

**MORGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
RIECKER BUILDING**

The Board of Morgan County Commissioners met in their office Monday, February 23, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 8:30am with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Heidi Maxwell, President
Steve Best, Vice-President
Cecil Mayle, Member

The commissioners did the following over the past week:

Commissioner Maxwell attended the fire meeting on Wednesday evening.

Commissioner Best attended a MCDD Board on Tuesday. He also attended a Health Department meeting on Thursday.

26-102- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best to approve the minutes of February 17, 2026

Mrs. Maxwell yea, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

Al Eltringham, Riecker Maintenance

Able's Heating Cooling has replaced the Fan Motor for the air handler on the 2nd floor West side of the Courthouse. Unit is still under Warranty, but we will have to pay the Labor, the replacement was completed 2-18-26

Chevrolet Truck has a broken brake line for the rear brakes, truck has been parked in the old garage until lines are replaced 1-7-26

Right side overhead door at the garage won't go up, checked breakers for power. We will need to contact Westfall Doors and Buildings check out the door after the first of the year.

Contacted Apperson's to look at and give estimate on replacing all sewer pipes in the basement and currently waiting to be scheduled. 2-17-26

Advanced Heating and Cooling performed scheduled Fall/Winter service on RTU's 1,2 and 3 and replace all the filters, belts and lubricate all grease points, plus check all electrical connections and reset all failure codes (Service completed 2-18-26)

Monarch Roofing Re-inspected the lower level roof again and took a core sample of the roofing insulation under the roofing fabric. 2-13-26 (Core sample was taken 2-16-26)

The Visitor Parking Signs have been ordered for the parking spaces along the alley. 2-20-26

Heidi Burns, JFS

Employee Policy Enforcement and Accountability

- Ongoing issues persist with employees not following company policies, including dress code and punctuality.
- Work is not being completed due to these issues.
- Supervisors have been instructed to hold their teams accountable for following established policies.
- Disciplinary action will be taken against employees who do not comply.
- Dress code clarification regarding leggings: if leggings are worn, the employee's behind must be covered.
- Employees who violate the dress code will be sent home to change, and the time will be deducted from their vacation time.

Punctuality and Its Impact on Funding

- Employees are required to be on time, especially new employees on probation.
- The organization uses a system to track employee tasks, which is tied to funding.
- If an employee is late, the organization loses funding for that scheduled item.
- This has been explained to employees repeatedly.

26-103- Motion by Mr. Best and seconded by Mr. Mayle to approve the following:

The Board of Morgan County Commissioners do hereby resolve that: Pursuant to Title IV—D of the Social Security Act, Section 3125.13 and 3125.14 of the Ohio Revised Code and rule 5101:12—10—45 and its supplemental rules of the Ohio Administrative Code promulgated by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the Morgan County CSEA is authorized to contract with public or private agencies for the purchase of services. This particular resolution will allow for legal services with Morgan County Prosecutor's Office See Attachment A

Mrs. Maxwell ye, Mr. Best ye, Mr. Mayle ye Motion Carried

Concerned Citizen

Misconduct Pattern, Gatekeeping Levers, and Compliance Risk

- Allegations of Officer Misconduct and Retaliation
 - Reported behavior: verbal abuse, personal threats.
 - Witness context: complainant claims a phone call with three listeners captured the officer's conduct inside the officer's office.
 - Broader pattern: complainant asserts a large percentage of the people on that officer's caseload report similar treatment; favoritism alleged toward informants.
- Employment Interference and Mobility Restrictions
 - Job sabotage: officer allegedly calls employers to block hiring; an offer in Columbus was reportedly disrupted.
 - Mobility denial: officer refused relocation approval to Columbus, functionally preventing access to that job and broader opportunities.
 - Practical harm: complainant cannot secure income, increasing instability and dependence on officer approvals.
- Community Service Obstruction and Accusations
 - Only two community service sites recognized (Dog Pound, Donation Station); both are reportedly full.
 - Access denial: complainant says the officer will not allow work at the Dog Pound for service credit and cites a contested harassment allegation there.
 - Resulting trap: with limited venues and alleged officer-driven exclusion, the complainant faces likely technical non-compliance on service hours.

Amber Wilson, Senior Citizen Director

Council meeting is canceled tonight due to not enough people in attendance.

