

**THE MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL MET ON MONDAY, AUGUST 14 AND 15, 2023
AT 8:30 A.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: KIM MERIDETH, VICKIE KIVETT, TROY SPRINKLE, JASON MAXWELL, MELISSA GREENE, CHIP KELLER AND BRIAN CULP. ALSO PRESENT WERE; LINDA PRUITT, MORGAN COUNTY AUDITOR; DEB VERLEY, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT; AND JOSH MESSMER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR.

Budget Review:

The following budgets were presented by office holders and elected officials:

- *Plan Commission* – Laura Parker
Salaries are increased 3% for 2024, they removed the part time inspector line item as well as the uniform line item, increased longevity and dues and subscriptions. Vickie Kivett asked if there has been an increase in building permits. Ms. Parker stated that they have seen an increase since they now have the buffer zones.
- *Treasurer* – Terry Clelland
The budget is the same for 2024 except for salaries and allowing for inflation in some items. The part time line item has been increased and equipment rental has been increased because the postage machine needs to be upgraded and they plan on purchasing a new tax sale program.
- *Surveyor* – Terry Brock
Salaries were increased by 5%, he has added a chief deputy and combined two part time lines into one. The Stormwater Coordinator is now in the consulting line item so this was increased. They have requested \$15,000 to redo the MS4 ordinances.
- *Veterans' Service Officer* – Lindsay Smith, Courtney Kemp
They have requested a part time administrative assistant and an increase in the burial allowance from \$100 to \$200, which would be a \$5,000 budget increase (veterans are also allowed \$80 for the setting of the veteran's marker). Ms. Smith stated that their number one goal is to increase veteran's compensation and having a full time assistant would enable them to do this.
- *911 Dispatch* – Scott Hamilton
Mr. Hamilton requested five additional personnel in order to meet training requirements and standards. The IDACS requirements have increased and this job has grown. There is a lot of liability in this position to make sure records are up to date. They have also increased salaries on the pay matrix. They have positions for telecommunicator 1, 2, and 3 and a supervisory position. They would like to establish a classification between supervisor and telecommunicator 3 for a certified training officer. Mr. Hamilton would like to increase the director and assistant director pay to be in line with other 24/7 public safety positions. They currently have one vacant position. Three of the requested positions will replace supervisors that are on the floor so they can supervise and not answer calls. This will also allow them to incorporate a rotating schedule. They are going to be the pilot county for a mental health program called "Mind Base" that monitors stress calls and notes if an employee has taken several high stress type calls and when they might need services.
- *Coroner* – Mike Ellis
Mr. Ellis requested an increase in salary and an administrative assistant. There have been increases in supplies and operating expenses and they now have two leased vehicles.
- *Court Services* – Brian Foley, Miranda Beaukamp
Mr. Foley requested a 5% increase in pay for hourly employees. The four coordinator positions have a stipend of \$1,200 that has been this amount for 26 years. The judges passed a resolution starting in January 2024 to increase this to \$3,600 and this will be funded through user fees and grants. They receive approximately \$1 million in grant fees, which is 60% of operating costs for community corrections, probation and CASA. Mr. Foley stated that the probation officer salary scale has been so neglected by the state that a starting probation officer with minimum standards starts at a lower rate than an entry-level clerical position.
- *Recorder* – Jana Gray
Budget is close to the same as last year, with the following exceptions - a separate line item has been added for post office box rental, 5% pay increase, the non-appropriated account is being used to maintain books and computers. They do not have a line for comp time when

employees come in early to start up all the computers. Vickie Kivett suggested allowing employees to leave early or take a longer lunch hour.

- *Assessor* – Julie Minton
Several items have been decreased as they rely more on aerial photography for reassessment work. They are only leasing one vehicle. The Elevate contract will renew in 2025. Wages have been increased and they have requested a chief deputy position from the assessment specialist line item.
- *Clerk / Election / Records* – Tammy Parker
Wages have been increased by 4%, they are looking into a new postage meter so this line has been increased. Josh Messmer, Morgan County Administrator, stated that there has been a change in printing standards and the current postage meters in the Administration Building and Courthouse are not compliant with the USPS format. It was suggested that postage be tracked by office, but to pool postage expenses in the Commissioners budget.

The Records budget has been increased for years of service because an experienced employee has transferred to that position. Salaries have been increased. They have a scanning project that will be done in house and paid through the Record's Perpetuation Fund.

The Election budget includes expenses for a presidential election using the 2020 expenses as a base. The iPads were purchased in 2016 and cannot be updated and she will be asking for an additional appropriation in order to purchase new ones before a price increase at the end of the year. Poll worker meals have been increased from \$9.00 to \$14.00 per meal.

