

**MORGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
RIECKER BUILDING**

The Board of Morgan County Commissioners met in their office Monday, June 1, 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, Absent

The commissioners did the following over the past week:

*Commissioners are in receipt of May expense, revenue and statement of cash report from the Morgan County Auditor.

26-259- Motion by Mrs. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Best to approve the minutes of May 26, 2026

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

Al Eltringham, Riecker Maintenance

Monarch Roofing Re-inspected the lower-level roof with the Insurance Adjuster 5-11-26

All mowing at the Grove Park, Commons, Dirt Pile Lot, EMA Building, Old Transit Garage and Senior Citizen Building completed 5-21-26

Jason Pierce has ordered Emergency lights and Exit Signs for the Riecker Building 5-19-26

Replaced all Flags at all 3 County Building Locations. 5-19-26

Called Advanced Heating and Cooling to repair RTU 3. 5-29-26 (Compressors won't come on)

A discussion about data centers took place between residents of Center Township and the commissioners.

Meeting Notes

- Topic Title: Scheduling of Public Meetings and Notifications
 - A prior virtual meeting was held on the 21st.
 - An in-person public meeting is proposed for the week of the 14th; a community room is likely to accommodate a larger crowd.

- Another public meeting was mentioned for “the week of September 20,” with the company visiting the county.
- Notification methods: Facebook, postings at the office, county website; a newspaper notice in the Herald if timing allows.
- Debate on whether a legal notice in the Herald is required for public meetings; requirement depends on whether it is the company’s meeting or an official county meeting.
- Residents requested regular web updates (weekly if possible) to reduce anxiety and misinformation.
- Topic Title: Company Engagement and Upcoming Meetings
 - The company is referred to as Cipher Digital; the project name Ulysses AEP was discussed.
 - Commissioners reported recent communications: a virtual conference on 05/21 and additional calls last week.
 - A tax-focused meeting is being arranged by the prosecutor for next week; details are pending.
 - No NDAs have been signed by county commissioners; they intend to share what they can publicly.
- Topic Title: Project Scope, Timeline, and Infrastructure
 - The property is under contract; the purchase has not yet closed. The auditor and recorder will reflect the transaction when complete.
 - A press release stated the project is on track to energize in Q4 2027.
 - Early activities observed near Waterford Road: temporary structure, internet, drones; substation work is expected to be an early stage.
 - Speculation that AEP transmission/substation costs are being prepaid; figures mentioned include eight million.
 - The footprint remains unclear: references to 100–300 acres and 100–1000 thousand square feet were discussed without confirmation.
 - The cooling method (air vs. water) is unknown; final design depends on tenant selection.
- Topic Title: Power Supply, Reliability, and Costs

- AEP's role (transmission/distribution) and market-based generation via PJM auctions were discussed.
- Concern that data center costs could be socialized; commissioners noted companies often prepay transmission to avoid consumer pass-through, but costs may appear elsewhere.
- Residents reported recent local outages and asked about impact; expectation is the data center will have a dedicated substation/feed and on-site generators.
- Choice of generation suppliers was discussed; residents are wary due to mixed outcomes.
- No definitive answers on future local energy rates.
- Topic Title: Taxes, Incentives, and Economic Impact
 - The governor's pause was referenced as applying to sales tax; other abatements are not paused.
 - Nothing has been filed yet at the auditor regarding incentives.
 - Company estimate: tax base impact about seven million (distribution would follow standard property tax allocation).
 - Commissioners leverage is limited due to lack of zoning; they are seeking benefits above and beyond property taxes through negotiation.
- Topic Title: Community Concerns: Property Values, Noise, Heat, and Quality of Life
 - Residents fear property value declines, tax increases, noise, heat island effects (claims of 6–16°F increase up to a mile), and 24/7 operations.
 - Commissioners cited external briefings that portrayed minimal noise from most data centers; Bitcoin mining was noted as louder.
 - Mixed anecdotes about noise and environmental effects from other facilities and online videos; no local measurements are available.
- Topic Title: Tenants, Secrecy, and Supply Chain
 - The tenant is unknown; disclosure is expected only upon market announcements to avoid insider trading.
 - Possibility discussed that government surveillance workloads require all-US-manufactured components, which could affect timelines.

- Conclusion: The tenant will drive design, cooling, and staffing; disclosure is subject to securities rules.
- Topic Title: Workforce and Operations
 - During operations, staffing estimates ranged from about 30 employees, plus 24/7 security; one attendee shared experience of some centers operating with minimal on-site staff.
 - Construction is expected to bring union jobs; site security and access controls will be stringent.
- Topic Title: Zoning, Precedent, and Future Developments
 - No zoning in the area limits the county's regulatory leverage.
 - Residents worry about additional data centers siting nearby and cumulative community impact.
 - Commissioners acknowledged limited tools and emphasized negotiation and communication.