Steve Redrup, EMA

EMA/ OHS Report to Commissioners

- Worked on HMP, planning to present it at the March 2nd regular Commissioner meeting.
- Meetings with the weather service and the state about potential ice jams as the river thaws
- EMPG Q9 reimbursement was received totaling \$9092.46
- The reimbursement for the PWM grant has been submitted, the requested reimbursement amount is \$10,482.38
- Attended the Southeast Sector Meeting at the Athens County EMA
- Working on Hyper-Reach, establishing a department head group, an EOC call out group, and Sheriff's office group. Setting up accounts for the Sheriff and a Dispatchers account. Creating preplanned messages in case of emergencies or evacuations.
- Hosted a Public Safety Agency Meeting
- Performed vehicle maintenance on the EMA's F250
- Performed basic building maintenance

John Wilt, 911

HMP Report and Grant Reimbursements

- The HMP (Hazard Mitigation Plan) report will be presented to commissioners on March 2nd.
- Meetings were held with the weather service and the state regarding potential ice jams, but the risk has passed.

Emergency Management Activities and Updates

- Attended the southeast sector meeting in Athens County to work on Hyper Reach.
- The department head group and an EOC call-out list have been established.
- Accounts are being set up for the sheriff and dispatchers in Hyper Reach.
- Pre-planned messages are being created for faster emergency notifications.

- A public safety agency meeting was hosted at EMA.
- Vehicle and building maintenance were performed.

Training and Technical Issues

- Attended the OH 230 "Introduction to Emergency Management" class in Columbus.
- An attempt to have John Walter attend the class via Microsoft Teams failed due to computer issues.
- The computer in the EOC is outdated, cannot update to Windows 11, and needs replacement as budgeted.
- John Walter was able to join the class via telephone.

Public Meeting Notification Procedures

- Discussion on legal requirements for posting public meeting notices.
- If a meeting is recessed, a notice must be posted on the door stating when and where it will reconvene and the topic.
- Ensures the public has the right to attend any gathering of officials discussing official business.

Cinda Erickson, Berkshire & Hathaway

Use Rights on Morgan County Property (Potential FEMA Parcel)

- Status: The office representative does not know of any current leasing on the property and could not confirm whether the parcel carries FEMA-related restrictions.
 - Core Question: Can anyone use the property, or is use limited to a specific lessee/neighbor under a lease arrangement?
 - Context: The caller is selling a house across the road and needs to represent use rights accurately to prospective buyers.
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Shannon Wells, Development Office

DLZ has submitted a contract modification for professional services for site survey work. The additional amount is \$8,000.

Shannon Wells, Robin Ambrozy and OhioSE, Brad Peoples will meet with a local manufacturer to discuss the JobsOhio Small business grant today, February 23, 2026 at 1pm.

An economic development strategy session is scheduled for 4pm today with the CIC and Taft Law. Shannon Wells has a meeting scheduled for February 25, 2026 with RCAP to discuss projects they may be able to assist with.

Concerned Citizen

Process of Job Termination

- Background: The dispatcher disclosed disabilities at hire (Aug 2022); no write-ups or formal discipline over 3.5 years. Prior documented conflict with the captain which was witnessed.
- Feb 11 Meeting: The employee announced 911 dispatchers would assume more dispatch duties. Conflicting guidance emerged on whether Fire/EMS dispatch keeps “times.” The captain raised his voice in front of higher leadership; later apologized.
- Feb 12 Operations: Overnight dispatcher kept “times” despite prior guidance; 911 dispatcher spoke over the Fire console and marked times. The 911 dispatcher later apologized for speaking over. The captain reportedly asserted the 911 dispatcher did not call, despite all sheriff-office lines being recorded. The captain displayed agitated body language (head down, banging on arms).
- Lift-Assist Confusion: Sheriff Fisher indicated his dispatchers were confused on how to turn out extra help; chain of responsibility for turnouts was unclear. The dispatcher sought clarity and, per the chief’s instruction, turned out additional crews.
- Termination: About 30 minutes after the dispatcher left for a pre-scheduled appointment, the captain called to say he and the chief decided to “let her go,” offered resignation as an alternative, and provided no reason.

Process Ambiguity and Authority Conflicts

- Phenomenon: Conflicting instructions across meetings and live operations (timekeeping, who speaks to crews, who triggers lift-assist turnout).
- Mechanism: A transition to 911 taking additional responsibilities without documented SOPs, role boundaries, or unified communications protocol caused overlapping radio traffic and responsibility confusion.
- Root Cause: Leadership failure to codify changes, communicate a single authoritative directive, and enforce it uniformly; Captain-level behavior escalated interpersonal friction and silenced clarification attempts.

Termination Decision: Signals of Procedural Irregularity

- The dispatcher performed duties under unclear directives, sought clarification from chain of command, executed Chief's orders, and had no prior discipline record; termination delivered without written reason and paired with an invitation to resign.
- The decision lacks documented performance grounds and appears reactive within a contested operational transition, creating legal exposure and reputational risk.

