

THE MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL MET ON MONDAY, APRIL 4, 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

Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the March 7, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

Additional Appropriation:

- *Commissioners*

Kim Merideth noted that this item was on an earlier agenda, but was not advertised correctly in the newspaper. The Board of Commissioners requested an additional appropriation of \$10,800 from the ARPA Fund (8950) into Account #8950.21301.000.0068 (COVID Testing Supplies). Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the request. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

Reduction:

- *Highway Department*

Dan Bastin handed out a worksheet and stated that this reduction regards the Community Crossings Matching Grant Fund (9110) Spring 2021 (9604) for paving of various roads in the county. The initial appropriations were based on the engineer's estimates. The bids come in lower than the estimates and more money was appropriated than was received. Mr. Bastin requested a reduction of \$246,154.58 from Account #9110.39999.00099604 (CCMG Closeout). Tony Hinkle, Morgan County Highway Engineer, stated that they were able to obtain lower bids because of the I-69 construction in the area. Mr. Bastin stated that there will be an additional at the May meeting for \$55,346.96 because the local share is short. Mr. Bastin stated that it is quite complicated and asked that the Council review the worksheet he handed out. Jason Maxwell made a motion to approve the reduction. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 7-0.

Transfers:

- *Sheriff*

Rich Myers, Morgan County Sheriff, requested a transfer of \$25,000 from 1170.44400.000.0005 (patrol Cars) to 1170.31500.000.0005 (Professional Services). Sheriff Myers stated that this amount will be used to pay for the installation of radios and radars in the cars. Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the transfer. Motion seconded by Troy Sprinkle. Motion carried 7-0.

- *Highway Department*

Dan Bastin requested a transfer of \$3,471.23 from Account #9110.39999.000.9603 (CCMG Closeout) to Account #9110.39999.000.9604 (CCMG Closeout). Mr. Bastin stated that there was a project overrun on the first grant and excess funds on the second grant. This transfer is within the Community Crossings Fund and lessens the amount of money that must be moved in from the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund. Chip Keller made a motion to approve the transfer. Motion seconded by Vickie Kivett. Motion carried 7-0.

Salary Ordinance Amendment - EMS

Dan Bastin stated that the amendment that was adopted at the last meeting was actually going to cost the county money. This amendment adds a base year for EMTs and paramedics and changes the accrual date for the increase in wage from the end of the previous calendar year to the anniversary of the hire date. Keenan Blair, Morgan County EMS Director, stated that the previous version would end up wrecking the budget. Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the Salary Ordinance Amendment for EMS. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. Motion carried 7-0.

Recess Meeting and Open Public Hearing

Public Hearing – *Preliminary Determination to Issue Bonds for a Public Works Project*

Zach Klutz, Taft Law, serving as bond counsel for the 2022-GO bond issuance, stated that this is the second public hearing required before the Council can make a preliminary determination to issue bonds. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Council would need to approve a Preliminary Determination Resolution. If the resolution passes, they would then publish the notice that it has been adopted. The Council would then approve the Bond Ordinance. Kim Merideth asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

Betty Chamberlin, a Martinsville resident, asked what the bond is about. Zach Klutz stated that the bond is a governmental loan; the county will take out a loan not to exceed \$16 million with a maximum repayment term of 15 years (10 is expected) and interest rate below 5%. The loan proceeds will be used for various capital projects such as improvements to facilities. Ms. Chamberlin asked if this includes the three-story garage and she would rather see a parking lot. Ms. Merideth stated that there are a lot of options on the table and they are working through those.

Daniel Lundy, a Mooresville resident, stated that a parking lot sounded better than a parking garage; if the county offered a garage, he would ask why the additional 200 parking spaces are worth \$6 million plus interest to taxpayers.

Dave Snyder, a Mooresville resident, echoed Mr. Lundy's comments. Mr. Snyder stated that everyone he has talked to about the project asks why. Mr. Snyder also asked what the security was for.

Ms. Merideth stated that the project has a long-term plan and this is just the first step. There are a lot of moving parts and they are just beginning with funding. Today's parking will not be the needs in 5-7 years. They need to look to future needs.

Matthew Pranger, a Mooresville resident, stated that it sounds like the project needs to move forward, but it is fiscally irresponsible to use it for a parking garage; however more money for projects sounds like a good idea.

