

**THE MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL MET ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023 AT 6:30 P.M.**

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

PRAYER (*Chip Keller*)

**Minutes**

Brian Culp made a motion to approve the September 13, October 2 and 23 minutes. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 5-0. (Kim Merideth was absent and Melissa Greene was late.)

**Treasurer's Report**

Vickie Kivett noted that there was a Treasurer's Report included in the meeting packet. Jason Maxwell made a motion to accept the report. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 5-0.

**Additional Appropriations:**

• *Highway*

Justin Schneck, Morgan County Highway Engineer, stated that several months ago, a motorist left the roadway and damaged some decorative railing at the I-69/Henderson Ford interchange. The county received a quote for \$32,500 to repair the damage and the motorist's insurance sent a check to the Highway Department, which was receipted by the Treasurer's Office. Mr. Schneck is now requesting an additional appropriation of \$32,500 from the MVH Fund (1176) into Account #1176.36100.000.0529 (Contractual Services) in order to complete the repair. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the additional appropriation. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 5-0.

**Transfers:**

• *Treasurer*

Terry Clelland, Morgan County Treasurer, stated that she needed to transfer funds for a part time seasonal employee as there are a couple of employees that will be out due to medical reasons and she will be need a part time person. Ms. Clelland requested a transfer as follows:

\$1000.00 from Acct #1000.32200.000.0003 (Postage)  
 931.40 from Acct #1000.32300.000.0003 (Travel & Lodging)  
 1390.00 from Acct #1000.37200.000.0003 (Equipment Rental)  
 1895.00 from Acct #1000.39500.000.0003 (Instruction & Education)  
 2600.00 from Acct #1000.40000.000.0003 (Equipment)  
 \$7816.40

Into Acct# 1000.12100.000.0003 (Part-time Seasonal)

Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the transfer as requested. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 5-0.

• *Commissioners*

Bryan Collier, Morgan County Commissioner, requested a transfer of \$65,709.23 from Acct #1000.34210.000.0068 (Insurance Deductible) to Acct # 1000.40002.000.0068 (Property Acquisition). Mr. Collier stated that this settles up the acquisition of property at Waverly Park. This has been an ongoing process and started before Mr. Collier became a Commissioner. Brian Culp made a motion to approve the transfer request. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 5-0.

• *Highway*

Justin Schneck requested a transfer of \$150,000 from Acct #1173.49100.000.0529 (Small Structure Replacement) to Acct #1173.36100.000.0529 (Contractual Services). Due to a lack of

key personnel in the Highway Department, they have not been able to plan for projects to put these funds to use; however they do not have a small structure inventory for all the culverts across the county and this should be done every four to five years. The last inventory was in 2015. These funds would be used to hire a consultant to perform the inspections and the department can plan for the replacement and rehab of small structures moving forward. This will be a six-month project. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the transfer request. Motion seconded by Brian Culp. Motion carried 5-0.

- **Health Department**

Dr. Paul Broderick, Morgan County Health Officer, was present to request a transfer of \$5,000 from Acct #8951.11510.000.0000 (Part Time RN Nurse) to Acct #8951.23501.000.0000 (Incentive Supplies). Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the transfer. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 6-0.

Chip Keller noted that there have been two resignations within the Health Department within the last few months and asked if this was concerning. Dr. Broderick stated that one employee left due to family health issues and another employee was offered a job at twice the salary, but is working part time to help out.

**Resolution 2023-11-6A Approving a Reserve Policy and Debt Policy**

Linda Pruitt stated that this resolution establishes the guidelines for county finances. The debt level would not exceed 3% of the gross assessed value, or \$2,500 per capita. The resolution authorizes the Council as the body that would formally enter debt for the county. Bryan Collier stated that when they started going through the BOT process, and evaluating creditworthiness, questions were asked concerning mechanisms in place. The resolution sets parameters and checks and balances. Chip Keller noted that the Reserve Policy sets a maintenance level of 35% for the funds. Mr. Collier stated that this should have been in place decades ago. It protects the taxpayers from a group going rogue. Jason Maxwell made a motion to approve the resolution. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 5-0.

