

THE MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL MET ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2022 AT 6:30 P.M.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRAYER (*Vickie Kivett*)

Minutes

Melissa Greene made a motion to approve the September 15, December 6, December 21, 2021 and January 3, 2022 minutes. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 7-0.

Additional Appropriations:

- *Payroll*

Prosecutor - Dan Bastin stated that this additional appropriation (along with several others) is a budget clean-up. The Prosecutor's Office has discontinued a position of forensic analyst and replaced it with a part time investigator, but the first payroll in 2022 covered the last two weeks of 2021 and there was no budget for that position. Mr. Bastin requested an additional appropriation of \$1,013 from the General Fund (1000) into Acct #1000.11800.000.0009 (Bailliff).

Superior Court I - Mr. Bastin stated that after the budget was set, the Council changed the rate of pay for the bailliff and requested an additional appropriation of \$176 from the General Fund into Acct #1000.14200.000.0201 (Bailliff).

Superior Court II - This court also has a bailliff position that increased after the budget was set and also omitted the years of service for one of the employees. Mr. Bastin requested an additional appropriation from the General Fund of \$176 into Acct #1000.14200.000.0202 (Bailliff) and \$1,050 into Acct #1000.19800.000.0202 (Years of Service).

Circuit Court – Mr. Bastin stated that this budget also is short for the bailliff position and requested an additional appropriation of \$176 from the General Fund into Acct #1000.14200.000.0223 (Bailliff).

ADAPT – Mr. Bastin stated that the ADAPT Coordinator funding is short by \$829 for the year and requested an additional appropriation of \$829 from the General Fund into Acct #1000.11005.000.0609 (ADAPT Coordinator).

Chip Keller made a motion to approve the additional appropriations as listed above totaling \$3,420. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Commissioner*

Josh Messmer stated that in preparation for federal mandates, the county ordered COVID testing supplies. It looks like testing will not be mandated, but they will still be able to use the supplies for public safety employees. Mr. Messmer requested \$10,800 from several possible different funds into Acct #XXXX.31502.000.0068. Kelly Alcala stated that the ARPA Fund was not included in the list of possible funds and was highly opposed to the additional being taken out of any other fund. Kelly Alcala made a motion to table the request until the next meeting and advertise it from the ARPA Fund. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Commissioners*

Josh Messmer stated that this additional appropriation of \$1,030,000 into Acct #XXXX.31515.000.0068 will be used for design services for the BOT (Build Operate Transfer) project. Dan Bastin stated that the appropriation has been advertised from the General Fund (1000), LIT Economic Development Fund (1112), Cumulative Capital Development Fund (1138), Rainy Day Fund (1186) and Riverboat Revenue Sharing Fund (1191). Whatever fund is chosen will be reimbursed from the bond funds at a future date. Mr. Messmer stated that Mr. Bastin had requested that the Commissioners clarify in the Rainy Day Ordinance that bond proceeds could be reimbursed.

Vickie Kivett asked that Mr. Bastin explain what the Rainy Day Fund is for the newer members of the Council. Mr. Bastin stated that the Rainy Day Fund is a fund in which excess or surplus monies has been deposited. A large share of the fund came about several years ago when the state

distributed to the county surplus income tax that accumulated at the state. State Code allows the Council to transfer up to 10% of the budget into the Rainy Day Fund and the Council has done that. The federal COVID funds were also deposited into this fund. State Code has been updated to allow the transfer of up to 15% of the budget into the Rainy Day Fund until 2024. This fund may be used for any governmental purpose but the intent is for it to be used for a rainy day. Mr. Bastin stated that the reimbursable BOT expenditures will be for a short term. Kelly Alcalá stated that this is an excessive amount of money to be spending and will not be voting in favor of the additional appropriation as she is not in favor of the project moving forward. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the additional appropriation of \$1,030,000 from the Rainy Day Fund (1186) into Account #1186.31515.000.0068. Motion seconded by Kim Merideth. Motion carried 5-2. Kelly Alcalá and Jason Maxwell were opposed.

- *Surveyor*

Terry Brock, Morgan County Surveyor, was present to request an additional appropriation of \$25,630 from the LIT Economic Development Fund (1112) into Acct #1112.31501.000.0006. Mr. Brock stated that the Town of Monrovia came to the county after the budget was approved and asked for assistance with drainage issues in the buffer zone. There is an area on Baltimore Road with undersized pipes and water is flowing over the road. This additional will be used for consultant services to make sure other culverts in the area, along State Road 42 and Everett Road are functioning properly. Any further expense would depend on the consultant's findings. Kelly Alcalá made a motion to approve the request. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Commissioners*

