

THE MORGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MET IN A REGULAR SESSION ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 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; AND ANNE COWGUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY, WERE ALSO PRESENT.

PLEDGE

PRAYER – *Kenny Hale*

MINUTES

Don Adams made a motion to approve the August 18 and September 2, 2025 meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

CLERK’S REPORT/TREASURER’S REPORT

Kenny Hale acknowledged the August and September Treasurer’s Report and September Clerk’s Report.

CLAIMS

Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the September 12, and 26, 2025 payroll claims of \$943,351.18 and \$906,986.79; PERF \$82,383.15 and \$79,885.18; FICA \$68,356.77 and \$65,590.65; and monthly claims of \$2,146,553.72. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – *Hendricks County Coroner*

Mike Ellis, Morgan County Coroner, stated that this MOU is between Hendricks County and Morgan County for assistance should there be a mass casualty event. This has already been approved by the Hendricks County Board of Commissioners. Don Adams made a motion to approve the MOU. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

SEED GRANT

Zach Worth, Morgan County Public Safety Dispatch Director, requested approval of a SEED (Sowing Enriched and Enhanced Datasets) Grant. The range for this grant is \$5,000 to \$30,000 and it will cover expenses to support the development and use of authoritative statewide spatial information, reach NENA standards for NextGen911 Data Model and support and develop data quality management practices. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the application. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

MOTOROLA LEASE

Mr. Worth stated that he is not requesting action on this item as he is waiting on updated language for the agreement. It will be on a future agenda.

STOP GRANT

Cassie Mellady, Morgan County Deputy Prosecutor, was present to request approval of the \$15,606.00 2025-00043 STOP Grant. Ms. Mellady stated that the grant helps to fund the domestic violence prosecutor position. The matching amount for the grant has been budgeted. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the grant application. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

CASA GRANT

Candice Carter, Morgan County CASA Coordinator, was present to request approval of the \$27,726.00 Matching Grant and \$11,888.00 Capacity Building Grant. The grant is used to assist with everyday operations of the program. The match is the coordinator’s salary. The capacity building grant is used to build capacity in the network and reduce the number of children waiting for a CASA Volunteer. Ms. Carter explained that CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) is appointed by the court to be the eyes and ears for the court in working with children that have been removed from their home due to abuse and neglect and give them a voice in court. Ms. Carter stated that people can go to the county website for an application to volunteer. Don Adams made a motion to approve the grants. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

ORDINANCE 2025-12 - *Rezone Discussion*

Joe Calderone, Barnes & Thornburg, representing clients for the rezone of 158 acres from Ag to PUD, stated that this would mirror the ordinance that was passed in February to allow for a data center and other light industrial uses. This property came about as an opportunity and includes a parcel immediately adjacent to the PUD on the south side of Keller Hill Road. The property is within the high intensity area of the comprehensive plan and is also partially within priority

development A. On the north side of Keller Hill Road, there is only one more parcel to go into the industrial development in Hendricks County. This was presented to the Plan Commission last Monday and was approved with a 5-2 favorable vote. There was robust discussion at the meeting and they have proposed an ordinance that matches the same parameters as the PUD ordinance, including the maximum noise level of 65 decibels. They are also providing the same enhanced screening along Keller Hill Road, which is 150' wide with berms 10 to 15' high. The intent is to screen as much of the buildings as they can from perimeter roads. Bryan Collier asked if there would be generators and how that would affect the noise level. Mr. Calderone stated that the noise level for an emergency could exceed 65 decibels. Regular testing would meet the 65 db. Kenny Hale asked if the plan was to have AES supply power. Mr. Calderone stated that the 375 K line runs through the property and it is a natural fit. Mr. Hale stated that the other concern is water. Mr. Calderone stated that if water is not available through public sources, then it would be air cooled.

The following citizens made comments:

Bruce McClain, Kathy Morrow, Laura Johnson, Alec Willis, Christopher Lamberson, Carrie Syczlo, Janice Bacon, Dorian Patkus, Chris Green, Penny Johnson, Brian Weitz, Austin McKee, Doug Peine, Susan Kessler, Terri Moore, Carl Gildes, Sean Walker, Heather Alle, and Darrin Birch. Items mentioned were water, jobs, home values, permits, a note passed by the attorney during a Plan Commission meeting, need for housing, noise, transparency, overcrowded schools, taxes, benefits to county, lack of benefits to county, and lawsuits.

Joe Calderone introduced Matt Stypula with EMHT. Mr. Calderone stated that the note passed during the meeting concerned questions that were raised regarding technical aspects of the project. Mr. Calderone stated that he is not an engineer and was writing questions to ask the engineer so he could respond correctly. The note from the attorney noted that someone was looking at the questions he was writing. Mr. Calderone stated that it is disappointing that the Plan Commission and Board of Commissioners are accused of short-circuiting procedural requirements. Barnes & Thornburg is aware of the legal procedures for public hearings, and they abide by them.

