

THE MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL MET ON MONDAY, MAY 5, 2025 AT 6:30 P.M.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRAYER (*Vickie Kivett*)

Minutes

Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the April 7, 2025 minutes. Motion seconded by Joe Crone. Motion carried 6-0. (Brian Culp was absent.)

Resolution #2025-5-5 – Economic Revitalization Area

Josh Messmer stated that this is a resolution for the creation of an economic revitalization area. This is the first step in an abatement process. This is a declaratory resolution and does not obligate the county. The next step is a public notice for a public hearing, at which time a confirmatory resolution can be considered.

Mr. Messmer mentioned the headaches that Morgan County will be facing as a result of Senate Bill 1. Morgan County has structured taxes to help keep property taxes low and it is now more important than ever to support businesses and provide an opportunity to grow.

The area for the proposed data center meets the criteria to be considered an economic revitalization area and this resolution gets the process rolling. If the resolution is approved, the developer would want to schedule a special meeting at the end of May, as they are closing the first of June. The resolution starts the process to create an ERA (Economic Revitalization Area) and if the Council wants to consider an abatement on real or personal property, this step must be done first.

Kim Merideth noted that was a typo on page two that was corrected, as well as some language in another paragraph that was changed.

Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve Resolution #2025-5-5 A Resolution Declaring the Area within Morgan County, Indiana an Economic Revitalization Area. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 6-0.

Special Meeting Date

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 9 am was set as the date for the special meeting and public hearing.

Request to Fill Position - Surveyor

Kerstin Woodard, Chief Deputy Surveyor, was present to request approval to fill a vacant seasonal part time position in the Surveyor's Office. This position has been budgeted and will run from the end of May to the beginning of August. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the request. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 6-0.

Request to Fill Vacant Position – Health Department

Tricia Runningen, Morgan County Health Department Director, was present to request approval to file a vacant position for an administrative assistant. Ms. Runningen handed out paperwork showing the duties that the Health Department must provide. Ms. Runningen stated although the funding got cut, the responsibilities did not. They would like to reclassify the position and change the title of the position to Finance/Grants Manager as the position will be heavily involved in grants and will also pay claims. The Health First Indiana funding was cut 74% for 2026. For 2025, they received \$1.4 million. Staff costs alone total \$600,000. They granted funds to several community organizations and much of these grants will stop. They will be able to carry over funds from 2025 and some counties might opt out of the funding. This position is from the county budget. Kim Merideth stated that they will be meeting with the financial team on May 21st to look at the county funding. Chip Keller stated that they are getting ready to enter an age of austerity where things will be very different for the next few years; they could be asking departments to really cut the budget for next year. Ms. Runningen asked if they would be able to fill the position as it is currently listed. Daree Fry, HR Director, stated that the position has been reduced from eight hours to seven hours per day and they are willing to fund it at the low end instead of the midpoint. In the last three years, they have had three people in the position and none of them lasted a complete year. They are not able to pay for the skills that are

needed for the position. Linda Pruitt mentioned that she has had a similar experience obtaining an employee in her office. Ms. Runningen stated that with the Health First Indiana funding, they have an additional 30 pages of data and metrics that they have to report to the state quarterly, they have 14 new partnerships and grantees that they have to oversee spending, doing site visits, examining data, etc. If they cannot get consistency from the state, they will need someone who can write grants. They are requesting that the position be paid at a rate of \$29.09 and go from a classification of COMMOT IV to PAT II. If they remove a part time environmental position, this would take care of the difference from the current administrative assistant rate to the finance/grants manager rate. They have four full time environmentalists. Joe Crone suggested waiting until the May 21st meeting so they would have a better vision of the changes and made a motion to table the request until the June meeting. Motion seconded by Vickie Kivett. Motion carried 6-0.

Finance Committee Workshop

The Finance Committee meeting with Reedy Financial will be May 21st at 6:30 pm.

Reminder

There is a state-called meeting for County Councils on Friday, June 20 and Saturday June 21st in Carmel.

Adjournment

Melissa Greene 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
Vickie Kivett

Troy Sprinkle
Troy Sprinkle

Chip Keller
Chip Keller

Melissa Greene
Melissa Greene

Brian Culp
Brian Culp

Joe Crone
Joe Crone

ATTEST:

Linda Pruitt
Linda Pruitt, Morgan Co. Auditor