

THE MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL MET ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2023
AT 6:30 P.M.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRAYER (*Vickie Kivett*)

Minutes

Melissa Greene made a motion to approve the August 7, 2023 minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

Additional Appropriations:

• *Soil & Water*

Lisa MacPhee, Morgan County Soil & Water District, was present to request an additional appropriation of \$300 from the General Fund (1000) into Account #1000.19800.000.0750 (Years of Service). Ms. MacPhee stated that she didn't realize that this should be a separate line item and added it into the salary. This was submitted correctly for 2024. Vickie Kivett made a motion to approve the additional appropriation. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 7-0.

• *Auditor*

Linda Pruitt requested an additional appropriation of \$1,050 from the General Fund (1000) into Acct #1000.19800.000.0002 (Years of Service). Ms. Pruitt stated that after the budget was prepared, they hired an employee from another department and they need to include the employee's years of service. Melissa Greene made a motion to approve the additional appropriation. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 7-0.

• *Recycling*

Josh Messmer stated that Erick Kivett was not able to attend the meeting. Due to increased costs and abuse at some of the sites, the Board of Commissioners is pulling the recycling bins at the end of the month. The original request of \$111,770.72 from the Solid Waste Fund (0506) into Acct #1000.36100.000.0506 (Contractual Service) has been reduced to \$40,000. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the appropriation as presented. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 6-0-1. Vickie Kivett abstained.

• *Highway*

Charlie Wilson, Acting Morgan County Highway Superintendent, was present to request an additional appropriation of \$3,000 from the LIT Economic Development Fund (1112) into Acct #1112.19800.000.0529 (Years of Service). Mr. Wilson stated that an employee with several years of service transferred to the Highway Department from another department. Jason Maxwell made a motion to approve the additional appropriation. Motion seconded by Vickie Kivett. Motion carried 7-0.

• *Clerk*

Tammy Parker, Morgan County Clerk, requested an additional appropriation from the Clerk's Record Perpetuation Fund (1119) as follows:

\$8,973 into Acct #1119.11231.000.0000 (First Deputy)
8,663 into Acct #1119.11232.000.0000 (Second Deputy)
6,047 into Acct #1119.12200.000.0000 (Overtime)
450 into Acct #1119.19800.000.0000 (Years of Service)
360 into Acct #1119.16550.000.0000 (HSA)
5,386 into Acct #1119.16580.000.0000 (HDHP)
1,874 into Acct #1119.11232.000.0000 (Second Deputy)
2,743 into Acct #1119.11232.000.0000 (Second Deputy)
\$34,496

Ms. Parker stated that she has several files that need to be scanned and obtained quotes for this project. A few employees approached her offering to work overtime to scan the files and this is less of a cost than the quotes. Vickie Kivett made a motion to approve the additional appropriation. Motion seconded by Brian Culp. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Election*

Ms. Parker requested an additional appropriation of \$25,000 from the Cumulative Capital Development Fund (1138) into Acct #1138.4000.000.0062 (I-pads). Ms. Parker stated that these are used as poll pads and were purchased in 2016. They are out of date and will not be able to be used next year. She would like to order them now at the guaranteed price. Vickie Kivett suggested ordering them as close to the end of the year as possible to extend the warranty. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the additional appropriation. Motion seconded by Brian Culp. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Drug Free Community*

Barb Dinwiddie, Morgan County Substance Abuse Council, was present to request an additional appropriation of \$37,104.87 from the Drug Free Community Free Community Fund (1148) for grants that are distributed as follows:

\$9,276.21 1148.32110.000.0000 (MCSAC Contract Salaries)
\$9,276.21 1148.35810.000.0000 (Morgan County Sheriff Task Force)
\$3,276.21 1148.35820.000.0000 (Stability First Magdalene House)
\$6,000.00 1148.35840.000.0000 (Wellspring)
\$3,000.00 1148.36105.000.0000 (Churches in Mission)
\$4,000.00 1148.35850.000.0000 (Martinsville Youth Development Center)
\$1,000.00 1148.32110.000.0000 (Youth First, Inc.)
\$1,276.24 1148.34620.000.0000 (Mooresville High School PASS Program)

Ms. Dinwiddie stated that these are countermeasure fees that are collected and redistributed. Vickie Kivett made a motion to approve the additional appropriation of \$37,104.87. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Commissioners*

Josh Messmer stated that Kendrick Foundation, Stability First, and MCSAC applied for a joint grant and they needed matching funds from the Opioid Fund. Mr. Messmer requested an additional appropriation of \$5,000 from the Opioid Fund (1237) into Acct #1237.36100.000.0000 (Stability First). Chip Keller made a motion to approve the request. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 7-0.

