MORGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
RIECKER BUILDING

The Board of Morgan County Commissioners met in their office Monday, July 27, 2026.

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

The commissioners did the following over the past week:

Commissioner Best attended a meeting with Eric Leach who is with Taft Law.
ON Saturday, Commissioner Best also assisted in cleaning up the fairgrounds.

26-360- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best to approve the minutes of July 20, 2026.
Mrs. Maxwell absent, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

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Alan Eltringham, Riecker Maintenance

The operational team is managing a collection of low-grade, reactive maintenance issues, primarily driven by weather and aging infrastructure. Recently heavy rain has been a major cause.

At the same time, a decision is pending on a high-cost HVAC compressor replacement. The current thought is to defer this major expense, as the unit is still functional on a reduced number of compressors, and demand is low.

John Telesz, Engineer; Patrick Kidd, Deputy Engineer

Project & Procurement Updates

- **Asphalt Bids:** Bids for asphalt are expected to be approximately 20% higher than the previous year.
- **Township Asphalt:** To manage costs, townships have agreed to reduce asphalt thickness from two inches to one and a half inches, allowing them to avoid paying overage charges.

Steve Redup, EMA

Emergency Response & Preparedness

- **Storm Aftermath**: The recent storm caused unique flash flooding, an event Mr. Redrup noted as unprecedented for the area. The assessment is that the damage was unavoidable.
- **Equipment Procurement**: The VMA is working with COTS to acquire ten additional med sleds for the county to enhance response capabilities.
- **Facility Use Request**: An external group, interested in using the building as a disaster shelter, conducted a site survey without notifying management. Mr. Redrup was only made aware after the fact, indicating a significant security and coordination failure.

John Wilt, 911

 Extension and Reporting for OBM

- Mrs. Wells received an email regarding a due report, contacted OBM, and filed the necessary paperwork.
- An extension was granted until July 31.
- Approximately 12,000 has been expended to date.
- About 125,000 is earmarked for the radio system; remaining funds planned for building renovations (including upstairs) and soundproofing/sound-deadening.

 Radio System, Pagers, and Tones

- Issues exist by sending tones via the old radio system. Transition and troubleshooting are needed before taking action to go live.
- JD Johnson Sales & Service needs to connect a siren to the new system; vendor agreed to perform upgrades.
- They are working on a pager for financial programming and requires a map.

- Several talk groups are not actively used; brief 3–4 second recordings appear every four hours, explained as system authentication queries to verify authorized radios.

 E-Dispatch Capacity and Credential Verification

- Capacity concerns for e-dispatch; aim to add as many users as possible without extra cost.
- Proposal to require credentials from personnel before removing them from incident pages.
- Anticipated pushbacks from departments noted that compliance is lacking.
- Chesterhill is the only department with a signed contract. Disputes involve whether Union Chesterhill/Penn has contracts.
- Trustees indicate Penn had something historically, but none is currently known.

 Mutual Aid, Run Coverage, and Contract Payments

- Athens reportedly refused a run at a township line due to jurisdiction yet often calls for assistance across counties.
- Concern raised about reciprocal payments for cross-county runs; suggestion to review or renegotiate the contract ending at year's end.
- Contract timeline referenced: July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2030.
- Operational gaps exist when local departments lack availability.

Shannon Wells, Development

Shannon Wells and Citizens National Bank will be meeting this morning at 10:30 with APG Architects from Zanesville to discuss the elevator project in the Stanbury Building.

ODOT has requested all transit authorities to update their drug and alcohol policies. Buckeye Southeast Transit has updated their policy, and it needs to be adopted by the Morgan County Commissioners. This is a zero-tolerance policy. The medical review officer and substance abuse professionals have been updated.

A meeting will be held on Tuesday at 2pm with DLZ to review a site plan and floor plan for the jail study.

The Habitat for Humanity home dedication for Marion St. Chesterhill is scheduled for Wednesday, July 29, 2026, at 3pm.