Kim Merideth stated that in 2021 the Council allowed a stipend for employees from the COVID funds. Elected officials could not be paid an additional amount after their salary was set, so they had to wait to give the stipend to elected officials until the new year. Dan Bastin stated that the additional appropriation request from the Rainy Day Fund (1186) is as follows:

\$2,360 into Acct #1186.16500.000.0068 (PERF)
1,650 into Acct #1186.16510.000.0068 (FICA)
21,000 into Acct #1186.19900.000.0068 (COVID Employee Supplement)

Kelly Alcalá made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as listed above. Motion seconded by Kim Merideth. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Health Department*

Jeanne LaFary, Morgan County Health Department, was present to request approval of an additional appropriation from the 93.354 COVID ARP RWSFO LHD FUND (8951) as follows:

\$ 125,000	8951.11510.000.0000	Part-time RN Nurses
10,000	8951.16510.000.0000	FICA
1,000	8951.16530.000.0000	Worker's Comp
15,000	8951.21100.000.0000	Office Supplies
40,000	8951.21300.000.0000	Clinic Supplies
5,000	8951.22200.000.0000	Operating Supplies
5,000	8951.32300.000.0000	Travel
45,000	8951.33901.000.0000	Real Estate Lease
20,000	8951.35100.000.0000	Utilities
20,000	8951.36100.000.0000	Contractual Services
12,000	8951.37300.000.0000	Communication/Internet
30,000	8951.40000.000.0000	Equipment
2,000	8951.44300.000.0000	Computer Software

Ms. LaFary stated that the state is giving them a \$330,000 grant to hire three nurses as a liaison with the schools for COVID reporting and vaccinations. They are updating the deliverables that they will have to meet. Ms. LaFary estimated the budget amounts listed above. Vickie Kivett made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as listed. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 7-0.

Salary Ordinance Amendments

Health Department – Dan Bastin stated that the amendment specifies that the part time nurse is an RN. Jeanne LaFary stated that they did not want the LPN and the RN to have the same rate of pay and asked that the RN rate be \$28.80 and the LPN rate be \$22.00. Dan Bastin stated that he also added the other funds. Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the Salary Ordinance Amendment. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 3-0.

ADAPT- Dan Bastin stated that the ADAPT coordinator rate of pay was not set in the Salary Ordinance, although the position was budgeted. The salary for this position was set at \$57,263.

Jason Maxwell made a motion to approve the Salary Ordinance Amendment. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 7-0.

Jail Corrections Officer – Minimum Age

Dave Rogers stated that the request to change the minimum age for a jail corrections officer was submitted to the Wage Committee and received unanimous approval. It was also approved by WIS. In 2019 the minimum age for a jail corrections officer was increased to 21 so they could issue a firearm; however they are having an issue attracting and retaining employees. When the minimum age was 18, they had an average of 200 to 300 applicants and the last two years they are continually hiring because they can't keep the positions filled. If the age is lowered back to 18, they would not issue a firearm to these employees until they turn 21. They would not be able to schedule these employees for transports or hospital duty. Mr. Rogers stated that they have several relationships with universities and high schools, but a lot of candidates want to be law enforcement officers when they turn 21. Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the minimum age change from 21 to 18. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

Salary Ordinance Amendment - Ordinance 2022-2 and Ordinance 2022-3 – EMS

Keenan Blair, Morgan County EMS Director, stated that he is aware this is more of a budget time issue, but he was not in a position to implement or propose changes at budget time and this issue is getting worse by the day. They are wasting a lot of money with PTO and losing recruits. The budget increases every year because the run volume increases every year. Elected officials, as well as citizens, have expressed concerns regarding the growing budget. EMS is averaging a 200 to 300 run per year increase; the total for 2021 was 5,212 runs with \$1.4 million generated in revenue. In 2020, revenue was \$1.1 million. Mr. Blair stated that the EMS employees are top notch. In 2021 EMS employees received 9,666.5 PTO hours, which is equivalent to 402 24-hour shifts that required coverage through overtime or PRN. Using a low average of \$16 per hour, the cost to cover the open shifts was \$155,664. They run at minimum staffing and if they are down one employee, that means the ambulance is out of service until they find an employee to take their place. Mr. Blair began a PTO SOG in January and this has saved an average of \$6,000 per pay cycle. This savings times 26 pay cycles is a \$156,000 savings. Mr. Blair stated that the WIS pay study is outdated and does not take COVID issues into account. Mr. Blair gathered information from EMS providers in the surrounding area for a pay study. Mr. Blair proposed a pay structure that would put Morgan County right in the middle of surrounding counties for compensation. The advancement opportunities, protocols, and medical direction will attract the type of EMT and paramedic that Morgan County wants. In order to get to this point, Mr. Blair proposed decreasing the amount of PTO, increasing comp time to 240 hours, and implementing a new pay structure. Mr. Blair stated that a one-year employee currently receives 14 PTO days and the proposal is to reduce this to nine. If they burn through this and want more time off, they would need to pick up an overtime shift and bank it as comp time. The county would not be paying out overtime wages. This would encourage comp time over PTO. It is difficult to get paramedics that live north of the county to drive past higher-paying agencies to work in Morgan County. Mr. Blair has had an opening for five months and he has not been able to fill this position with a qualified applicant. IU Lifeline has approached Mr. Blair about taking over transports. They would be able to do this with a full staff. They are also looking into mobile integrated health (community paramedicine) which involves going to an at risk patient's house to make sure they are taking their medications and vitals are good, as it is cheaper for insurance companies to pay a paramedic to do that rather than have a 911 transport cost along with an emergency room bill. If they need an additional appropriation, they will have information to back up the request. A possible source for an additional appropriation would be ARPA Funds as COVID has taxed EMS and paramedics.

