amounting in a repayment of \$163,915.07 to the state.

In addition, it was found that Seminole was in violation of the WV Jobs Act, which requires that 75% of labor on public improvement projects be from within the local labor market.

Stanley believes letting contractors like Seminole come into the state results in shoddy work, as they often cut corners to underbid the responsible companies.

"It is a privilege to get our state's tax dollars," said Stanley. "We should let honest companies and local workers get this work and it will turn out to be a better job." ■

  
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