**Taxpayer Petition -- Courthouse Renovation BOT III**

Zach Klutz, Taft, stated that the Council has held the Preliminary Determination Hearings, notice has been given, and they can now move forward with the underlying financing of the project. The Building Corporation met earlier in the evening and adopted a resolution to approve the lease agreement and to authorize the issuance of bonds pending Council approval. The project for the renovation of the Courthouse will be structured as a lease financing project. The title for the Courthouse will be transferred to the Building Corporation. The Building Corporation will be the party issuing the bonds in the name of the county. The county will do a property tax levy to pay the lease rental payments that the Building Corporation will collect and pay the debt service on the bonds. The county cannot enter into a lease unless they receive a petition from 50 tax payers within the county asking the county to move forward with the project and the lease financing. The petition has been certified by the Auditor showing that 58 signatures were gathered and 53 were certified as owners of taxable real estate. Chip Keller made a motion to accept the petition. Motion seconded by Brian Culp. Motion carried 6-0. (Melissa Greene joined the meeting.)

Mr. Klutz stated that notice was published for the public hearing. The lease agreement includes two parcels, one for the Administration Building and one for the Courthouse. The lease will be for a 20-year term, annual payments will not exceed \$2.5 million and will be payable semiannually at a not to exceed amount of \$1.25 million.

**Recess**

Chip Keller made a motion to recess the Council meeting and open the public hearing. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 6-0.

**Public Hearing -- Lease Agreement**

There were no comments.

**Reconvene**

Chip Keller made a motion to close the public hearing and reconvene the Council meeting. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 6-0.

**Ordinance #2023-22 -- Courthouse Project BOT III**

Zach Klutz stated that Ordinance #2023-22 is An Ordinance of the Morgan County Council of Morgan County, Indiana, Making Determinations Related to the Courthouse Project, Authorizing the Form of and Execution of Lease, Approving the Issuance of Bonds and Related Matters. If

adopted, the Board of Commissioners then ratifies the lease and signs the lease agreement. The bonds will go to market in January or February of 2024. By November 20<sup>th</sup>, the authorization process for the lease and bond documents will be concluded. There will then be a 30 day notice period that will expire December 21<sup>st</sup>. The ordinance recognizes that the Council has accepted the tax payer petition and conducted a public hearing. The ordinance approves the project and the scope of the project. The ordinance also approves the form of lease, accepts the petition, and makes a recommendation that the Board of Commissioners execute the lease as the executives. The ordinance ratifies the Building Corporation's decision to issue property tax lease rental bonds of 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$26 million and pledges a property tax levy for the lease rental payments for a term not to exceed 20 years. If approved, the Auditor will publish notice and start the 30-day objection period.

Chip Keller asked that Bryan Collier, Morgan County Commissioner, remind them of what the project entails and why they are doing it. Bryan Collier stated that the county did a space study some time ago and they are lacking space to function. They are also opposed to having employees in basements. Due to the lack of space and overall cost in renovations, the 1857-1859 Courthouse is no longer functional, but in the interest of preserving the county's history they are building a new court facility and renovating the Courthouse for county offices. There have been numerous mechanical issues that will be addressed, plumbing, heating/cooling, windows, wiring, etc. while keeping the aesthetics of the downtown area. Chip Keller stated that they will also be able to eliminate the building where Court Services currently resides, as well as the building the Prosecutor's Office is using. Vickie Kivett asked if there were any public comments and stated that she wanted the public to realize that a lot of time, effort, and thought has gone into the plans to make the project as affordable as possible. Chip Keller made a motion to approve Ordinance #2023-22. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 6-0.