Jenny Bond, Concerned Citizen

- Topic Title: Data Center Proposal by Cypher Digital

    - Concerns raised about timing, involved stakeholders, and decision authority for the data center.
    - Township trustees stated they have limited control. Multiple entities are involved in approval.
    - Participants clarified close collaboration with Cypher Digital to ensure compliance with water discharge, noise levels, and community impact.
    - Perception issues are acknowledged. Cypher Digital aims to be a good neighbor.
    - Reports on ongoing land purchases. Anecdotal note that some residents sold due to perceived property devaluation.
    - Water usage is described as a closed system: initial fill, minimal ongoing use.
    - No river water intake is planned. Water to be hauled to the site, purification requirements cited as the reason to avoid river sourcing.
    - Noise is expected to be limited to a certain decibel at the property line.
    - External references suggest other communities had positive experiences with Cypher Digital, a first venture in Ohio.

- Topic Title: Senior Center Relocation and Building Restrictions

    - A caller reported that senior citizens may need to move. Options are being explored. No new location is finalized.
    - Historical belief that the Colson family sold the building to commissioners to remain at a senior center. Deed checked from 1977 with no restriction found.
    - Emotional concern about seniors being displaced. Request for patience as the county seeks suitable space.

- Potential new location under negotiation: old church at Union and Ninth (Grace). Safety considerations are mentioned. The fire department has reviewed the building for something.

Pam Weaver, Sheriff Fisher

Building Damage and Repair Assessment

- The Mrs. Weaver, Sheriff Fisher, and the commissioners agreed to proceed with building repairs due to escalating internal water damage from rain.
- Decision: Contact the contractor to confirm the repair pricing remains unchanged.

Jail and 911 Center Renovations

- The building inspector rejected the hallway airlock plan, reverting to the original plan to use an adjacent room. This entails adding new doors and closing a hallway door.
- Concerns persist about how long the current 911 facility can operate before potential state intervention.
- Demonstrating continuous effort and measurable progress should keep the facility compliant.
- A new 911 center is estimated to require at least 1.5–2 years to complete. Contractors are experiencing significant delays. One individual indicated a one-year wait before starting.

Generator Upgrade and Replacement

- Discussion covered replacing a generator under the maintenance agreement.
- A larger generator is needed to support both the sheriff's office and the courthouse, including air conditioning during outages.
- The current generator only powers limited lighting, the 911 center, and radios, and does not meet broader office needs.
- A bill for completing a previous generator repair is pending.

Staffing and Administrative Issues

- Dispatch is short for two dispatchers. One left for personal reasons; another took a closer-to-home job in Zanesville.
- Plan: Conduct another applicant test. One trainee is onboard but was originally intended for a different role.
- For the outstanding bill payment process, the group will ask The Auditor's Office for the simplest handling method.

Inter-Agency Coordination and Future Plans

- Collaboration is underway to pool funds for roof repairs.
- Larry McCoy is verifying whether the school system will move to MARCS, following their grant application.
- Plan: Consult the engineer about joining MARCS or co-locating with their tower.

Vehicle Repairs

- A vehicle is awaiting parts. Repair is scheduled for the first week of August 2026 and will require removing the top half of the motor.

911 Center Consolidation Challenges

- Building a compliant 911 center is estimated at approximately $5 million. An alternative is relocating operations up to one floor.
- The alternative would require moving the judge and prosecutor, underscoring current communication and alignment gaps among stakeholders.
- Urgency: Prior misrepresentations to the state of Ohio regarding certified communicators and PSAPs have heightened scrutiny.
- The state is enforcing compliance; inaction could result in monetary fines for the county.

Amber Wilson, Senior Administrator

 Topic: Upcoming programs and events for seniors

- Council meeting scheduled for 2026-07-28.
- Bingo on Wednesday, 2026-07-29.
- Planning for National Senior Citizens Day on 2026-08-21.
- Effort to boost attendance at the congregate meal site by listing group days on the calendar.