Rick Welch, Brad Bond, Prosecutor's Office; Michael Lowe, Kelly Williams, County Court; Britney Racer, Carma Johnson, Clerk of Courts; Shannon Wells, Development Office; Sheriff Fisher, Pam Weaver, Sheriff's Office; John Wilt, 911

Suitability of 37 South Fifth Street for 911 Center

- The building at 37 South Fifth Street, originally listed in the grant application, was deemed unsuitable for the 911 center.
- The architect (DLZ) and the State of Ohio indicated the building is not seismic-proof or resilient enough for first responder operations.
- A variance was requested but rejected because the building cannot meet code requirements for a change of occupancy.
- Conclusion: The architect advised against using this building, suggesting it would be more cost-effective to tear it down or find a new location.

Grant Funding and Deadlines

- There is a funding deadline of June 30th associated with the OMB contract.
- Concerns were raised about missing this deadline due to the building issues.

Relocation Logistics: County Court and Courthouse

- The group discussed moving the County Court to the Courthouse to free up space, potentially placing the 911 center in the Sheriff's office building (upstairs).
 - Judge Lower expressed concerns about disrupting court operations, staff morale, and the need for comparable space, specifically regarding security and witness separation.
 - There is a conflict regarding space availability in the Courthouse; Judge Wells indicated he is unwilling to give up his current space.
 - Accessibility is a factor; moving to the Courthouse might require elevator installation or chair lifts (estimated at 50,000 to 100,000).
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Jeff Babcock, IT Administrator

The Engineer's main office printer failed this week. The printer's internal hard drive had failed and Poynters had to be contacted to replace the hard drive.

Cabling was run at the Sheriff's office to accommodate the installation of a third 911 station in the dispatch area. A lot of excess phone cabling remains in place at the Sheriff's office from the old dispatch area. Due to the ad hoc nature of wiring in the Sheriff's office, this cabling will take some time to remove to ensure active connections are not disrupted.

Public Transit had received a bill from Spectrum for the non-return of Internet equipment. Unaware that the service had been disconnected, the IT Director found five pieces of equipment that should have been returned. The equipment was taken to a UPS store for packing and return to Spectrum.

Equivant finished the transition to the newer version on CourtView on the new server at County Court. There were a few minor issues related to the migration, but service was eventually restored and eServices was placed online.

The IT Director has been having some trouble adding Microsoft 365 email accounts to SMTP devices like printers and various pieces of software. If Microsoft email accounts cannot be added to these devices, then email accounts will need to be created on the HostGator email servers. Unfortunately, HostGator is currently configured to forward all email to Microsoft, which might be a problem. Troubleshooting is ongoing.

Transfers, Then & Now, Supplemental Appropriations & Utility Applications

None

26-104- Motion by Mr. Best and seconded by Mr. Mayle to approve payment of bills. *See attached*

Mrs. Maxwell yea, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

26-105- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best to recess the commissioners meeting February 23, 2026 at 5:30pm.

Mr. Mayle yea, Mrs. Maxwell yea, Mr. Best yea Motion Carried

26-105- Motion Mr. Best and seconded by Mr. Mayle to reconvene the commissioners meeting for a EODA meeting Friday, February 27, 2026 at 9:00am.

Mr. Mayle yea, Mrs. Maxwell yea, Mr. Best yea Motion Carried

Mr. Mayle yea, Mrs. Maxwell yea, Mr. Best yea Motion Carried

26-106 Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best to adjourn the commissioners meeting on Friday February 27, 2026 at 1:00pm.

Mr. Mayle yea, Mrs. Maxwell yea, Mr. Best yea Motion Carried

Heidi Maxwell, President

Steve Best, Vice-President

Cecil Mayle, Member

Sheila Welch, Clerk

Attachment A:

Morgan County Commissioners

155 East Main St., Room 216
McConnelsville, OH 43756
Phone: 740-962-3183
Fax: 740-962-2014

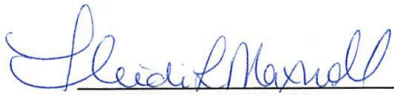
RESOLUTION # 26-103

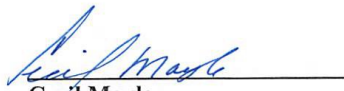
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Adopted this 23 day of February, 2026

Vote: Heidi Maxwell, ✓ Cecil Mayle, ✓ Steve Best, ✓
Motion Carried

Morgan County Commissioners


Heidi Maxwell, President


Cecil Mayle


Steve Best

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