**Health Department Director Salary**

Dr. Paul Broderick stated that he sent an email outlining the background information for this request. Dr. Broderick stated that \$80K represents a 40-hour position. Since this will be a 35 hour a week position, \$70,000 should attract and keep an individual that can administrate the required reports, grow with the funding from the state, and interact with community partners such as the Kendrick Foundation. The WIS study sets this salary at \$62,000. Darcy Fry, HR Director, stated that the employees in the same pay range are HR, EMA Director, 911 Director, EMS Director and Highway Superintendent. If the pay range for the Health Department Director is set to \$80,000, then there will be two departments that are still in the original level, the others have already been increased. Ms. Fry stated that she did not have a problem with the range; things are changing at a rapid rate and they probably would not be able to attract a quality candidate with a Master's Degree at the lower rate. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the position at \$80,000 as it states in the budget. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 6-0.

**Third Amendment to Morgan County Police Retirement Plan**

Sheriff Rich Myers stated that this is the amendment that was discussed during the budget hearings. It drops the 10 year requirement to 8 years for deputies and allows retirement at 20 years of service and 50 years of age. Dave Rogers stated that this was discussed and approved at budget time and the budget was adjusted accordingly. There is another issue with funding the retirement plan and this will be discussed at a later date after coming up with a strategy. Mr. Rogers stated that when it was approved, they did not have the paperwork for the amendment. Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the amendment. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 6-0.

**Qualified Entity Reimbursement Agreement**

Bryan Collier stated that this is part of the next item on the agenda, which is participating in a fuel budgeting program through the Indiana Bond Bank, but no action is needed. This agreement deals with specific numbers that are not available yet. When they are released to the county, they will need to act quickly to lock in the price. Until the prices are available, they do not know if they will participate. Mr. Collier stated that they are asking for the Council's approval to participate, but if the numbers don't make sense, then they will not do it. This allows the county to purchase an amount of motor fuel at a special price if prices start escalating.

**Resolution #2023-11-8 Authorizing Participation in Motor Fuel Budgeting Program**

Jason Maxwell made a motion to approve Resolution #2023-11-8, which allows participation in the fuel program as discussed by Commissioner Collier. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 6-0.

**Construction Update**

Vickie Kivett asked for an update on the construction of the Judicial Campus. Bryan Collier stated that they are on schedule, and possibly slightly ahead of schedule. There have not been any major setbacks and the main elevator shaft has been constructed. They will then construct the second elevator shaft.

**Health Insurance**

Mr. Collier stated that the overall premium for employee health insurance increased by 15.9% and there will be some adjustments for employee premiums. The PPO is going away and the employee will bear more of the premium for that policy. There will be a presentation for the employees this week. To help ease the premium adjustment, they are increasing the contribution to the HSA. The single rate is going to \$1,500 and the family is increasing to \$3,000.

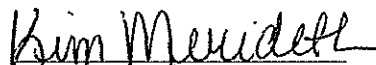
**EMS Update**


Vickie Kivett asked for an update on EMS. Brent Worth, EMS Director, stated that EMS continues to be a challenge. It is not where he thought it would be as they have challenges with vehicles, equipment and staffing. They are making some good changes and it is going in a good direction, just not on the timeline he had thought it would be.

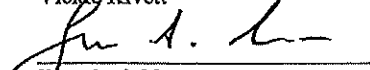
**Adjournment**


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

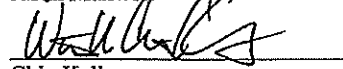
MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL

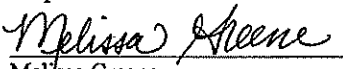
  
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Kim Merideth


  
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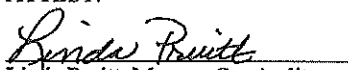
  
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Jason Maxwell

  
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Chip Keller

  
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Melissa Greene

  
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Brian Culp

ATTEST:

  
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Linda Pruitt, Morgan Co. Auditor