

**MORGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
RIECKER BUILDING**

The Board of the Morgan County Commissioners met in their offices on Monday, January 31, 2011 with the following members present:

Mike Reed, President  
Dean Cain, Vice-President  
Tim Vanhorn, Member

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am with the pledge of allegiance to the flag. The minutes of the January 24, 2011 meeting were read and approved.

**11-64** Motion by Mr. Mike Reed and seconded by Mr. Dean Cain to approve the minutes from January 24, 2011.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

Becky Thompson, Dog Warden, reported traveling 195.6 miles responding to dog calls. Mrs. Thompson stated 14 dogs were impounded, 1 dog was redeemed, 1 dog was sold, and 3 dogs were euthanized. Jeff Koons, Athens County Dog Warden, was also in attendance. Mr. Koons submitted information on being a member of the Ohio Association of Dog Wardens. Commissioners asked Jeff how to get free dog food. Mr. Koons named various places that donate dog food to counties. Commissioners also discussed various items relating to Dog Pounds and reaffirmed Athens County does not allow pictures to be taken inside the Athens County Dog Pound.

Ancil King, Jr., Deputy Dog Warden, reported traveling 67 miles and 5 hours assisting the Dog Warden.

Shannon Wells, Morgan County Commissioners' Development Office, stated the NatureWorks Grant is a reimbursable grant. The grant total is \$38,000. Commissioner Cain inquired if the funds could be used from the Revolving Loan Fund instead of the General Fund. Shannon mentioned she never thought of that and stated it probably could. Shannon noted a local manufacturing company is current as of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011. Mrs. Wells stated she attended the Convention and Visitor's Bureau meeting last Tuesday night and the Connect Ohio meeting on Wednesday that was held at the Kate Love Simpson Library.

Traci Baker, Morgan County Commissioners' Development Office, requested the Commissioners pass the following resolution regarding the application for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Grant.

**11-65** Motion by Mr. Dean Cain and seconded by Mr. Tim Vanhorn to approve the following:

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, administers financial assistance for public recreation purposes, through the State of Ohio NatureWorks Program, and

WHEREAS, Morgan County Commissioners desires financial assistance under the NatureWorks Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Morgan County Commissioners

1. That the Morgan County Commissioners approves filing an application for financial assistance.
2. That Morgan County Development Office is hereby authorized and directed to execute and file an application with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and to provide all information and documentation required to become eligible for possible funding assistance.
3. That the Morgan County Commissioners does agree to obligate the funds required to satisfactorily complete the proposed project and become eligible for reimbursement under the terms of the NatureWorks Program.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

Mike Workman, Morgan County Community Improvement Corporation, discussed the Morgan Green 60 project.

Vicki Quesinberry, Director, Job and Family Services, informed the Commissioners Morgan County's unemployment rate for December 2010 was 13.7%. Vicki also submitted Then and Now Resolutions.

**11-66 Motion** by Mr. Tim Vanhorn and seconded by Mr. Dean Cain to approve a Then and Now Resolution in order to pay the following WIA bill: Shriver's Pharmacy in the amount of \$23.95; as requested by Heidi Burns, Fiscal Supervisor, Job and Family Services.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

**11-67 Motion** by Mr. Dean Cain and seconded by Mr. Tim Vanhorn to approve a Then and Now Resolution in order to pay the following Public Assistance billings: Transit in the amount of \$9926.00 and Transit in the amount of \$7938.00; as requested by Heidi Burns, Fiscal Supervisor, Job and Family Services.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