- *Auditor* – Linda Pruitt
Salaries have been increased by 5%, she had requested a training amount for the chief deputy replacement, they have been using the same property tax software for 22 years (MVP) and they will need to replace it with LOW (\$295,000 over three years plus \$113,492 for the conversion). They will also need to pay the annual amount for MVP until the new system is completely converted. The part time position has been increased to allow for a higher hourly rate for Dan Bastin.
- *Circuit Court* – Judge Matt Hanson
The only change is in salaries. Vickie Kivett stated that she met with the courts and Probation and there weren't any drastic changes. Judge Hanson stated that they jumped from \$60 to \$90 per hour for CHINS. Kim Merideth asked if staff had returned to the office. Judge Hanson stated that his staff is always in the office. Remote work for his court means that everyone can appear by Zoom. They can do everything whether they are physically in the office or in another location. They are probably getting more work time out of the employees through the remote work than they are when they are physically in the office. It is cutting costs; if one of the employees leaves employment, he will probably not replace the employee as there isn't as much to do since they have gone remote. They can run the courts out of their house. The courts are at 70-80% utilization.
- *Magistrate* – Judge Terry Iacoli
The only request Judge Iacoli has requested is a 5% salary increase for employees, all other items are the same.
- *Superior I* – Judge Dakota VanLeeuwen
The law books budget has already been addressed, increases include increased jury fees, salaries and public defender budget. They use Zoom for hearings and also allow working remotely. Judge VanLeeuwen stated that staff sometimes works on Saturdays and Sundays and it would help to access Odyssey through a VPNs so they can access the court calendar and answer attorney questions. Josh Messmer stated that they are aware that there is an issue and IT is trying to come up with a way to work around it.
- *Sheriff / Jail* – Sheriff Rich Myers, Jail Commander Dave Rogers
Sheriff Rich Myers handed out a new pay matrix request and stated that they are asking for one additional merit lieutenant, two additional merit deputies, and one additional sergeant. This will allow them to have supervision for each 12-hour shift that they have. They are asking for a pay restructure for office staff. The office administrator would be increased to \$26 per hour, payroll and transcription would be increased to \$24 per hour and court process would be \$23 per hour. The budget includes the purchase of an e-learning/scheduling software, which will also be used for the jail and also includes the costs for the system they are currently using. They have increased the budget for vehicles. Dave Rogers stated that they are concerned about issues that could arise if they lease vehicles through the Enterprise

program. They would like to move the pension program to eight years of vested service and 20 years of service at age 50. McCready & Keene is currently doing a study.

The jail has requested an additional maintenance person, two additional security personnel for the new Judicial Campus so they can be trained, and three additional corrections officers. They have requested an increase for control officers. They have increased computer maintenance for a change in computer software from Spillman. They have added maintenance costs for items that must be addressed. They are currently down by five employees at the jail. The Sheriff Department is down by five but has recently hired two.

Recess for lunch 12:12 pm

Reconvene 1:30 pm

- *Superior III* – Judge Sara Dungan
Judge Dungan has increased the budget in the equipment line. She has not approved requests to work from home and prefers in-person trials, but will do pre-trial conferences through Zoom.
- *Title IV-D* – Robert Hagee
Mr. Hagee stated that the equipment line has been increased for scanners and monitors, salaries have been increased by 4%, but he would like to see a larger increase for the office administrator as this position does training and security. \$43,000 of their budget is reimbursed dollar for dollar, after that 66% is reimbursed.
- *Superior II* – Judge Brian Williams
Judge Williams stated that except for salaries, everything was the same as the previous year. His staff does not work remotely as they need a VPN. He used Zoom for pre-trial needs, but otherwise it's in person.
- *EMA* – Mark Tumey
The budget is mostly the same except for making the deputy director position full time and the administrative assistant position part time.
- *Weights & Measures* – Scotty Manley
All budget items are the same except for longevity.
- *Highway* – Charlie Wilson, Acting Morgan County Highway Superintendent; Joe Forler, and Zach VanBibber
They are putting paving and chip & Seal information on the website. They have increased the overtime line and are forming an emergency response team. They are having issues in obtaining truck drivers as the cost for a CDL has been increased to \$4,000 to \$6,000. Mr. Wilson suggested that the county could pay for the training and an employee could sign a promissory contract that they would have to stay for two years or pay it back. This would allow CDL training for two people each year.
- *Maintenance* – Michelle Cooley
Ms. Cooley stated that she is working with HR to change a job description for a position. The equipment line item has been increased and goa/oil/tires has been decreased, the supply line has also been increased.
- *Purdue Extension* – Rena Sheldon
Rena Sheldon introduced Amanda Fites, Purdue Extension Health and Human Sciences Educator. Ms. Fites stated that they are currently assessing to determine how Morgan County can best benefit from this position. They will be meeting with schools and are doing good work so far. Ms. Sheldon stated that Morgan County does not have anyone local to do food service training and Ms. Fites will be trained as an instructor.

