

THE MORGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MET IN A REGULAR SESSION ON MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2021 AT 9:30 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT WERE DON ADAMS, KENNY HALE AND BRYAN COLLIER. DEB VERLEY, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT; JOSH MESSMER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR; DAN BASTIN, COUNTY AUDITOR; AND JIM WISCO, COUNTY ATTORNEY, WERE ALSO PRESENT.

PLEDGE – Veteran and American Legion Post #103 Commander Emily Armstrong.

PRAYER – Clay Township Trustee Bill Mitchell.

CLAIMS

Kenny Hale made a motion to approve the payroll and monthly claims of \$1,645,002.20. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

GRANT APPLICATION - *Sheriff*

Sheriff Rich Myers was present to request approval of two grant applications, \$5,800 for the PACE team (Pro-Active Criminal Enforcement) and \$8,200 for a drug canine. Both grants are provided through the Morgan County Substance Abuse Council. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the grant application. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

GRANT APPLICATION – *CASA*

Candice Carter, Morgan County Court Services, was present to request approval of a \$35,000 grant application for the 2021 CASA Triage Pilot Program through the Indiana State GAL/CASA Office. Ms. Carter stated that this program will help the CASA program better serve the children in need of services in Morgan County. In 2020, they were only able to serve 58% of the children that were in need of a CASA volunteer. This grant would go towards a contractual employee to assist in the CASA office to track the cases in need of a volunteer, attend court hearings, assign volunteers, and write reports. There are currently 54 volunteers that spend an average of 18 months per case. In the first three quarters of 2020, there were 99 new cases. Kenny Hale made a motion to approve the grant application. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

GRANT APPLICATION - *Commissioners*

Kenny Hale requested approval of a \$135,806 2019 Morgan County HMGP (Hazard Mitigation Grant Program) grant application through FEMA for the acquisition and demolition of flooded property in the Willowbrook Addition. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the grant application. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

FEMA RESOLUTION

Kenny Hale stated that this resolution authorizes him to serve as the purchasing agent for the 2018 grant, which totaled over \$1.9 million. The resolution authorizes the purchase of 15 homes as listed in Exhibit A. Bryan Collier stated that there were a lot of areas that have been damaged in floods and are likely to flood again. This resolution puts Mr. Hale in charge of purchasing the homes that flood in order to protect the county when it comes to future flood insurance. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the Resolution Authorizing Kenny Hale to Serve as Purchasing Agent for Purchase of Certain Real Estate and Order to Purchase. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

ANNUAL SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT AGREEMENT

Lisa McPhee and Doug Peine, Morgan County Soil and Water Conservation District, were present to update the board on current projects. Ms. McPhee stated that in the past, their main duty has been education and collaborating with partners to provide that. Things have changed with a reduction in staff and COVID-19. They still provide education and work with the Solid Waste Management District, Partnership for Water Quality, and Purdue Extension. They have developed online lessons, lessons-in-a-box, and books in classrooms. Their main focus has turned to agriculture. With new administrations, there will be changes to conservation practices and their job at Soil and Water will be to help the farmers make the transition before it becomes regulatory. There are three different grant programs and they are working with crop consultants. The annual meeting is March 10 and will be virtual this year. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the agreement. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

EMS - *SOGs*

Josh Messmer stated that there are two SOGs (Standard Operating Guidelines), one for ballistic vests, and one for students that want to work with EMS on a shift. Bryan Collier noted that the vests are recommended, but not required and made a motion to approve both SOGs. Motion

seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

REOPENING DISCUSSION

Don Adams stated that this topic regards reopening the Administration Building to the public.

Josh Messmer stated that some offices have expressed a desire to “get back to normal” as the county goes into “yellow” status, down from “red”. Steve Lyday, Morgan County Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, stated that events are limited to 100 people. He would like to see the numbers come down some more before opening, but it is up to the Board of Commissioners.

Kenny Hale stated that he has talked to several office holders and department heads and he has mixed feelings, but would agree to open the building to the public and encourage appointments.

Dan Bastin stated that it is confusing. Mr. Lyday stated that it has been his experience in dealing

with the clinic that an appointment is just a suggestion; people who have appointments at 3 pm are showing up at 10 am. Mr. Lyday suggested a screening process for each office. Bryan Collier stated that employees have a right to refuse service to someone not wearing a mask unless they are exempt so precautions can be made. After further discussion, Kenny Hale made a motion to open the Morgan County Administration Building to the public immediately and noted that masks are required. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

Josh Messmer noted that the judges will be meeting regarding the Courthouse and it could also be opening soon. This includes Court Services and Prosecutor. Mr. Messmer stated that he would order thermometers for those offices that want them.

