

Morris County News

From the office of Morris County Judge Lynda Munkres



June 22, 2011

Almost six months in office and I have definitely learned the complexities of county government. It has been both exciting and interesting to learn about all the different decisions that are made daily to help Morris County provide what is best for our citizens.

We have several decisions to make in the near future. Last year Morris County received an Economic Development Strategic Planning Grant, which is very exciting. We hope the results of this grant will encourage the county to work together with businesses, schools, and cities. TIP Strategies of Austin will do the work on this grant. They recently toured the county and informed county officials of the plan. School and city officials, Chamber of Commerce directors, business representatives, and citizens were also interviewed. If you would like to offer any suggestions, please call my office at 903-645-3691.

Every ten years, after receiving the results of the census, we have to look at whether to redistrict. The Commissioners' Court will follow the guidelines of the Department of Justice. We will insure that our precincts are in compliance with the law. At the present, we are 9.37% out of compliance, very close to the 10% mandatory number to redistrict.

We are also considering reducing the number of justices of the peace and constables. If we do this, it would take effect after the current terms. This decision would save the county over \$47,000 annually; about \$500,000 in ten years.

The Commissioners' Court is also discussing the possibility of permanently closing County Road 2115 at the railroad crossing upon the advice of Kansas City Southern Railroad. The road was closed temporarily in 2007 for repair and renovation on the grade and tracks. KCS's concerns are safety as well as erosion problems and cost. These are also concerns of the county. KCS has offered Morris County \$100,000 as an incentive to permanently close the road at the railroad crossing. The property owners adjacent to the road will still have access to their property. There are no homes on CR 2115.

As of Friday, June 17, 2011, we have a burn ban in effect. We are very concerned about the lack of rain and the problems this causes farmers, ranchers, fire departments, and all citizens. Please be aware and be extra diligent about this problem.

All citizens of Morris County are important and no area within the county is more important than another. Please feel free to call me, 903-645-3691, and give your opinion or ask any question.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve you.

Lynda Munkres

Morris County Judge