Steve Redrup, EMA

- Continued working with ODNR and Reinersville FD on an issue at Jesse Owens
- Met with the Health Care Coalition about the Mass Casualty and Blue Med trailers. Discussed trailer placement in the county, for regional deployment
- Worked with contractor on finishing the HMP, the state is waiting for our submission.
- Monitored River levels, provided data to NOAA, met with residents about the river and addressed their concerns on the data. Had meetings with several residents about the river rising south of the new dam at a rate that they have never seen previously.

Larry Casey, Itech

Discussed cameras that will be purchased for the building.

A technical project is encountering persistent communication failures and process breakdowns. The team is deploying IP-based cameras to expand coverage, but critical information is not being disseminated effectively, as evidenced by missed notifications about system capabilities and logistical arrangements. This pattern of miscommunication, whether it's a technical lead failing

to receive an email about a meeting or a stakeholder being unaware of a system's notification features, points to a deeper operational dysfunction. The issue is not the technology itself, but the unreliable, ad-hoc human processes surrounding it, which are creating information silos and execution risk.

Cheryl Brink, Treasurer

The primary issue is the physical state of the storage room. The room is inaccessible for sorting and processing, described as an area that would take weeks to clear a place. This has effectively frozen the records management and destruction process.

The Operational Constraints

Several factors are preventing a straightforward resolution:

- **Physical Barriers:** A support pole is located right in the middle of the doorway, making it impossible to get a dolly or cart close enough for efficient loading. This forces a manual, box-by-box removal process, which is slow and hazardous.
- **Space Deficit:** There is no designated, adequately sized space to move the material to for sorting. The team requires a temporary staging area to go through the boxes and separate what needs to be destroyed from what must be kept.
- **Procedural Timeline:** The team has only 15 days to go through the records once they submit a destruction list. This tight window requires that the material be sorted *before* initiating the formal process with the disposal company.
- **Resource Inefficiency:** The preference is to have the disposal company come only once. Executing a partial disposal now and another later is seen as a waste of resources, creating a strong incentive to solve the entire problem in a single, coordinated effort.

3. Proposed Scenarios & Path Forward

Two main options have been discussed, leading to a temporary decision to delay action.

- **Scenario A (Two-Step Disposal):** Get rid of the currently accessible and sorted material now. This would free up some space but require bringing the disposal company back a second time, which is considered inefficient.
- **Scenario B (One-Step Disposal):** Wait until after the "second half collection" in July. The goal is to find a temporary space, move all the material out of the compromised storage room at once, sort it, and then have the disposal company retrieve everything in a single visit. This is the preferred but currently blocked path.

The immediate plan is to postpone any significant action until July, at which point the issue will be revisited with the hope of securing a viable staging area to execute the one-step disposal.

Shannon Wells, Development Office

Ohio Department of Development has opened the brownfield remediation grant application for additional properties. Morgan County can still apply for \$600,000 of set aside funds and Shannon Wells will apply through the Morgan County land bank. The application is due June 5th.

26-260- Motion by Mrs. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Best to approve entering into a contract with Singree Construction for \$1,424.00 for the Home Sewage Treatment System Program Contract 24-3R for the reclaim of one septic system at 8895 Boxer Mayle Lane Chesterhill, OH 43728 (Tabler). This resolution will be contingent upon funding. Two prices was submitted for this address and Singree was the low quote.

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

Quotes were received to seal a well that was located behind the main building at 900 S. Riverside Dr. Clair Well Service LLC is the low quote at \$2,340.00.

26-261- Motion by Mr. Best and seconded by Mrs. Maxwell to authorize the Morgan County Auditor's Office to transfer \$25,000 into Grant Administration 099-0099-4002-00 for the purposes of economic development. See Attachment A

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

Becky Thompson, Dog Warden

-Submitted report

-Full report can be found online at: https://www.morgancounty-oh.gov/dog_warden_reports.html

Courtney, Morrow, Deputy Auditor

Meeting Notes

- Topic Title: Proposal to Replace AFLAC with Washington National Benefits
 - A Washington National representative proposed transitioning employees from AFLAC to Washington National.
 - They stated Washington National offers the same accident plan and similar plans, with no health questions and a straightforward enrollment process.
 - A return-of-premium feature at approximately the same price if benefits are not used.
 - The representative can match current AFLAC pricing and allow employees to upgrade if they choose.
 - Each employee will have an individual meeting to switch; the representative will schedule and conduct onsite visits.
 - Employees who prefer to keep AFLAC may continue coverage via personal payment.
 - Washington National typically conducts annual onsite visits around early June.
 - A mass email will be sent to employees explaining the change and process; employees can contact the internal coordinator with any issues.
 - The representative requested permission to proceed with setup.