Jeff Babcock, IT Administrator

Advanced Business Communications (ABC) returned to the Riecker Building to move the Internet connection for the phone switch network from the Sheriff's office to the Riecker Building. All IP addresses were changed as a result. Once the Internet connection was moved to the Riecker Building, the IT Director was able to get the unified communication mobile application working again. Now, County officials have the option to have their desk phone mirrored in the unified communications application on their smart phone.

Advanced Business Communications (ABC) looked at the elevator phone line at the Courthouse. The Auditor's office said that a legacy Bright speed line was used for this phone, but this line was discovered to be deactivated. ABC and the IT Director activated an unused number on the County's PRI line and wired it into the elevator panel. Unfortunately, the elevator phone is not dialing the correct number when the button is pressed. The elevator repair company will be contacted about this problem.

The IT Director attended the Zanesville – Muskingum Chamber of Commerce Safety Council meeting this week. The topic of discussion was drug test results presented by Ohio Health Consortium.

Microsoft accounts and laptops were configured for two new inspectors at the Health Department this week.

Transfers, Then & Nows, Supplemental Appropriations & Utility Application

26-361- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best to request a supplemental appropriation to account 001-0601-5309.00 in the amount of $19,830.16. These funds were deposited into 001-0601-4004.00; this was a reimbursement gran for the purchase of Body Worn Cameras, awarded through the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Office of Criminal Justice Services. This transfer

will be paid back to the Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Trust Fund account for purchase made, please see attached payment verification, vendor contract,

Following this request, please adjust PO 133 accordingly.

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

26-362 Motion by Mr. Best and seconded by Mrs. Mayle to approve all supplemental appropriations. See Attachment A

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

26-363- Motion by Mr. Best and seconded by Mrs. Maxwell to approve payment of bills. *See attached*
Mrs. Maxwell absent, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

26-364- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best recess the commissioners meeting Monday, July 27, 2026, at 4:00pm.
Mrs. Maxwell absent, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

26-365- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best reconvene the commissioners meeting until Wednesday, July 29, 2026, at 3:00pm for a Habitat for Humanity ribbon cutting ceremony.
Mrs. Maxwell absent, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

26-366- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best reconvene the commissioners meeting Wednesday, July 29, 2026, at 3:00pm for a Habitat for Humanity ribbon cutting ceremony.
Mrs. Maxwell absent, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

26-367- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best recess the commissioners meeting Friday, July 31, 2026, at 11:10am for a zoom jail meeting.
Mrs. Maxwell absent, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

26-368- Motion by Mr. Mayle and seconded by Mr. Best adjourn the commissioners meeting Friday, July 31, 2026, at 11:25am.
Mrs. Maxwell absent, Mr. Best yea, Mr. Mayle yea Motion Carried

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Approved by Commissioners on: October 19, 2026

Heidi Maxwell, President

Steve Best, Vice-President

Cecil Mayle, Member **Sheila Welch, Clerk**

Attachment A:

MORGAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
James R. Fisher, Sheriff
sheriff@mcso58.us

July 21, 2026

Board of Morgan County Commissioners
155 East Main Street
McConnelsville, Ohio 43756

Subject: Request for Supplementary Appropriation

Dear Commissioners,

I respectfully request a supplementary appropriation to account number 001-0601-5309.00 in the amount of $19,830.16. These funds were deposited into 001-0601-4004.00, this was a reimbursement grant for the purchase of Body Worn Cameras, awarded through Ohio Department of Public Safety, Office of Criminal Justice Services. This transfer will be paid back to the Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Trust Fund account for purchase made, please see attached payment verification, vendor contract,

Following this request please adjust PO 133 accordingly.

Thank you for your continued support of the Morgan County Sheriff's Office.

Respectfully,

Pamela Weaver

Pamela Weaver
Sheriff's Office Administrative Assistant

SCB 7/27/26
Cmm 7/27/26

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