

**MORGANTOWN TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD MARCH 11, 2024**

**ATTENDANCE**

The Town Council held a meeting on Monday, March 11, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge was led by Council member, Penny Anderson. Clerk Treasurer, Sharon McIntosh noted Council members; Courtney Allen, Penny Anderson, Jeremy Baker David Johnson and Town Council President, Joe Blevins were present. Also present, were DPW, Kyle Rooks, Town Marshal, Ryan Swank, Town Attorney, Lee Robbins and Clerk Treasurer, Sharon McIntosh. Special guest was Jill Curry with Curry & Associates.

**ADJUSTMENT**

An adjustment was presented for Action Academy for a leak which was in the crawl space for \$575.44. Council President, Joe Blevins made a motion to approve the adjustment request. Council member, Courtney Allen seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

**UTILITY RATES**

At the February 12, 2024 the Council voted to approve the Water and Wastewater rate increase for the Town of Morgantown with a vote of 4 to 1. Before the Council met again to have the second reading on the Ordinance it was discovered the water rates that were advertised were not correct. The 3-year rates were advertised instead of the 5-year rates. The wastewater 5-year rates were advertised correctly.

Council President, Joe Blevins opened the Public Hearing for the utility rate increase for water and wastewater. The Town readvertised the 5-year water rates along with a 15% increase for customers outside of Town limits. There was no one from the public that spoke for or against the rate increase. Council member, Joe Blevins made a motion to adopt the 5-year rate change for water along with 15% increase for customers outside of Town limits. The motion was seconded by Council member, Courtney Allen. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Council member, Courtney Allen made a motion to suspend the rules and adopt on second reading the 5-year rate increase for water and an 15% increase for customers outside of Town limits. Council member, Jeremy Baker seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Council President, Joe Blevins made a motion to accept the 5-year rates for wastewater as well as an increase of 15% for those customers outside of Town limits. Council member, Courtney Allen seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. Council President, Joe

Blevins made a motion to suspend the rules and adopt Ordinance 2024-7 on second and final reading

### **DRINKING WATER PROJECT**

Jill Curry with Curry & Associates spoke to the Council about moving forward with the Environmental Review and hiring Kleinpeter Consulting Group LLC, Mike Kleinpeter for \$5,000.00. The Town is looking to apply for an OCRA Grant and borrow funds from the SRF for a future Drinking Water Project. Jill wanted to know if the Town had decided to move forward this spring applying for an OCRA Grant. The PER that Curry has been working on would have to be submitted by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

The Council discussed the various options they have as well as buying water from Brown County Water. Council President, Joe Blevins has contacted Brown County Water asking them how much they would charge the Town if the Town chose to buy water wholesale from them. Brown County Water has a meeting later this month and will determine the cost of the water wholesale. The Council felt they could not move forward until they had the cost. Attorney, Lee Robbins said there would be a contract that would have to be determined between the two parties which might take a little time. If the Council felt they could not apply for an OCRA Grant this spring, the Town would have to wait until October to move forward. The Town would still need the environmental review whether they applied in the Spring or Fall. Council member, Penny Anderson made a motion to hire Kleinpeter Consulting Group LLB, Mike Kleinpeter for \$5,000. to prepare the Environmental Review and to proceed with the Archaeological Consultants of Ossian for a cost of \$2,625.00. Council member, David Johnson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

The discussion continued about the options some of the Council members believed would be best for the Town. Council President, Joe Blevins felt that option 2 & 3 were the best for the Town. Its unclear whether the Town could afford a large loan payment of the size it would need to make to buy ground, build 2 new wells, build a treatment center, make an emergency water line with Brown County and then work on Town water lines. Joe expressed he would be interested in buying water wholesale from Brown County Water and then work on replacing the water lines in Town. Council member, Courtney Allen was concerned about the cost of buying water from Brown County Water and she felt Brown County could raise the cost of the water any time and the Town would have no control. It was explained that Brown County is a member of the IURC and Brown County would have to have approval from the IURC before increasing the water rates

### **LOAN BETWEEN FUNDS**

The Town declared an emergency to extend the repayment of the loan between Funds between CCD and the water utility. The Town is borrowing funds from the CCD Fund of \$18,754.00 to pay for the cleaning of well #2 & #3. The Council discussed adding a \$15.00 service call fee when the DPW is called out by a customer to check for a leak. If the worker opens the pit to check for a leak there would be a charge of \$15.00. There are a few shut of valves inside homes and those need to be moved to another location. This fee will be added to the Rate increase Ordinance. Council member, Penny Anderson made a motion to approve the charge. Council member, David Johnson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **SERVICE FEE**

The Council discussed setting a charge for pumping water from the hydrant \$15.00 per 1,000 gallons of water. The Town needs its own water for its customers. If the DPW catches anyone filling from any town hydrant the Police is to be called. There will be a \$500 fine for stealing Town water. If the party wants to buy water from the Town, they should contact Town Hall to pay for the water. Council member, Jeremy Baker made a motion to adopt the water rate of \$15.00 per 1,000 gallons and to fine individuals who steal Town Water. Council member, David Johnson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **NEW COMPUTERS**

Council member, Penny Anderson made a motion to approve the purchase of 6 new Dell computers with dual screens for \$6,857.00 through Chad White. Council member, David Johnson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **TOWN HALL OPTION**

Council President, Joe Blevins reported that Robert Jefferies with State Farm called him saying he is interested in selling the building if the Town would be interested. Mr. Jefferies has to find a place to go first and then he will contact Joe.