Transfers:

- *Parks & Recreation*

Josh Messmer stated that Kenny Hale was not able to be present for the meeting, but they need a couple of transfers to clean up some accounts. The first request is \$12,000 from Acct #1112.36100.000.0803 (Contractual Service) to Acct #1112.23300.000.0803 (Supplies-Repair/Maintenance). Chip Keller made a motion to approve the request. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 7-0. The second request is for \$1,350 from Acct #1112.36100.000.0803 (Contractual Service) to Acct #1112.16530.000.0803 (Workman's Comp). Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the request. Motion seconded by Brian Culp. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Highway*

Charlie Wilson, Acting Highway Superintendent, stated that the Salary Ordinance did not match the budget and requested a transfer of \$44,931 from Acct #1135.23000.000.0000 (Bridge Repair Supply) as follows:

\$4,803 into Acct #1135.11001.000.0000 (Bridge Crew)
6,978 into Acct #1135.12200.000.0000 (Overtime)
4,992 into Acct #1135.16530.000.0000 (Workman's Comp)
2,940 into Acct #1135.16550.000.0000 (HAS County Contribution)
25,218 into Acct #1135.16580.000.0000 (HDHP)

Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the transfer request. Motion seconded by Brian Culp. Motion carried 7-0.

Salary Ordinance Amendment

Josh Messmer stated that the county engineer position was vacated at the end of 2022. An employee from the Highway Department stepped up in a big way, far outside of her experience and knowledge base, to become trained as the ERC (Employee in Responsible Charge) for both bridges and general projects through INDOT. The county was at risk of losing many LPA projects, which could have cost the county hundreds of thousands of dollars, and this employee stepped up and managed the process and kept the county in compliance, while continuing to do the normal job duties listed in the job description. The engineer salary was budgeted at \$115,000 for 2023 and none of it had been used until the new engineer was hired at the end of August. (The salary has now been set at \$105,000.) The Board of Commissioners is asking that a one-time stipend of \$5,000 be given to this employee because of the money saved for the county and making sure grants weren't lost. Don Adams stated that there were a lot of dirty dishes left in the rack and they had to be cleaned up. This employee cleaned them up and had to take courses to do it. Mr. Adams stated that he did not want to let these actions be overlooked. Mr. Adams had mentioned starting a program several years ago to give employees a percentage of the savings when opportunities arise. Kim Merideth mentioned her concern with setting a precedent; there are a lot of employees that go above and beyond their regular duties and it is a large sum to hand out as a bonus. Ms. Merideth stated that she did not want it to appear that they don't appreciate what others have done as well. Chip Keller stated that this is a slippery slope and did not think the Council should single out one person; however he thought that the employee should be rewarded and if the Commissioners have a line item for this, maybe a gift certificate could be given. Dan Bastin stated that this employee saved the county money to the tune of 6 to 7 figures. INDOT was prepared to pull all the contracts and the county would be left holding the bag for hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars all because a (former) professional employee was not being honest and put the county in a position that was not realized. The employee stepped up and got the county out of a mess. Melissa Greene stated that they were not aware of the details of the situation and thanked Mr. Bastin for the information. Charlie Wilson, Acting Highway Superintendent, stated that he has been compensated for taking on the duties of the Superintendent, but this employee has not. Daree Fry stated that there is a line item for employee appreciation, but this is a small amount and was intended to be used for small tokens for 20 years of service or something similar. Mr. Messmer stated that the funds are available through the Highway Department. Brian Culp stated that Mr. Wilson has been compensated for stepping up, but this employee has not been compensated. Linda Pruitt stated that during this time, the other clerical employee left employment and the employee temporarily picked up these duties as well. Jason Maxwell stated that it is not a matter of whether the employee deserves it, but where do they draw the line. Ms. Greene stated that it stops at the Council; they make that decision. Brian Culp made a motion to approve the \$5,000 stipend and amend the Salary Ordinance. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 5-2. Kim Merideth and Chip Keller were opposed.

