

**THE MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL MET IN A SPECIAL SESSION ON MONDAY,
DECEMBER 6, 2021 AT 6:30 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: KIM MERIDETH, VICKIE KIVETT, KELLY ALCALA, JASON MAXWELL, CHIP KELLER AND MELISSA GREENE. ALSO PRESENT WERE DAN BASTIN, MORGAN COUNTY AUDITOR; DEB VERLEY, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT; JOSH MESSMER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR; AND JIM WISCO, COUNTY ATTORNEY. TROY SPRINKLE WAS ABSENT.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRAYER (*Vickie Kivett*)

Minutes

Vickie Kivett made a motion to approve the November 1, 2021 minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 6-0.

Transfers:

- *Sheriff*

Sheriff Rich Myers requested a transfer for vehicles as follows:

\$21,000 from Acct #1000.22100.000.0005 (Gas)
21,000 from Acct #1000.22110.000.0005 (Oil & Tires)
26,000 from Acct #1000.36400.000.0005 (Vehicle Repair)
15,627 from Acct #1000.37000.000.0005 (Computer Maintenance)

To:

\$83,627 Acct #1000.44400.000.0005 (Patrol Cars)

Sheriff Myers stated that the price of vehicles has risen \$8,000 per car. These will not be delivered by the end of the year. Melissa Greene made a motion to approve the transfer as listed. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 6-0.

Sheriff Myers requested a transfer of \$10,000 from Acct #1170.12200.000.0005 (Overtime) to Acct #1170.44400.000.0005 (Patrol Cars). Sheriff Myers stated that this makes the total amount \$93,627 for the vehicles. Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the transfer. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 6-0.

2021 Salary Ordinance Amendment

Robert Hagee, Title IV-D, was present to request a line in the 2022 Salary Ordinance for a Title IV-D part time deputy prosecutor. Mr. Hagee stated that a deputy prosecutor left two weeks ago and they have had no interest in the open position. A former deputy prosecutor that retired in 2019 has agreed to come back and work part time. They can take the money for the position from the Title IV-D Incentive Fund or the PCA Fund. The PCA Fund accumulates from small amounts collected through a debt collection agency. These funds have been accumulating for some time and there is \$10,000 to \$11,000 in the fund. If the position is paid from this fund, they can submit claims and receive a reimbursement of up to 66%. Mr. Hagee asked that this position be paid at a rate of \$30 per hour. Dan Bastin stated that there are two parts to this request; an amendment to the 2021 Salary Ordinance and adding it to the 2022 Salary Ordinance. The Council would also need to appropriate funds from the PCA Fund after the first of the year. Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the part time deputy prosecutor at \$30 per hour for the 2021 Salary Ordinance. Vickie Kivett seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

Discussion – Court Staff Salaries

Morgan County Superior Court I Judge, Pete Foley, was present to address the difference in staff salaries. Judge Foley stated that they removed the distinction between a first and second deputy and a court reporter and bailiff are paid the same as court administrator. The bailiff pay was only increased by 3.5% for 2022 versus a 4% increase. The bailiff needs to be available during jury trials (this could require that they don't go home until midnight) and they need to be compensated for their extra duties. They need to also create incentive within the office structure for employees have something to aspire to and move up within the organization. Judge Foley suggested amending the Salary Ordinance and increase the bailiff pay by 9 cents per hour to \$20.57. There are four bailiffs, one in each court; this would be a \$702 difference.

Kelly Alcala stated that deviating from the WIS study could cause an open market and every position could veer off the study. This could set a precedent. Kim Merideth stated that the cost

of living is close to 6% and there are some employees that have not had a pay increase in two years.

Daree Fry, HR Director, stated that the data in the WIS study is over two years old. They have had COVID since the study was done and it has changed the way the world does business. Judge Foley stated that employees are doing more with less. Kim Merideth stated that by the time the numbers were gathered and the study was presented, before it was put in place, the information was already 18 months old. Vickie Kivett stated that there are at least six other employees that fall into this position and the Council decided that they would stick with the WIS study. Ms. Kivett stated that she did not agree with this and doesn't like that employees are not getting raises. Ms. Fry stated that she would like to see the study as the baseline and employees with more experience, training, certification, etc. are offered a higher rate. This would make being a Morgan County employee attractive. Ms. Fry stated that there needs to be three levels in the court staff but this is currently not the case. Ms. Fry stated that I-69 is making it very easy to drive a few minutes to get a higher rate of pay rather than staying somewhere you're not feeling appreciated. There are a lot of hard-working people in the county and maybe they do want to set the precedent in order to award people for working as hard for the county as they do. Ms. Alcala stated that the best time to make salary adjustments is when they have all their budget forms in front of them. Dan Bastin stated that maybe the job descriptions need to be reviewed. Ms. Fry asked if the Council would consider this if the job committee reviews updated job descriptions. Mr. Bastin stated that if employees are doing different duties, then the job descriptions and classifications should be updated; currently, a bailiff and court administrator have the same job classification. Ms. Fry asked that Judge Foley review/rewrite the job descriptions and submit them to the job maintenance committee.