Kelly Alcala asked if the reduction in PTO has gone through HR and if having two different PTO allowances is allowed. Daree Fry, HR Director, stated that the when they already have five different classifications for PTO in the handbook. Mr. Blair stated that a 20-year 40-hour work week employee receives 7.6 weeks off, versus a 20-year 24/48 work week employee that receives 4.6 months. The proposed system is 456 hours which is 19 shifts and right at the 7.6 weeks. Ordinance #2022-2 addresses the lateral transfer policy and Ordinance 2022-3 addresses the change in PTO.

Don Adams, Morgan County Commissioner, stated that Mr. Blair presented this information at the Commissioners meeting. Mr. Adams stated that Mr. Blair reminded him of Colonel Martin Weaver, who both know how to identify a problem, evaluate and make a plan and execute a plan. Mr. Adams stated that he is proud to have Mr. Blair as the EMS Director and appreciates the work he has put into this proposal. The Commissioners voted this morning to present the Council with the proposal on the conditional that the Council approve the two ordinances and the change in salary.

Josh Messmer stated that the ground has shifted in the EMS world and if Mr. Blair had been director in May, this probably would have been dealt with at budget time. The county spent at least \$90,000 last year in paying out PTO. They think the money saved in PTO will balance the money spent in salary increases. They are doing as well as they are because people follow Mr. Blair. When Mr. Blair thought about leaving last year, medical direction stated that they would be done with the county, employees also stated that they would be leaving.

Ms. Alcalá wanted to clarify that when they are down an employee, they do have an EDO officer that can step in.

Chip Keller asked Mr. Blair to look into the transport contract when staffing is back up to capacity. Kelly Alcalá stated that when an ambulance is being used for private transport, it is out of service and may not be available for an emergency. Mr. Blair stated that the BLS ambulance would be used for transports. Mr. Keller stated that he appreciated that Mr. Blair is conscious of the budget and is trying to run it as efficiently as possible. Citizens want top notch emergency services, but also want low taxes. Mr. Blair stated that people see the budget advertised, but do not see the revenue generated that offsets the amount that is spent.

Melissa Greene asked how many ambulances are available during a shift. Mr. Blair replied that there are six ambulances with six paramedics, six EMTs and an EDO.

The current pay scale has three tiers: paramedic – tier one, 1-5 years of experience; tier two, 6-10 years of experience; tier three, above 10; EMT – tier one, 1-7; tier two, 8-13; tier three over 13. An EMT with one year of experience would max out in 12 years. This is not the industry standard anymore. The proposed pay scale changes to 1, 2, and 3 years for paramedics (three tiers) and 1 through 5 years (five tiers) for EMTs. Mr. Blair gave examples of several surrounding area pay structures that are similar to the proposed pay scale.

Ms. Alcalá commended Mr. Blair for suggesting using ARPA funds to make up for any shortcomings in the budget, but noted that these funds are only available for a short time and by 2025 they would need to be able to fund it themselves. Mr. Blair stated that he is working towards this.

Mr. Blair also included stipends for employees that step forward to help with administrative tasks. Dan Bastin stated that for a department of this size, they should have an administrative employee for this. Council members asked Mr. Blair to look into this at budget time. Ms. Alcalá stated that she would not be in favor of a stipend and the EDOs could be assigned some of these duties.

Kim Merideth stated that she felt this was a budget time issue, but COVID has changed their world and using ARPA funds to bridge the gap could sustain this. Ms. Alcalá asked if the Commissioners would be in favor of using the ARPA funds for this purpose. Bryan Collier, Morgan County Commissioner, stated that he would like to tell them yes, but the committee consists of seven people and he could not speak for them.

Troy Sprinkle stated that Mr. Blair's presentation was impressive and the fact that he put the numbers together, does his job and supports his employees impressed him. Management skills can be taught, but not leadership skills. Mr. Sprinkle stated that he applauds him.