Job Maintenance Committee

Daree Fry, Morgan County HR Director, stated that the Job Maintenance Committee met this evening and discussed a Maintenance Technician Assistant position. This is a new position, but is not an additional employee. This is a current custodian that will be doing inventory, ordering, and several other duties in addition to their regular duties. This was approved by the Job Maintenance Committee last year and the Council asked that it be brought back at budget time. The position is in the same category but WIS recommended that the salary be increased by \$1.40 per hour. Jason Maxwell made a motion to approve the position. Motion seconded by Kim Merideth. Motion carried 7-0.

Ms. Fry stated that the Surveyor is adding a Chief Deputy position. This is allowed by statute and is not an additional employee, it is adding duties to a current employee position. Chief Deputy positions are 75% of the office holder's salary. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the position. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

The Veterans Service has requested an Administrative Assistant position. This has been budgeted and will be at the hourly clerical rate. Brian Culp made a motion to approve the position contingent upon the budget being approved. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 7-0.

The Board of Health has requested a School Liaison Nurse. This is currently a part time position shared by two nurses. This could be a part time or full time position. It is currently being paid through a grant that should last another two or three years. This is a state mandated position. Melissa Green made a motion to approve the position. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

The Purdue Extension Office has requested that the job description for the Clerical Part Time position be updated to include technology skills to be able to help with the website. It does not change the rate of pay. Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the job description. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 7-0.

Ms. Fry stated that last month she presented a job description that the Council approved contingent upon Commissioner approval and the Board of Commissioners voted to approve it.

Recess

Vickie Kivett made a motion to recess the meeting. Motion seconded by Kim Merideth. Motion carried 7-0.

Public Hearings - Harrison Township Fire District

Jason Maxwell made a motion to convene the public hearing for Binding Taxing Units Budget Hearings. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Harrison Township Fire District*

Brooke Chaille with Reedy Financial Group, and Don Stevens, John Kennedy and Chief Eric Funkhouser, representing Harrison Township Fire District, were present to review the budget. Ms. Chaille stated that the only change to the budget, outside of the 4% growth quotient, was a three year growth appeal. This would be an additional \$5,000 which would be used to help fund the contract with Bargersville to provide fire service in that area. The total budget is \$170,100 with a levy of \$77,159. The estimated 2024 levy is \$65,571. Kim Merideth asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none. Brian Culp made a motion to approve the budget as presented (\$170,100) with a levy of \$62,933. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 7-0.

Brian Culp made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Monroe Township Fire District*

Troy Sprinkle made a motion to open the public hearing for the Monroe Township Fire District. Motion seconded by Vickie Kivett. Motion carried 7-0.

Chris Mills stated that the budget is the same as it has been in the past; however, their district is growing. The budget is \$321,200. They have had 416 runs so far this year and last year they were at 347. They are doing more with the same amount of funds and they will not be able to maintain this. They are adding 200 to 250 homes each year, which is 800 to 1,000 in population growth. They are a volunteer crew every evening from 5 to 10. They need to figure out a way to increase the budget. Linda Pruitt stated that the published levy is "0". The budget request in Gateway had errors and the budget was not accepted with the errors. The budget will be at the 2023 levy. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the budget as presented (\$481,306) with a levy of \$236,767. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 7-0.

Brian Culp made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Morgan County*

Vickie Kivett made a motion to open the public hearing for the Morgan County budget. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 7-0.

Kim Merideth stated that the estimated budget is \$78,954,775. Ms. Merideth asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none. Vickie Kivett made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

Reconvene

Troy Sprinkle made a motion to reconvene the Council meeting. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 7-0.