Ms. Sheldon stated that several line items have been increased due to the additional employee and have asked that this position be made full time. Purdue pays benefits for this employee. The two extension agents are paid through Purdue and the state.

Recess – The Council recessed the meeting until 8:30 am August 15th.

Reconvene

The Council reconvened at 8:30 am on Tuesday, August 15, 2023. Council members present were Kim Merideth, Vickie Kivett, Jason Maxwell, Troy Sprinkle, Chip Keller, and Brian Culp. Melissa Greene was absent.

- *Convention, Visitor & Tourism Commission – Tosha Daugherty*
The budget request is \$170,000 for operating expenses for 2024. Morgan County is in the path for totality for the eclipse next year and it is a really big deal. Cedar Creek is planning a big event. Hotels are already sold out and they are planning some giveaways for the event. Any venue that will have a decent event of the eclipse is hosting an event. Martinsville and Mooresville are planning events with live music and street fairs. They want to make sure the people that are here have a good time. Vickie Kivett stated that the fairgrounds is offering camping spots.

The tourism commission uses a portion of the budget (\$20,000) for grants to promote festivals and events and for grants for a coop marketing program, which reimburses 50%, up to \$500 for advertising in magazines or the state festival guide promoting local businesses.

- *Health Department – Dr. Paul Broderick and Carol Bruner*
Dr. Broderick stated that the state has performed very poorly in a variety of public health measurers, such as smoking, premature birth, infant mortality, obesity, etc. The ranking for expenditures was in the bottom 10th per capita. The commission that studied this allowed \$26 per capita that would bring Indiana up to the median to allow health departments to invest in the health of its citizens. This puts \$761,000 into a fund for the health department and this has changed the budget and allowed them to move toward being proactive. One of the biggest changes in the budget is an administrator, preferably someone with a master's degree in public health. They would like to add permitting software for contractors and eventually food vendors. They would like to add an environmental food specialist for inspections. Part of the funding is to be used to partner with local entities (Wellspring, Substance Abuse Council, Desert Rose, etc.). Dr. Broderick stated that he would like to target maternal/fetal health, smoking and pregnancy and mental health in schools. The job descriptions will be reviewed by the job maintenance committee. It is not in the 2024 budget, but in the future, they would like to digitize records and this is not cheap.
- *Morgan County Recycling – Erick Kivett*
Mr. Kivett stated that several items in the budget increased. The director pay was increased from \$63,434 to \$67,429; the contractual services line was \$350,579 for 2023 and the cost for just the bin pick-ups is \$494,496. The previous contracts were from 2015 and Mr. Kivett was not able to extend them any further at the current price. Effective immediately, the cost is going from \$213 per bin to \$313 plus an additional \$130 service charge for each bin, a \$50 fuel surcharge for each trip and \$80 per ton fee for processing materials. Mr. Kivett is touring other county sites tomorrow. The current sites are being abused and used as dumps. They are working on updating the illegal dumping ordinance. He increased the budget for the Tox Away Day and river cleanup.
- *Morgan County LEPC (Emergency Planning & Community Right to Know) – Steve Lyday*
Steve Lyday, LEPC Chairman, stated that the budget is unchanged from 2023. The funds come from state permits, the committee conducts exercises and purchases materials to help first responders in responding to hazardous materials calls.
- *Parks & Recreation – Kenny Hale and Volitta Fritsche*
They are requesting a full time director position for 2024. In 2019 the salary for the director was \$56,068. They are trying to grow the parks and the trails and provide amenities for Morgan County residents. They would like to connect the parks to the trails. They have requested an additional part time laborer as they have a lot of areas to mow and maintain. Mr. Hale stated that he probably has 400 to 600 hours in since July. They would need to add benefits to the budget if there is a full time employee. DNR donated a split rail fence (\$3,183) and IU Health donated materials for the front porch of the cabin (\$1,109). The contractual services line includes work on the Delaney conference center, gazebo refurbishment and a shed. The budget also includes an amount for a leased vehicle and the purchase of a tractor for mowing. Mr. Hale noted that 99% of the tools used at the parks are his personal tools. Volitta Fritsche stated that the Parks Department does not have a vehicle and they are using one from the Sheriff's Department.
- *Soil & Water Conservation District – Lisa MacPhee, Doug Peine*
The 2024 budget is less than the 2023 budget. They have received increased funds from the state due to new legislation. They work with state and federal agencies as well as non-profits and other districts to obtain grant money. They work with farmers and woodland owners in order to create improvements in the soil and water on their property. They also do programing with youth through 4-H, scouts, schools, and FFA to promote conservation in Morgan County. Last year they gave away 3,500 tree seedlings. They also have a part time employee that does a lot of work with invasive and native plants.