Mr. Messmer stated that if the Council approves the changes, they would need to approve two ordinances to amend the Personnel Policy Handbook. One ordinance would change PTO for the employees, one would implement a transfer policy that matches the pay structure and at the next meeting, another ordinance would be presented to change the comp time allowance to 240 hours.

Mr. Bastin stated that he converted the salary proposal to hourly rates.

Troy Sprinkle made a motion to approve the Salary Ordinance Amendment at presented. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 7-0.

Vickie Kivett made a motion to approve Ordinance 2022-2 and Ordinance 2022-3. Motion seconded by Kelly Alcalá. Motion carried 7-0. Vickie Kivett made a motion to waive a second reading. Motion seconded by Kelly Alcalá. Motion carried 7-0.

Rainy Day Fund

Kim Merideth stated that it was mentioned earlier in the meeting that the Council had the option of moving 15% of the budget into the Rainy Day Fund. The budget was \$23,556,509 15% of this

amount would be \$3,533,476. Kelly Alcala made a motion to transfer \$1 million from the General Fund to the Rainy Day Fund. Motion seconded by Chip Keller. Motion carried 7-0.

Highway Department Update

Tony Hinkle, Morgan County Highway Engineer, stated that they will meet with EMS and other departments to review actions during the recent snowstorm. Even with a reduced staff, things went well. They used private contractors in some areas and had some complaints, but not in the areas that the contractors were and there was some confusion regarding I-69 roundabouts.

Coroner Update

Mike Ellis, Morgan County Coroner, stated that last year was a record year with 121 cases compared to 2020 with 95. Twenty-two of these were overdoses, 12 suicides, 1 infant, 5 auto accidents, 3 motorcycle accidents, 3 other types of accidents and 75 medical investigations. So far this year, there have been 25 calls and 4 of these have been suicides. Mr. Ellis thanked law enforcement, fire departments and EMS.

ARPA Committee

Bryan Collier noted that the ARPA committee will be comprised of seven members, four of them will be appointed by the Commissioners and three will be appointed by the Council. They would like to have a list of the appointments as soon as possible. Kelly Alcala stated that she would be happy to serve.

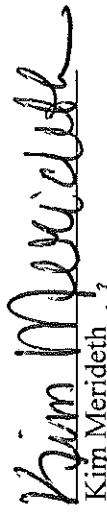
Local Income Tax Rate

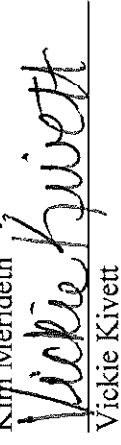
Dan Bastin stated that there was a time when property tax levies were frozen local income tax could be used to replace property taxes to fund increases in budgets. This is no longer authorized, but Morgan County is grandfathered in and the county is obligated to continue this part of the income tax rate until the law changes. Part of the levy is being paid from income taxes and currently, more money is coming in from the rate than what can be distributed to the units of government. It has grown to the point that there is \$1 million excess being collected that can't be used for anything other than the stabilization fund. The stabilization fund is used in years when there is a shortfall in income tax to fully fund the levy replacements. Mr. Bastin stated that something needs to be done with the rate as the fund has a balance of \$3.7 million. The rate could be reduced, but if it is reduced to much and not enough income tax is generated to fully fund the levy replacement, they can't increase the rate; it can only be decreased. Mr. Bastin suggested reducing it by five cents. The current rate is made up of a certified shares rate of \$1.00, levy freeze rate of .268, public safety rate of .25, economic development rate of .20, and a property tax relief rate of 1.002. The reduction amount could be added to the public safety rate and that could be dedicated to PSAP funding. This would require a public hearing and an ordinance changing the rate. The Council asked that this be ready for the next meeting.

Adjournment

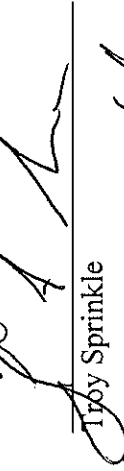
Vickie Kivett made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

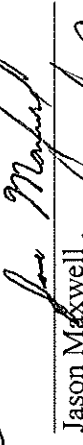
MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL

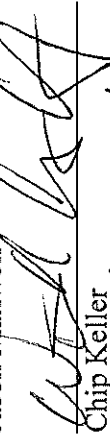

Kim Merideth

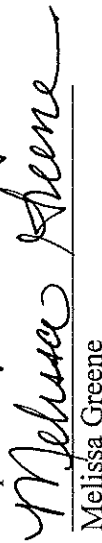

Vickie Kivett


Kelly Alcala


Troy Sprinkle


Jason Maxwell


Chip Keller


Melissa Greene

ATTEST:


Dan Bastin, Morgan Co. Auditor