### **SECOND PERSON ON BANK ACCOUNT**

There was a discussion about putting Council President, Joe Blevins on the Town's Bank account. The Town Attorney felt that was not a good idea. If anyone should be on the Town's bank account it should be the Deputy Clerk. The Council President is not bonded.

### **PARK BOARD MEETING**

President, Joe Blevins gave an update on the latest Park Board meeting. The Town needs to rent a dumpster for about \$400 so that a few items can be removed from the park. The Town would like to see the Shed, and Tower removed. The Park Board has not decided about when whether

to remove the batting cage. Council member, David Johnson made a motion to rent a dumpster for \$400 to clean up the park area. Council member, Jeremy Baker seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **NEW STREET LIGHTS**

Council President, Joe Blevins explained there would be an \$8,000. credit per street light the Town would receive through the INDOT project for Main Street for Street Lights if new lights were purchased. There were 4 options to choose from. Street Light #1 was the choice which is a Traditional Post Top with an Acorn Globe. Council member, David Johnson said a lot of light would be lost with that globe so David had a picture of the same acorn street light but with a decorative top to direct the light down. The Town is going to look into that option. Joe explained that instead of putting back the bricks used as a sidewalk trim after the project is complete, he thinks stamp concrete with a brick pattern would be best. There was a picture enclosed in the packets. The Council had no issue with the stamped concrete.

### **ECLIPSE**

The Council discussed the April 8<sup>th</sup> eclipse. They had ordered 5 porter potties and needed to know where to put them. They thought about putting them at the Parks but Town Marshal, Ryan Swank suggested by Town Hall. He wants to keep the traffic moving through Town because the traffic could be a problem.

### **FINANCIALS**

Council member, Jeremy Baker made a motion to approve the minutes dated February 12, 2024. Council member, Penny Anderson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Council member, Penny Anderson made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes dated February 28, 2024. Council member, David Johnson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Council member, Jeremy Baker made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes dated March 4, 2024. Council member, David Johnson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Council member, Jeremy Baker made a motion to approve the Claims dated March 11, 2024 totaling \$201,815.37. Council member, David Johnson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Council member, David Johnson made a motion to approve the February payroll. Council member, Jeremy Baker seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **ADJUSTMENT**

Raymond Lebo had a leak under his house and it has been repaired. Council member, David Johnson made a motion to approve a wastewater credit of \$172.55 to Raymond Lebo's account. Council member, Penny Anderson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Town Marshal, Ryan Swank asked the Council's permission to purchase police equipment for the new Deputy, Dustin White. Council member, David Johnson made a motion to approve buying police equipment for Dustin White. Council member, Penny Anderson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The Marshal asked the Council permission to purchase a police vest for Dustin White for about \$1,400.00. Council member, David Johnson made a motion to approve the purchase of the police vest for Dustin White. The motion was seconded by Council member, Jeremy Baker. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **DPW**

DPW, Kyle Rooks had nothing to bring to the council.

### **FIRE TERRITORY**

Town Attorney, Lee Robbins explained to the Council that he had spoken to the Fire Territory attorney about the option to have a 5-member Board instead of a 3-member Board that would approve the budgets each year. The 5-member Board would consist of 2 members of the Township, 2 members from the Council and 1 person that would be at large chosen by the Territory Board. Lee believes this would give a more balanced Board with a stronger position to have input with the group. Lee felt this would give the Town an opportunity to control what people are being taxed concerning the Fire Territory. The Council members liked the idea of a 5-member Board.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Resident, Joe Clephane gave a presentation about the Illinois Central Rail Road and the Sycamore Street property. Joe had numerous documents and maps that he spoke about during his presentation. His concern was the Order that was given to David Huff from the Town Attorney that his pool was on Town property and needed to be moved to David's property by as deadline. Joe expressed his desire to come up with some type of compromise between the Town and David Huff. Joe Clephane even expressed the idea to divide the property differently

so David Huff could leave his pool where is now sits. The Council wondered why David Huff was not present to deliver this information since it was his pool that was in question. Council member, Penny Anderson felt the Attorneys should be the ones working to settle the dispute.

#### **DPW**

DPW, Kyle Rooks said he did have something after all that he wanted to asked the Council. Zach Burton would like a raise. Zach received a \$1.00 increase when his 90 days was up and then by the end of the year he received a 3% increase. The Council discussed the issue. The utilities are not in good shape and some members wanted to wait 2 months till after the rate increase took effect. The Council had no problem with Zach or his work. Council member, Penny Anderson made a motion to give Zach Burton a .43 cent increase on the hour. Council member, David Johnson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

#### **CLOSING MEETING**

There was no other business before the Council and the meeting was adjourned by President, Joe Blevins.

MARCH 11, 2024 MEETING MINUTES APPROVED & SIGNED APRIL 10, 2024

Sharon McIntosh DATE 4/10/24

ATTEST: CLERK TREASURER

SHARON MCINTOSH

Joe Blevins

TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT, JOE BLEVINS

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COURTNEY ALLEN

Penny Anderson

PENNY ANDERSON

Jeremy Baker

JEREMY BAKER

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DAVID JOHNSON