Della Bratton telephoned Commissioners to discuss some concerns. Ms. Bratton inquired on the Board of Elections seeking legal counsel again. Commissioners informed Della the BOE has requested legal counsel, the Commissioners offered an additional \$10,000 to the Board of Elections; which could pay their employees at the same wage as the Judge ordered last year: \$11.50 per hour and increase their hours to 32 hours a week. Loiose and Bailey declared they would not accept the Commissioners offer. Della asked how many times the BOE could sue the Commissioners. Commissioners stated they could every year if they wanted according to the Ohio Revised Code. Della acknowledged some of the codes have been around a long time and need to be reconsidered. Della affirmed there are a lot of people that would be willing to work for what the BOE employees are currently being paid. It was also stated: everyone should be happy that they have a job and the BOE are just greedy. Commissioner Vanhorn stated no matter who wins, Morgan County loses. The BOE made it clear they desire to pay their employees \$15 per hour and 32 hours per week. Della questioned the Commissioners on the increase on her American Electric Power bill. Commissioners mentioned a lot of peoples bills went up; however, the Commissioners are uncertain why. Ms. Bratton also inquired on the increase in her property taxes. Commissioners informed Della the passage of the Ambulance and Library Levies last year are the reasons for the increase.

Mr. and Mrs. Greg Cable inquired on the status of ambulance/rescue service in Homer Township. Greg is a Trustee in Homer Township. Commissioners informed Mr. Cable they signed a contract with Athens County and Homer Township has coverage.

Russ Harper met with Commissioners and discussed the Board of Elections. Mr. Harper wanted to make sure he had the facts straight therefore he conversed what he understood. Russ acknowledged the following: the BOE employees currently make \$11.50 per hour and work 25 hours per week; they receive an hour paid lunch every day and have full benefits; also, one employee does not live in Morgan County, but was supposed to move to the county. Commissioners confirmed Mr. Harper's statements. Commissioners stated they offered an additional \$10,000 to the Board of Elections; which could pay their employees at the same wage as the Judge ordered last year: \$11.50 per hour and increase their hours to 32 hours a week. The BOE declared they would not accept the Commissioners offer. Russ asked the Commissioners if they were going to offer an increase in the other departments as well and stated if he were in one of the other departments he would expect the same increase. Commissioner Cain stated last year when the county was working 4 days a week, the BOE still wanted to pay their employees \$16 per hour. Commissioner Reed mentioned the Ohio Revised Code allows the BOE to sue for more money; however, the Commissioners made a reasonable offer to help keep it out of court; however, the BOE rejected the offer. Russ asked if the Commissioners were going to keep the offer on the table. Commissioner Reed confirmed the offer is on the table until they go to court. The BOE can accept the Commissioners offer but must agree not to "go-ahead" and sue for more money. They cannot have both. Commissioner Cain acknowledged once the BOE obtains an attorney the offer is off the table. Mr. Harper stated he could not see the logic in the BOE losing the lawsuit and appeal last year and going forth and suing again this year. Commissioners affirmed \$11,000 was spent last year for the lawsuit and expect this lawsuit to cost as much if not more. Russ acknowledged he worked for Morgan Local Schools and with his educational achievements he could have moved somewhere else and made more money; however, he loves living in Morgan County and he never complained. Commissioner Reed mentioned there are a lot of people that would be willing to work for \$11.50 per hour. Russ made it clear if the BOE employees are not satisfied then they should find something else and get paid what they want. We all have to live within our budgets. Commissioners appreciate Mr. Harper coming in. Russ mentioned he wanted to make sure he understood things correctly.

Kelly Caldwell updated Commissioners on SPOT. From March 2009 through January 1, 2011; SPOT has spayed/neutered almost 1000 dogs/cats; 350 dogs/cats were spayed/neutered through RASCALS clinic and an estimated 650 dogs/cats were spayed/neutered at local veterinarian offices for the County's Dog Pound or Community Pets. The next RASCAL spay/neuter clinic will be held March 12<sup>th</sup>, after which point SPOT is going to try to have one every month. Kelly mentioned SPOT's policy on taking puppies at the owner's request. It is SPOT's policy to agree to take puppies if the owner agrees to spay the mother. Kelly notified the Commissioners she has received phone calls from individuals stating they support SPOT and the County's Dog Warden. Commissioners thanks SPOT for everything they do. Commissioner Cain acknowledged if it wasn't for SPOT, look at all the dogs that wouldn't have been taken care of. Kelly inquired why don't the Southeastern Ohio SPCA take dogs. Commissioner Reed remarked the Commissioners do not believe the SOSPCA will ever take a county dog seeing that it was stated to them they never would.