Bryan Collier, Morgan County Commissioner, stated that he too would question a parking garage. The whole concept of where they are moving as a county needs to be visualized. They are growing and this is just the beginning. This should have happened 20 years ago, so they are behind the curve. Mr. Collier stated that a parking garage is not the Board of Commissioners number one option. They have a Courthouse that is over 150 years old that needs to be updated, but it can't be updated to use as a Courthouse. They conferred with the judges, Council, Commissioners, Clerk, and others about moving a court campus. The current parking lot will eventually be filled with a new building. They are limited with funds and must do it in phases. This is the beginning of the phase. There are seven homes behind where the parking garage is planned. They are in negotiation with the homeowners to possibly buy the homes and make flat surface parking. They are planning on moving the courts to this campus and remodeling the Courthouse into administrative offices. Then the current building can be made into prosecution and probation offices. The courts are in a lot of stress to function as a court. Mr. Collier stated that the county is growing and they are trying to address current needs as well as future growth. They do not want a parking garage, but they do not want to take someone's home either. The current parking lot will be gone within the next 10 years, if they don't plan for more parking now, it will continue to be more expensive. At a recent meeting, a presenter stated that they can project at least a 3% annual increase; add 3% to a \$7 million project over the next 10 years. The interest rates are at a 45-year low, but they are beginning to increase. Mr. Collier asked that people attend the meetings and question what they do.

Melissa Greene noted that Courthouse employees take up many of the parking spaces downtown and parking is an issue during the day. Ms. Greene noted that there is a bigger, long-term plan than just a garage, but they have to negotiate and it will be in stages.

Vickie Kivett stated that they did a space evaluation of the buildings and described the Courthouse as a beautiful old lady, but she's worn out and needs a lot of work; sewage has dripped on employee's desks, there has been mold and it's time. They are here to protect the public and the buildings and to provide quality government service not only to the citizens of Morgan County, but to visitors. They consider the employees their biggest asset and they need quality workspace.

Nina Veach stated that their house is one of the seven that has been proposed for purchase and asked that a tree in front of the house be left. Ms. Veach stated that she has sat behind the scenes

for over 52 years and watched the county do nothing and she appreciates everyone on the Council for looking to the future and improving the county.

Treg Hopkins, representing Building Better Communities, stated that he is excited for the future growth for the county and urged the Council to take into consideration the abilities that people have. Parking garages are notoriously inaccessible for handicap vehicles and residents of all different types of ability levels.

Close Public Hearing and Reconvene Meeting

Preliminary Determination Resolution

Zach Klutz stated that the Council has now conducted two public hearings.

Chip Keller made a motion to approve the Preliminary Determination Resolution. Motion seconded by Melissa Greene. Motion carried 6-1. Kelly Alcala stated that she was opposed to the project because they don't know for sure that it won't be a parking garage.

Ordinance 2022-9 – Bond Ordinance

Zach Klutz introduced the Ordinance of the County Council of the County of Morgan, Indiana, Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of Bonds of the County for the Purpose of Procuring Funds to Pay for Various Capital Improvements and Other Repairs and Improvements to Public Buildings, Facilities, and Parking Infrastructure Improvement Projects within the County, Together with the Incidental Expenses in Connection Therewith and on Account of the Issuance of the Bonds Therefore and Appropriating the Proceeds of the Bonds to Such Purposes to Finance the Project in an Amount not to Exceed \$16,000,000.00. The bonds would be paid by a property tax levy. If the ordinance passes upon the second reading, the bond sale is scheduled for May 23rd with a closing scheduled for the week of June 6th. The second reading and adoption of the ordinance will be April 18th during a Special Meeting of the Council.

Resolution Authorizing Purchasing Agent to Commence Process to Purchase Certain Real Property Located in the City of Martinsville, Morgan County, Indiana

Josh Messmer stated that the purchase of the seven houses for the parking lot will be more than \$25,000 and statutorily, they need approval from the Council. Kelly Alcala made a motion to approve the resolution. Motion seconded by Vickie Kivett. Motion carried 7-0.

ARPA Loss Calculation Discussion

Josh Messmer sent a memo to the Council summarizing the information regarding the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Final Rule that became effective April 1, 2022. There is an option to presume that the county had a \$10 million revenue loss for governmental services. The Board of Commissioners voted to take the presumptive loss at their meeting this morning. Chip Keller clarified that the federal government passed through ARPA funds totaling \$13.6 million to the county. There were a lot of rules as to how the funds could be spent and if it was spent incorrectly, they would have to pay it back. The county has been waiting for the final ruling and there is more flexibility in the spending. Mr. Keller stated that they are looking outside of the governmental group for input from people to appoint to an ARPA advisory committee.

PSAP Letter to Fire Chiefs

Kim Merideth stated that right before budget discussions, local fire departments were informed that they would owe a portion of a contractual agreement. They were not prepared for that so the Council voted to continue to pay it. Scott Hamilton, Morgan County 911 Dispatch Director, presented a letter for approval that he will send to the fire departments. Mr. Hamilton stated that the departments will be responsible for fire reporting and the funds will be used for locution, licensing, etc. Melissa Greene made a motion to approve the letter. Motion seconded by Kelly Alcala. Motion carried 7-0.

ARPA Advisory Committee

Kim Merideth stated that there will be three appointments from the Council to this committee.

Adjournment

Vickie Kivett made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Jason Maxwell. 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