



Communications Office

The City of Morgantown

Susan Sullivan, PCM
389 Spruce Street, Room 16
Morgantown, West Virginia 26505
(304) 284-7426 Fax: (304) 284-7430
ssullivan@cityofmorgantown.org

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The City of Morgantown joins forces with United Way to share the Power of Change

Old parking meters will be refurbished to help collect donations for the new city initiative to discourage panhandling.

MORGANTOWN – An initiative to reassure citizens that their donations to the homeless are being put to good use is starting next week.

City Manager Terrence Moore reports that both the Department of Public Works & Engineering and the Morgantown Parking Authority are ready to install the “Power of Change” collection meters (specially designated parking meters) in areas of Morgantown known for panhandling and gathering areas for persons who often engage in panhandling and loitering activities, including:

- High street, next to the Wild Mountain Bakery,
- The corner of Wall Street and High Street,
- In front of the Morgantown Library on Spruce Street, and
- In front of the Mountain Line bus depot, located at Ruby McQuain Park.



“These locations were determined based on the frequency of loitering in each area – with the idea of discouraging panhandling in each vicinity, as well as to create opportunities for individuals to support charitable organizations working to effectively assist those in need.

Sgt. B.K. Hennessey, who brought the idea to Morgantown, says it’s a way the public can be sure its donations to the homeless are going to make a difference.

“The purpose of this program is to give altruistic citizens an opportunity to make a donation with the confidence that the funds will go to social service agencies that directly serve the needs of the homeless,” Sgt. Hennessey said.

Each meter has been painted gold, and will have a sign stating the following:

“Each year, hundreds of citizens make hand-to-hand donations to panhandlers. Unfortunately, these funds do very little to solve the problem of homelessness and often are used to continue a lifestyle of substance abuse. Your donations to this meter will go to reputable social service agencies that serve the needs of the homeless in Morgantown and Monongalia County. Thank you for your support in helping to break the cycle of homelessness.”

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Money put in these meters will be collected and counted. City Council will then donate this money to the United Way, who will allocate the money to places like the Bartlett House.

For more information, contact Sgt. B.K. Hennessey at the Morgantown Police Department Wednesday through Sunday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. His number there is 304-284-7522. You can also contact City Manager Terrence Moore, ICMA-CM, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. His number is 304-284-7405.