Gary Woodward, Auditor, discussed the property taxes owed on the Hess property, which was donated, to the County and the Village of McConnelssville. Commissioners replied they would need to speak to Mayor Wells to discuss this.

Larry Albert inquired on the policy for not allowing pictures to be taken at the pound. Larry stated if the Commissioners believe he is going to make it look bad he stated he is not. Commissioner Cain remarked it is not just Larry, no one is allowed to take pictures at the pound. Larry stated he just wanted to see where SPOT spent the \$8-900. Commissioners informed Larry, Muskingum and Athens County do not permit pictures taken inside their pounds. Larry questioned the amount of hours the Commissioner's Clerk works. Commissioner Reed replied Andrea works 24 hours as Clerk for the Commissioners and 16 hours as Coordinator for Family and Children First. Larry stated according to the ORC, the Clerk is required to work full-time in order to take the minutes. In this case since the Clerk is not full-time, the Auditor is required to take the minutes. Commissioners remarked with the two jobs, Andrea is a full-time county employee. Larry discussed the Commissioners bringing business into Morgan County.

**11-68 Motion** by Mr. Dean Cain and seconded by Mr. Tim Vanhorn to approve a county policy that no pictures are allowed to be taken inside the county's dog pound.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

Engineer Hook discussed several bridges to be replaced or receive major rehab over the next couple of years. Bridge #197 on CR #36 (Buck Run Rd.) will be replaced this summer by an outside contractor and financed with Federal funds. Bridge #258 (Hook Rd.) and Bridge #472 (Rosseau Hill Ln.) will be replaced in 2012 by outside contractors and financed with Federal funding. These bridges were all constructed prior to 1950 and are deficient and too narrow for modern day traffic. Bridge #138 (San Toy Covered Bridge) will be restored 2013 by outside contractor with Federal/ODOT funding. The general public is encouraged to comment on these projects to the County Engineer.

Linda Sheets, Office on Aging, dropped off vouchers.

**11-69 Motion** by Mr. Tim Vanhorn and seconded by Mr. Dean Cain to supplemental appropriation \$5000.00 into 057-0057-5301-00 ODNR Natureworks Grant; as requested by Katy Chapin, Chief Deputy Auditor.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

**11-70 Motion** by Mr. Dean Cain and seconded by Mr. Tim Vanhorn to approve a transfer of funds in the amount of \$2000 from 001-1501-5309-00 and place \$1500 into 001-1501-5329-00 and \$500 into 001-1501-5330-00; as requested by Katy Chapin, Chief Deputy Auditor.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

**11-71 Motion** by Mr. Tim Vanhorn and seconded by Mr. Dean Cain to approve a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$271,679.23 into 041-0041-5301-00 Issue II; as requested by Katy Chapin, Chief Deputy Auditor.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

**11-72** Motion by Mr. Dean Cain and seconded by Mr. Tim Vanhorn to approve the establishment of Fund #100 Wireless 911; the receipt line item #100,0100-4001-00, Wireless 911 Receipts; and expense line #001-0100-5301-00, Wireless 911 Expenses and supplemental appropriate \$90,000.00 to the same; as requested by Katy Chapin, Chief Deputy Auditor.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

**11-73** Motion by Mr. Mike Reed and seconded by Mr. Dean Cain to approve the following invoices as attached with the minutes.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

**11-74** Motion by Mr. Dean Cain and seconded by Mr. Mike Reed to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 PM.

**Vote Mike Reed- yea, Dean Cain- yea, Tim Vanhorn- yea. Motion Carried**

**Commissioners,**

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**Mike Reed, President**

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**Dean Cain, Vice-President**

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**Tim Vanhorn, Member**

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**Andrea Plummer, Clerk**