LAND USE RESOLUTION

Kenny Hale stated that House Bill 1381 gives the state control over planning and zoning for anything solar or wind turbines and is an overreach by the state. Several counties feel the same way and 80 counties could pass the same proposed resolution. Jim Wisco stated that he did not have any concerns with the resolution. Kenny Hale made a motion to approve the Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Morgan County, Indiana Expressing Support for Local Control of Land Use Decisions. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

DISCUSSION – *VSO Office*

Rick Baum, Morgan County Veteran’s Service Officer, stated that he started working for the county part time in 2017. Within six months, the caseload was so massive that the Council approved his position as full-time. Since then, he was able to hire a part time administrative assistant that evolved into a full time administrative assistant. Mr. Baum stated that because of the growing need in Morgan County, there are 5,913 veterans in Morgan County and he is serving 1,026 of those. Mr. Baum proposed that the administrative assistant, who possesses the required qualifications, become a full time assistant county veteran’s service officer. Mr. Baum stated that under certain conditions, even when a veteran passes away, the surviving spouse is eligible for further benefits. The Commissioners have supported a commitment to the veterans and spouses in the county and this position would further that support. Kenny Hale stated that he was in support of this position. Don Adams stated that Mr. Baum’s work is appreciated and he would like to see it continue. Kenny Hale made a motion to forward their support to the Council for an assistant veteran’s service officer position with a salary of \$44,000 for a 40-hour work week. Motion seconded by Don Adams. Motion carried 3-0.

PARK RESERVATION REQUEST

Kenny Hale stated that this request is for a wedding at Waverly Park on June 25th. Mr. Hale stated that this is for the granddaughter of the pastor at the Waverly Methodist Church. The pastor has been very supportive of the county’s efforts at the park and Mr. Hale supports the request. Kenny Hale made a motion to approve the request. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

UPDATED JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Josh Messmer stated that EMS Director, Donnie Warren, asked to make a change in the job descriptions and this is the final step. Once the Commissioners affirm that the descriptions are good, it will go to the Council for approval as well. Bryan Collier stated that he would like more time to look into this and made a motion to table the issue. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION – *Monroe Township Fire District*

Robert Berling, a member of the Monroe Township Protection District, was present to request approval by the Board of Commissioners of a levy increase based on House Enrolled Act 1065.

Mr. Berling handed out information from the DLGF, comments from their consultant, a resolution from the fire district board, and calculations from the consultant. Mr. Berling stated that their intent is to increase staff so they can have 24/7 coverage. They do not currently have that ability. Mr. Berling stated that the population has grown and they require more coverage. Dan Bastin

noted that the worksheet shows a population increase of 12.34%. Mr. Berling stated that there was a recent house fire that took out two more houses before it was done. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the Board of Commissioners' support for the levy appeal to the DLGF. Deb Verley noted that the information requires either a written statement or a resolution. The Board agreed to send a written statement.

APPOINTMENTS – *Animal Disease Coordinator*

Don Adams made a motion to appoint Amy Faulkenburg as the Animal Disease Coordinator. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – *Johnson County*

Jim Wisco stated that he worked with Scott Hamilton as well as Josh Messmer and the attorney for Johnson County in preparing this Memorandum of Understanding. Scott Hamilton stated that this is part of the locution project. Johnson County is allowing Morgan County to use their locution server and this saved the county \$25,000 to \$30,000. Mr. Hamilton explained that locution is an automated dispatch system. As part of this agreement, Morgan County will purchase a CAD to CAD module so the CAD will talk to each other during mutual aid situations. This \$9,000 purchase was already budgeted. This will especially aid with Bargersville serving Harrison Township. It will no longer require a phone call. When Mooresville updates their system, it would also work with them. Bryan Collier made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Johnson County and Morgan County. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

EVENT VARIANCE - *Mass Gathering*

Kenny Hale stated that “they have beat this to death” and would like to set up a workshop to work something out. Kenny Hale made a motion to move this item to a workshop. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

INCIDENT CLAIMS / TORT CLAIMS

Bryan Collier inquired about the procedure when insurance denies paying for damages that arise from an incident claim. Don Adams stated that once it is turned down, it is turned down. Mr. Collier stated that Mr. Hamilton submitted a claim for damage to a windshield by a rock. The insurance has denied the claim. Don Adams made a motion to abide by the decision of the insurance company. Motion seconded by Kenny Hale. Motion carried 3-0.

Kenny Hale made a motion to submit the Wells incident claim and the Maloy, Roberts, and Jones tort claims to the insurance company. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION REQUEST

Josh Messmer presented an additional appropriation request on behalf of the Morgan County Regional Sewer District. The Council approved an Ordinance in 2019 pledging \$10,000 of LIT revenue (Local Income Tax) for the operation and maintenance expenses of the sanitary sewer system in the Waverly service area for the first five years of the RDC (Redevelopment Commission) bonds. The bonds were issued in 2020 so this would be the second year that bonds have been in place and the Regional Sewer is requesting \$20,000. Kenny Hale made a motion to approve sending the additional appropriation to the Council. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

MINUTES – *2/1/21, Joint Meeting 2/1/21, Joint Meeting 1/29/21*

Kenny Hale made a motion to approve the February 1, February 1 Joint Meeting and January 29 Joint Meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Bryan Collier. Motion carried 3-0.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Morgan County Board of Commissioners

Don Adams

Attest:

Kenny Hale

Dan Bastin, Morgan Co. Auditor

Bryan Collier