Recommend Shift of Jail Expenses from General Fund to LIT Public Safety

Dan Bastin, Morgan County Auditor's Office and former County Auditor, stated that he and Reedy Financial both agree that after the budget workshop, the LIT Public Safety Fund ended up with a larger estimated cash balance than expected and more than necessary. The LIT Public Safety Fund cash balance at the end of 2024 is \$2,187,021. The Council has the opportunity to move more of the jail budget from the General Fund to the LIT Public Safety Fund. Mr. Bastin reviewed the line items as to what could be moved and recommended that \$1,284,542 be moved

to decrease the \$4,446,673 budget to \$3,204,163. The General Fund budget would then be decreased to from \$30,077,286 to \$28,834,776. The General Fund Jail budget does not include PERF, FICA or the employer's share of the health insurance. The Jail budget in the LIT Public Safety Fund would increase from \$2,280,682 to \$3,566,224. The General Fund estimated cash balance then changes from \$13,164,344 to \$14,406,854. Chip Keller made a motion to move \$1,284,542 to LIT Public Safety. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

Resolution 2023-9-13 Preliminary Determination to Enter a Lease Agreement – 1st reading

Josh Messmer stated that this resolution regards a work in progress. In 2025, there will be an empty Courthouse and the Board of Commissioners sees a need to continue with this work. There have been broken sewer lines, flooded offices, humidity issues, an out of date elevator, poor air circulation, HVAC issues, unsafe stairwells and it is just a building that needs to be re-done. Mr. Messmer introduced Zach Klutz with Taft and Jason Semler with Baker Tilly to answer any questions. This is the public hearing and no action is needed until the next meeting.

Zach Klutz stated that this financing would fund the Courthouse renovations. It is similar to the process for the Judicial Campus. They will utilize a Building Corp. for the financing that will be through lease rental bonds. The lease rentals will be paid using property taxes and this is the first step. The resolution is a determination by the Council that they find a need for the project and they are making a preliminary determination to move forward with entering into the lease rental financing. Once the preliminary determination is done, Mr. Klutz will come before the Council after 30 days with a bond ordinance approving the bonds and the lease. The Commissioners and Building Corp. will then likely close sometime in January or February.

Jason Semler handed out a report showing the preliminary costs of the bond schedule. The estimated cost is \$23.2 million. They are looking to issue bonds early next year, but there will not be any debt service levy until the next year. The first payment is estimated to begin in 2025. They will evaluate going through the Indiana Bond Bank and look at all the options. Total preliminary costs are \$24,685,000. The not to exceed amount will be \$26 million and will be paid over a 20-year period with interest rates from 3.95% to 4.75%, not to exceed 7%. The annual payment is estimated to be \$1,925,000, not to exceed \$2.5 million. The tax rate on the first two bonds is a little over 10 cents. Based on the 2023 assessed values, the tax rate for this project is estimated to be .0895. It climbs to .1276 then drops back to under .09 once the 2022 bonds drop off. Since these rates were calculated, the 2024 assessed values have been certified and there was a 4 to 5% increase in the tax base. Because of that, there will be a smaller levy, but still approximately .08. A home with an assessed value of \$160,700 would see an approximate \$9.09 increase in property taxes.

Recess

Vickie Kivett made a motion to recess the meeting. Motion seconded by Kim Merideth. Motion carried 7-0.

Public Hearing

Chip Keller made a motion to open the public hearing. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

Kim Merideth asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none.

Reconvene

Troy Sprinkle made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 7-0. Brian Culp made a motion to reconvene the Council meeting. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 7-0.

Next Meeting

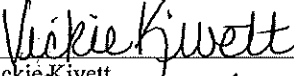
Kim Merideth noted that the next meeting is October 2nd at 6:30 pm and this will be a meeting to adopt budgets.

Adjournment

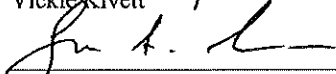
Vickie Kivett made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Kim Merideth. Motion carried 7-0.

MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL

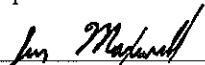
Kim Merideth



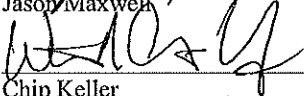
Vickie Kivett



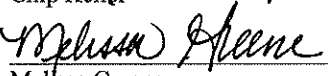
Troy Sprinkle



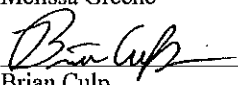
Jason Maxwell



Chip Keller



Melissa Greene



Brian Culp

ATTEST:



Linda Pruitt, Morgan Co. Auditor