Mr. Stypula stated that the 65 db is with the generators running, there will be noise mitigation measures around the generators to meet the requirement. They have had discussions with local utilities regarding water and there is a study of the aquifer. In the event there isn't sufficient water for a water-cooled system, they would utilize an air-cooled system; however, water cooled is more efficient. Water-cooled would use 1 to 3 million gallons per day, per building, hottest day, maximum capacity.

Kenny Hale noted that he did not attend the Plan Commission meeting due to a medical family emergency and he has not taken a job with the data center.

Don Adams thanked everyone for their comments and noted that there is a need for trust. He contacted the Chamber of Commerce in another state that has a data center. The Chamber had nothing but good to say about what it has done for the community. They discussed growth, taxes, the donations to community non-profits and money for schools. Mr. Adams read an Abraham Lincoln quote and stated that several of the concerns mentioned would be resolved within a month. Mr. Adams stated that this project has tremendous possibilities for future generations.

ORDINANCE 2025-12 - Rezone

Bryan Collier made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-12 An Ordinance of Morgan County Indiana Concerning Amendment to the Morgan County Unified Development Ordinance as they are following the items per IC 36-7-4-603. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Kenny Hale noted that he supported the first portion of the project and wanted to wait and see what happens there; he will not be supporting this ordinance today. Motion carried 2-1. Kenny Hale was opposed.

MONUMENTS AT COURTHOUSE

Luke Jackson asked that when the monuments are reset at the Historic Courthouse, that there be a plaque presented that honors all the different infantry divisions that Morgan County residents served in.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK UPDATE

Daree Fry, Morgan County HR Director, stated that Section 4 of the Employee Handbook has been updated. The last time it was updated was March of 2022. The benefit committee consisted of a judge, department heads, elected officials, employees, and council members. Several changes were made as follows: bereavement time changed to hours instead of days (similar to PTO); a chart for a percentage of PTO buyout has been added based on length of employment; employees that were taking 6 weeks to 3 months of PTO before leaving employment has been an issue so this was changed to allow a limited amount of PTO within six months of leaving employment; unpaid time (up to 3 days) can only be used for medical reasons as approved by a supervisor; employees

are allowed to take time off for school conferences; road deputies are working three 12-hour days and one 8-hour day; there is no PTO payout for employees that are terminated. These changes would be effective January 1, 2026. Don Adams made a motion to approve a first reading and move forward with a second reading. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 2-0-1. Bryan Collier abstained.

COMMUNITY CROSSING MATCHING GRANT

Justin Schneck, Morgan County Highway Engineer, stated that INDOT opened the call for CCMG (Community Crossings Matching Grant) projects for fiscal year 2026. Mr. Schneck drafted a funding commitment letter for the \$1 mill in matching funds and included a tentative list of roads to be paved. They are still working through the list to firm up the scope of work for each roadway. There is a possibility that if a road needs extra work, another road could be eliminated due to financial constraints. The matching funds would come from the MVH Restricted Fund. Bryan Collier stated that with SB1, road funding is being cut and the money is just not there to pave the roads. Morgan County has been taking 1% of income tax and supplementing property tax. The state has taken that from 1% to .3. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the CCMG letter and move forward with the grant application. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

CENTENNIAL ROAD EXHIBIT

Mr. Schneck presented an exhibit developed by DLZ and introduced Eric Ratts, DLZ, who was present to answer questions. Mr. Schneck stated that he has been working with Mr. Ratts and MSD of Martinsville on the proposed elementary school in Green Township. The exhibit lays out proposed roadway improvements along the school property frontage as well as the River Valley Christian Church property, extending north to the intersection with Egbert Road. They are widening the road within roadway standards and the consultant had incorporated turn lanes at both entrances. They have proposed a roundabout where there is currently a four-way stop and a crosswalk at the main entrance of the school with a push button. Bryan Collier made a motion to move forward with the design. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION 2025-10-6

Bryan Collier stated that in the breakout session at AIC, they talked about having a resolution in place to help with future decisions regarding energy and industrial development. Mr. Collier compared the resolution to using a roller instead of a fine brush. Don Adams noted that this is something that Josh Messmer, former county administrator, had worked on. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the resolution. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

An unidentified audience member stated that they did not understand the resolution. Mr. Collier explained that as infrastructure needs change, it is a platform from which to start and mentioned Home Rule.

TORT CLAIM

Bryan Collier made a motion to submit the Hillman tort claim to insurance. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

EEOC PLAN

Daree Fry stated that the EEOP (Equal Employment Opportunity Plan) has been updated. The EEO Utilization Report is not available at this time. This plan is used when submitting federal grants. The Board stated that they had not had a chance to review the plan. Bryan Collier made a motion to table the plan until the next meeting. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

COMMENT

David Mow, Soil & Water Conservation District, stated that this coming Saturday there will be a Weed Wrangle at Burkhart Creek. They will be working to eliminate Callery Pear, Bush Honeysuckle and Autumn Olive.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE COUNTY

Don Adams stated that he enjoyed the Old Town Waverly Festival and thanked the Park Board and all involved.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Morgan County Board of Commissioners

Don Adams

Attest:

Bryan A. Collier

Linda Pruitt, Morgan Co. Auditor

Kenny Hale