EMS Director Salary Discussion

Daree Fry noted that a pay increase was not requested by the EMS Director; he does not even know that Ms. Fry was present to make the request. Ms. Fry asked that all the employees in the director category make the same rate and not have their salary frozen. Ms. Fry asked that the EMS Director be raised to \$66,388, which is the same as the EMA Director, 911 Director, and HR Director. This is the WIS mid-point plus 4%. Kelly Alcala made a motion to unfreeze the EMS Director salary and increase it by 4%. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 6-0.

Highway Department – Crew Boss Salary Discussion

Grant Collinsworth, Morgan County Highway Superintendent, and Daree Fry stated that there are three crew bosses with the same duties, but for some reason, the WIS study only has one listed and that one position has a higher rate. The other two positions are paid the same rate as a truck driver. All three positions have a take home vehicle and are on call. Mr. Collinsworth and Ms. Fry asked that all three positions be paid the same rate for 2022. Dan Bastin stated that the job classification for a crew boss is LTCIV and they are being paid at the LTCIII rate. Kenny Hale stated that the situation is creating an issue between employees. This does not affect the job description. Chip Keller made a motion to change the number of positions for crew boss to three at a rate of \$24.94. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 6-0.

Ms. Fry stated that the crew boss supervisor is also at the \$24.94 rate. Ms. Fry used rates for other departments and came up with an 11% difference. Kelly Alcala stated that this request should go to WIS for a recommendation on the rate of pay. If this is reviewed quickly, they could make it retroactive for the first of the year.

Mr. Collinsworth stated that there are two clerks at the Highway Department that have the same responsibilities and their rate of pay is different. Mr. Collinsworth noted that the job descriptions are different. Kelly Alcala stated that if the descriptions are different and the classification is different, then they need to take it to WIS.

2022 Salary Ordinance Discussion

Don Adams, Morgan County Board of Commissioners President, stated that an employee that receives an award for Executive Assistant of the Year from the Indiana Association of County Commissioners, obviously excels at the job; but that employee hasn't received a raise in two years and that isn't right. Mr. Adams quoted Abe Martin: "When someone says it's not the money, it's the principle, it's really the money." Mr. Adams stated that in this case, it's both, but the principle of giving a raise is to show appreciation. It doesn't have to be a lot, but it should be something.

Kenny Hale stated that there is a little bit of Council experience on the Board of Commissioners and they feel their pain. They believe in the WIS study, but it is also the baseline. Morgan County has some of the best employees and office holders in the state. The Assessor, Auditor, Chief Deputy

Auditor, County Administrator, Executive Assistant, Computer Administrator, Surveyor and Health Officer are not receiving raises. Mr. Hale handed out a spreadsheet showing the cost for a 1% and a 2% raise. There are a few others that are receiving a few cents increase. Mr. Hale stated that it is a morale buster not to receive a raise and it is part of the Commissioners' job to fight for the employees. It is hard to retain good employees if the county isn't giving them raises. The grand total for a 1% raise is \$4,915.12; a 2% raise totals \$11,702.24. Mr. Hale stated that it is a small way to thank employees for their work. Kelly Alcala asked if there were other employees that did not receive the 4%. Mr. Bastin stated that the bailiffs are one group and there could be a few others. Ms. Alcala stated that if they were going to bring everyone up to at least 1%, she did not want to leave anyone out. Kim Merideth stated that she did not want to dismiss the job study, but by the time the numbers were put in place, they were a bit stale; given the state of the cost of living at nearly 6%, it has been mentioned several times this evening that the study is the base. Melissa Greene stated that if you think about it, employees are actually making less money. Dan Bastin noted that the county assessor is the only one in the state that does the reassessing in-house and the study did not take this into account. Jason Maxwell made a motion to allow a 2% wage increase for those employees that did not receive a wage increase and to approve a 9 cent per hour increase per Judge Foley's request for court bailiffs. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 5-0-1. Vickie Kivett stated that she could have a family member affected by this and abstained from the vote.

2022 Meeting Schedule

Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the 2022 Meeting Schedule. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 6-0.

2022 Budget

Dan Bastin stated that the state has approved the 2022 budget as adopted.

2022 Salary Ordinance

Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the 2022 Salary Ordinance with the amendments as presented this evening. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 6-0.

Adjournment

Jason Maxwell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 6-0.

MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL

Kim Merideth

Vickie Kivett

Kelly Alcala

Troy Sprinkle

Jason Maxwell

Chip Keller

ATTEST:

Dan Bastin, Morgan Co. Auditor

Melissa Greene