- *Emergency Medical Service (EMS)* – Brent Worth and Summer Brown
Mr. Worth stated that over that last six weeks they have an idea of where the budget is going and reviewed past justifications. The goal is to maintain a neutral budget. They look to address staffing and sustainability of the organization. EMS is not self-sustainable, but they can make profits to offset the cost. They are currently five medics and one EMT down, which is increasing the workload on staff.

They have one ambulance with a blown engine and are waiting on a replacement motor. The ambulances that were first purchased have a Medix box that can be mounted on different chassis to decrease cost of an overall purchase. The box can only be remounted one time. They are currently remounted one now that was scheduled to be remounted in 2022. They are investigating options for the future of the fleet and have budgeted for another remount for 2024 at a cost of \$200,000.

Another area they looked into was inventory tracking and accountability. They use a large amount of supplies and have a procedure and tracking system in place, but are looking into another program. They are also looking into locations and demographics; where stations should be located for response times and where staff will be housed. One of their goals is paramedic integrated health care (MIH) that would be a grant funded position. A paramedic would do follow up care and consulting and would not require an ambulance. They are concentrating on staffing as this is a dynamic, competitive area. They are reviewing job descriptions. The starting wage for an EMT is just over \$13 per hour and this needs to be a fair wage. Employee turnover is 60 to 70%, 30 employees per year and it is costing \$200,000 to \$240,000 per year. Mr. Worth stated that in the state of Indiana, not as many paramedics are being certified as ones that are leaving. Morgan County will probably struggle for the next 3-4 years.

Workman's Comp is up by 200% and fleet costs are up by 50%. They had \$1.6 million in collections last year and collections are increasing. A house bill was passed that increased Medicaid reimbursements and if they integrate mobile health care with paramedicine, there is the potential to generate more revenue. Chip Keller noted that the overall budget increased 3% this year and thanked the directors for their work on it. Mr. Worth stated that this is new to them and he hoped that it isn't overly conservative.

- *Prosecutor* – Steve Sonnega, Cassie Mellady
Mr. Sonnega stated that postage has increased and they are asking for 5% pay increases.
- *Commissioner* – Josh Messmer, Bryan Collier
Workers Comp expenses have increased because IPEP based their premium on lower levels than what it should have been and recently completed an audit for 2021. When IPEP passed the information to Travelers, they passed the outdated information. Next year, the premium will be increased. The premium increased by \$75,000 for 2023. There is a training overlap line item and helps with continuity of operations. Everside Clinic has been increased to \$283,550 for an 8% increase. They continue to see increased utilization and have also added services. The school, City of Martinsville and now Morgan County Library are using the clinic and they have added an additional provider which will increase the cost by \$42,000. Telephones have been increased to begin the switchover to VOIP. The Professional Development line was also increased. Mr. Messmer stated that they would also like the postage budget for offices to come from the Commissioners' budget. Economic Grants and studies has been added back to the LIT Fund and property acquisition was also included in this fund as well as Cumulative Capital Development. Fiber expansion of \$175,000 was added to CCD, this would get the EMS and Coroner building on the network and provide a redundant fiber link from the dispatch center to the rest of the network and down to the jail. This will also help to streamline cybersecurity. They have asked for Sharepoint for the last two years but were not able to secure a vendor. They now have two vendors that have provided quotes for approximately \$60,000, which is less than the originally requested \$150,000. The ARPA Fund includes line items for the aquifer study and sewer/stormwater study.
- *HR* – Daree Fry
Ms. Fry gave information on the turnover rate and shared some of the reasons employees give for leaving employment. They have lost 99 employees in the last year, which is 23.34%. This number includes retirements. Ms. Fry stated that she has listened to the budget reviews for the past two days and it has been stated that it costs \$3,000 to \$21,000 to train employees and then they leave. This is something a lot of employers are experiencing and this trend will continue for a while. Ms. Fry recommended the NACo Leadership Academy.

Adjournment

Vickie Kivett made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 6-0.

MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL

Kim Merideth
Kim Merideth

Vickie Kivett

Troy Sprinkle
Troy Sprinkle

Jason Maxwell
Jason Maxwell

Chip Keller
Chip Keller

Melissa Greene
Melissa Greene

Brian Culp
Brian Culp

ATTEST:

Linda Pruitt
Linda Pruitt, Morgan Co. Auditor