

**THE MORGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MET IN A REGULAR SESSION ON MONDAY, AUGUST 4, 2025 AT 9:30 A.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT WERE KENNY HALE, BRYAN COLLIER AND DON ADAMS. LINDA PRUITT, MORGAN COUNTY AUDITOR; DEB VERLEY, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT; JOSH MESSMER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR; AND ANNE COWGUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY, WERE ALSO PRESENT.

**PLEDGE**

PRAYER – *Kenny Hale*

**MINUTES – 7/21/25**

Don Adams made a motion to approve the July 21, 2025 minutes. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Kenny Hale acknowledged the June Treasurer's Report.

**CLAIMS**

Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the July 3 and 18, 2025 payroll claims and July 11 uniform claim of \$944,700.42, \$940,537.00 and \$31,900.00; PERF \$83,082.90, \$82,949.85 and \$3,572.80; FICA \$68,395.92, \$68,053.42 and \$2,440.64; and monthly claims of \$3,916,902.64. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

**ORDINANCE 2025-8 – Park Board**

Don Adams stated that he appreciated the work that Anne Cowgur did and referred to IC 36-10-3-3. Mr. Adams stated that the code needs to be looked over at the state level; one size fits all doesn't quite work and mentioned Section 1 that states the Morgan County Parks Department will function independently of the Morgan County Commissioners. The Park Board will consist of two members from different political parties appointed by the Board of Commissioners; two members from different political parties appointed by the County Council; and one member (Section 4.2) may be appointed by an elected official selected at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners or they may appoint the county Cooperative extension coordinator, the county extension educator, or, a member selected by the board of supervisors of a soil and water conservation district to serve as an ex officio member. A member of the county fiscal body or the county executive may not be appointed. Discussion followed regarding rotating the ex officio membership. Anne Cowgur noted that the appointment is by position, not by the person. Don Adams noted that the ex officio members should have voting powers. A meeting stipend and the requirement to follow the employee handbook were also discussed. Bryan Collier noted that there seemed to be some confusion about the appointments and made a motion to table the ordinance. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT**

Terry Brock, Morgan County Surveyor, stated that it was brought to his attention that the contract with the Stormwater Coordinator has expired. The previous contract automatically renewed, but the latest one was for a two-year term. They have updated the contract to include a 2% raise and changed the dates. Mr. Brock stated that Mr. Dials runs the MS-4 program. Bryan Collier noted that if the MS-4 program fails, the Morgan County Board of Commissioners President could face jail time. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the agreement. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

**1976 TIME CAPSULE**

Terry Brock stated that they dug up the 1976 time capsule at the Courthouse. There was a rumor that the time capsule was actually a burial vault and the rumor turned out to be true. The excavator could not dig it up so they contacted a vault company that excavated it. The vault company volunteered their time and equipment. The capsule will be kept under lock and key until it is opened next year.

**EMA GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Abby Worth, Morgan County EMA Director, stated that they have two Homeland Security grants; both not to exceed \$150,000. One grant is to obtain equipment to enhance soft target protection capabilities (large gatherings without security protection) and one is to provide training and equipment for development of a county Structural Collapse Team. Don Adams made a motion to approve the grant applications. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

## **COPIER DISCUSSION**

Josh Messmer stated that he and Deb Verley met with Ricoh to get a budget amount for copier replacement; not planning to replace them, just needing an amount to put in the budget because they are out of contract. Ricoh came back with special pricing of \$149,606.00. This amount is \$8,000 more than the cost six years ago. Mr. Messmer stated that if the Board wants to move forward, they can lock in the pricing and not replace them until later next year. Bryan Collier stated that they need to move forward and made a motion to proceed with the agreement. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

## **PURDUE PHARMA BANKRUPTCY PLAN**

Anne Cowgur stated that the bankruptcy court has reached a settlement with Purdue Pharma and the Sackler family and the question is, does the Board vote yes or no in favor of the settlement, or does the Board want to object to the settlement. Bryan Collier made a motion to vote in favor of the settlement through the bankruptcy plan. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

## **BRIDGE 40 INSPECTION AGREEMENT**

Justin Schneck, Morgan County Highway Engineer, stated that a scoring committee selected Egis as the consultant for the construction inspection services for Bridge 40 on Leonard Road. Mr. Schneck presented the agreement for \$132,700 for the inspection services and stated that this is a 13-week project. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the agreement. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

## **BZA APPOINTMENT**

Laura Parker, Morgan County Plan Commission Director, submitted a letter informing the Board that they had located a replacement for the position on the BZA (Board of Zoning Appeals) that was vacated by Gerry McGrath in the spring. Dr. Susan Fries is a retired educator and is interested in serving on the board. The term for this appointment would be until the end of the year, to serve the remainder of Mr. McGrath's term. Bryan Collier made a motion to appoint Dr. Susan Fries to the BZA. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

## **TORT CLAIM**

Bryan Collier made a motion to submit the Wood and Simpson tort claim to the insurance company. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

## **SYCAMORE SERVICES**

LaDonna Everroad and Kate Renneker, Sycamore Services, were present to give an overview of their program. Ms. Everroad stated that they offer a variety of services to individuals with disabilities, those that are elderly, or community members (such as transportation). They impact the lives of over 1,600 individuals. They have a day program, community integration, respite services, recreational therapy, residential and wellness services, employment services, behavioral management and public transportation. They support individuals to increase their independence and to help them contribute to the community. There are funding gaps that have resulted in staffing shortages and a decrease in supplies and equipment, affordable housing, transportation access and many other things that impact client's quality of life. They currently have 30 people in their Morgan County day program. 20 in the recreational therapy program, 20 individuals in the residential program and 10 in the behavioral management services program. Morgan County Connect provides public transportation for residents in the community. On a monthly basis, they provide approximately 1,564 trips for 164 riders. Don Adams stated that their services are appreciated. Bryan Collier stated that he is blessed to see what they do on a daily basis.

## **COMMENT**

Bill Mitchell, Clay Township Trustee, presented photos and stated that there are several properties in the township that are eyesores. Mr. Mitchell stated people living next to these places are not happy about it and come to him. He is not able to do anything about it so offered to go before the County Council and Board of Commissioners to see if there was something that can be done to make a change and make the county look better. Mr. Mitchell asked for rules and regulations to address these situations, or that the rules and regulations that are in effect be enforced. Bryan Collier stated that one man's junk in another man's treasure, but there should be some way to quantify how that lowers the value of surrounding properties and is costing tax revenue. Mr. Mitchell stated that the standards are not being maintained and rules are not being enforced.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Bryan Collier made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

Morgan County Board of Commissioners

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Don Adams

Attest:

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Bryan A. Collier

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Linda Pruitt, Morgan Co. Auditor

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Kenny Hale