**ReImagine Appalachia Resolution**

**Report for GSC 10 17 21**

Follow-up Discussion with Kevin Ritter, President of the County Commissioners

I spoke on the phone with Mr. Ritter on October 11 to follow up on the meeting I had with the commissioners on September 16. At that time Mr. Ritter had said that he had no problems with what I said in introducing the Resolution, but he does have problems with the document itself. He said that he thought we might be able to come together on some common ground in a later discussion. I sent a copy of the comments Ritter had made to Natalia Rudiak of ReImagine Appalachia, who gave me a point-by-point response to each of his comments. In my October 11 phone meeting with Mr. Ritter, I started answering his concerns, following Ms. Rudiak’s comments. At one point in our conversation Ritter made it clear to me that he sees the resolution as a Marxist treatise, as he considered the language on working people—i.e., he interprets the document as a statement in support of the working class promoting some kind of attempt to mobilize the working class against other interests.

I then asked him what he thinks are the major challenges in our Appalachian county. He said that the biggest problem he sees is affordable housing. He has an “all-of-the-above” view of energy. He did agree with me that fossil fuels have led to profits and growth on the part of interests outside of the county.

I told him I would send him an email message with responses to his concerns, but given his philosophical/political objection to the document, I am not sure he and I can make any progress on finding some common ground on this resolution.

Attendance at Marietta City Council – October 21.

I contacted Susan Vessels, President of the Council to ask if I could have a meeting with the Council about the Resolution. She did not offer a specific/exclusive time, as the county commissioners did, but she asked us to come to the open period of the council meeting on the second and third Thursday of the month. I am going on October 21 with Rebeca Phillips, who is a resident of the City of Marietta (I am not).

George Banziger