26-262- Motion by Mrs. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Best to approve an insurance change from AFLAC to Washington National.

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

A change order was made for the Morgan County Transit Facility Parking and Site Improvement project. The original contract price was \$339,067.00. The new contract price including the change order will be \$371,149.55. See Attachment B

Jeff Babcock, IT Administrator

The quote to replace and expand the surveillance cameras at and around the Riecker Building was received from ServerSIM and passed to the Commissioners for consideration. The Commissioners had some questions about the warranty on ServerSIM and iTech's quotes. They also wanted more details on cameras that ServerSIM was going to install.

The IT Director attended the Zanesville – Muskingum Chamber of Commerce Safety Council meeting this week. The topic of discussion was BWC claims record-keeping presented by Sedgewick, a BWC third-party administrator.

The new printer was installed at the Dog Pound this week. The old printer had failed with rollers and other parts breaking off internally. The new printer was installed and configured with no other issues encountered.

The issue of failing backups at the Health Department was resolved this week. The external backup drive had failed, which caused the RAID errors in the Windows log as well as the difficulty in rebooting the server. New backup drives were assigned to the Health Department, reusing some old CourtView server backup drives from County and Common Pleas Court.

Transfers, Then & Now, Supplemental Appropriations & Utility Applications

26-263- Motion by Mr. Best and seconded by Mrs. Maxwell to request new revenue lines in fund 099:

099-0099-4013.00 2025 ODOT—Aviation—Airport Program

099-0099-4013.01 2025 Local Sharre—Airport Program

Please create a new line item in fund in fund 099:

099-0099-5013.00 2025 ODOT—Aviation—Airport Program

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

26-264- Motion by Mrs. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Best to approve all new revenue and expense line items.

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

26-265- Motion by Mr. Best and seconded by Mrs. Maxwell to approve payment of bills. *See attached*

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

26-266- Motion by Mrs. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Best to adjourn the commissioners meeting Monday, June 1, 2026 at 4:00pm.

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

Approved by Commissioners on:

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, Ohio 43756
Phone: 740-962-3183
Fax: 740-962-1341

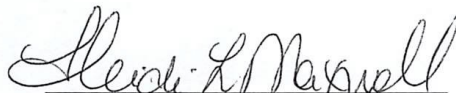
Cecil Mayle
Heidi Maxwell
Steve Best

Authorizing Resolution

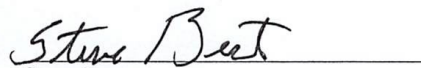
Resolution # 26-261

This resolution will authorize the Morgan County Auditors Office to transfer \$25,000 into Grant Administration 099-0099-4002-00 for the purposes of economic development.

Cecil Mayle



Heidi Maxwell



Steve Best

CHANGE ORDER

Order No. 3
Date: 05/28/2026

Name of Project: Morgan County Transit Facility Parking and Site Improvements
Owner: Morgan County Commissioners
Contractor: Singree Construction Services, LLC. "SCS"

The following changes are hereby made to the Contractor Documents:

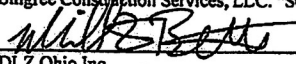
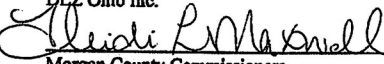
Justification: 1. Eye drain on back of transit building. This includes concrete boring into catch basin, replacement of patio and sidewalk concrete, 300' of 6" scheduled pipe fittings and labor.

Original contract price: \$ 339,067.00
Current contract price adjusted by previous change order \$ 363,722.00
The contract price due to this change order will be (Increased) (decreased) by: \$ 7,427.55
The new contract price including this change order will be \$ 371,149.55

Change to contract time:

The contract time will be increased by 1 calendar days.

The date for completion of all work will be _____

Approved by:  6/1/2026
Singree Construction Services, LLC. "SCS" Date
Approved by:  6/1/26
DLZ Ohio Inc. Date
Approved by:  6/1/26
Morgan County Commissioners Date

MORGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MORGAN COUNTY TRANSIT FACILITY PARKING AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS
DLZ Ohio Inc.:4/28/2026

Project Forms
2528316800
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Attachment C:



***Morgan County Commissioners
Development Office***

155 East Main St., Room 135
McConnelsville, Ohio 43756
Phone: 740-962-1322
Fax: 740-962-1341

May 29, 2026

Morgan County Commissioners:

I would like to request new revenue lines in fund 099:

099-0099-4013-00 2025 ODOT – Aviation – Airport Program
099-0099-4013-01 2025 Local Share -Airport Program

I would like to also request a new expense line item in fund 099:

099-0099-5013-00 2025 ODOT – Aviation – Airport Program

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Traci Baker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Traci Baker

HRM 6/1/26
SCB 6/1/26

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