



# STAFF REPORT

## MORGAN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

### PETITION FOR: TEXT AMENDMENT

Applicant: Morgan County Fire Chief Mark Melvin  
Applicant's Agent: Morgan County Planning & Development  
Zoning Ordinance: Morgan County Zoning Ordinance, Section 7.26.4

#### Summary

Morgan County Fire Chief Mark Melvin has requested that language in Section 7.26.4 of the Morgan County Zoning Ordinance be updated regarding equipment needed to support emergency services. Chief Melvin has stated that the current language does not meet the technology needs for the emergency system.

#### Current Language (Proposed change to first sentence only.)

Owners of towers over one hundred ninety feet (190') shall dedicate sufficient space on each tower to the governing body to place one whip antenna. The purpose therefore shall be to improve the County's 911 telecommunication system, and furthermore, to improve the public utility and public safety communication system, including, without limitation, roads and bridges communication systems. The Governing Body institutes this requirement in recognition of its furtherance of the public health, safety and welfare achieved by improving such communication system.

#### Proposed language (First sentence only, rest of paragraph is proposed to stay the same.)

Owners of towers over one hundred ninety feet (190') shall dedicate sufficient space on each tower to the governing body to place equipment necessary for emergency services.

Chief Melvin had specifically asked for the language to address a minimum of "one whip antenna, one three foot microwave dish and appropriate ground space for 911 equipment," but staff chose to present more vague language in order to cover any other equipment that may be needed if technology changes.

The Morgan County Board of Commissioners placed a moratorium on all new tower applications (both for construction and conditional use permits) on February 17, 2015. The moratorium will remain in effect until updated language is approved.

#### Staff Comments

Correct equipment is vital to the operation of emergency services. Staff agrees that the change is necessary and recommends approval of the text amendment as presented.