

**Wells County Regional Sewer District  
Regular Meeting Minutes**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Wells Co. RSD</b>	<b>Date</b>	Apr 15, 2013
<b>Facilitator</b>	Lee VonGunten	<b>Time</b>	6:30 P.M.
<b>Location</b>	Wells County Carnegie Annex, Washington St., Bluffton, Indiana	<b>Scribe</b>	Makaye Conrad
<b>Attendees</b>	<p>Wells County RSD Board Members: Lee VonGunten (President), Leon Berning (Treasurer), Makaye Conrad (Secretary)</p> <p>Others present from sign-in sheet: David Schulte, Tom Byanski, Darlene Shibley, Sandy Houlihan, Sandy Foster, Steve Foster, Perry Isch, Becky Isch, Toby Steffen, Blake Gerber, Howard Vaughn Jr., L. A. Brown, Rick Stoller, Gene Biberstein, Walt Neuenschwander, Joyce Neuenschwander, Glennis Henly, Ted Claghorn, Bob Johnson, Wayne Henly, Delores Maller, Cory Reynolds, Gary Gerber, Linda Reinhard, Joan Reinhard, Mary Jo Neuenschwander, Alan Coblentz, and Vicki Perry (State Director, Indiana Rural Community Assistance Program, IN-RCAP)</p>		

**Key Points of Discussion**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Highlights</b>
1.	Call Regular Meeting to Order	Lee VonGunten called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.; led Pledge of Allegiance and prayer
2.	Roll Call – Board Members	Lee VonGunten; Leon Berning; Makaye Conrad
3.	Approval of Meeting Minutes from Previous Meetings	<p>Minutes from the February 19, 2013 meeting were distributed and reviewed by board members. Makaye Conrad made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Leon Berning seconded; and the motion carried.</p> <p>City of Bluffton has posted the past minutes of the RSD meeting and is available for review by the public.</p>
4.	<b>Old Business:</b> A. RSD Attorney	<p>To date, the WCRSD has not selected/appointed a lawyer to represent or guide the RSD board. Makaye Conrad questioned if the RSD has an option to call on Roy Johnson, lawyer for the Wells County Commissioners, if the RSD has a question. Blake Gerber has not specifically addressed this concern with Roy Johnson. If certain issues arise, it may be appropriate for an RSD representative to attend a commissioners meeting to bring up an issue for their recommendation in regards to obtaining guidance from the Commissioners' lawyer.</p>

	<p>B. Funding of financial obligations of the RSD</p>	<p>Co Commissioners allotted \$5,000.00 to the WCRSD, provided under terms of repayment when the RSD is working on a project. What is the County Commissioners' definition of a project? Request clarification of the terms of the repayment.</p> <p>RSD has future potential to spend money (legal or engineering)... no other option than to bill homeowners on septic tanks in Wells County...to levy a minimal fee to help defray the costs for the WCRSD to operate. WCRSD may request assistance from County Commissioners or Council for assistance in defining a billing process; to get any appropriate approvals. Recommendations were made to talk with the Auditor or Assessor for recommendations; as well as Mike Lautenhizer, Jr. who has a data base and may be able to help determine who does not pay a sewer bill.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>New Business:</b> A. Review the meeting with IDEM</p>	<p>The meeting on April 10, 2013 with IDEM included Lee VonGunten (WCRSD), Phil Stoller (County Council), Blake Gerber (Co. Commissioner), State Senator Travis Holdman (R-Markle), State Representative Matt Lehman (R-Berne) and Dan Schmitt from Governor Pence's office. Although it was a cordial meeting, Lee VonGunten reported that his first objective of the meeting was to address the Wells County RSD planned direction since Bluffton said no to connections from the McKinney-Paxton Ditch area to municipal system. IDEM said they will be meeting with Bluffton in the near future to address water quality concerns. Lee's second objective in the meeting was to review progress that local homeowners near McKinney-Paxton Ditch area and Vera Cruz municipal sewer line have accomplished in the past 20+ years including maintenance with solid waste pumping every 3-5 years.</p> <p>IDEM said if the homeowner or RSD is not meeting the high standards of water quality that they expect us to continue working further towards water quality improvement. An IDEM rep opined after the McKinney-Paxton Ditch area is cleaned up there are other areas in Wells County that need to be addressed.</p> <p>IDEM agrees there has been improvements in the problem area and asks that they continue to be provided water sampling results documenting trends.</p>

		<p>As long as IDEM sees work in the direction of improving water quality they will not be unreasonable by evicting people from their homes.</p> <p>WCRSD needs to pursue sampling results documentation from Pastor Neil Ainslie and the Wells County Soil and Water Conservation District.</p> <p>Also coordinate with Jared Hahn where past samples were taken.</p> <p>Phil Stoller iterated IDEM is just looking for numbers to come down; not looking to push high cost sewer installations. IDEM standard is unattainable for the Wells Co RSD. The IDEM order with Wells County for establishment of the Wells County RSD will not go away.</p> <p>Discussion ensued to invite someone from the Allen Co. Health Department to come to the next WCRSD meeting to educate us on what Allen County is doing.</p> <p>Lee summarized that IDEM likes to see progress and the WCRSD will work toward progress toward better water quality numbers in Wells County. Water testing will continue and maps will be updated.</p>
6.	<b>Public Questions/Comments:</b>	<p>Vicki Perry, State Director, Indiana Rural Community Assistance Program (IN-RCAP), Indianapolis IN, attended. RCAP is a non-profit agency funded by the USDA and US Dept of Health and Human Services. She opined that hiring an attorney can be at no cost up front with payment due to the attorney once a project is started. If the RSD is collecting user fees, they need to be providing a service. More communities are implementing a septic maintenance program which includes a schedule for pumping septic systems, making solutions to water quality problems more affordable than high cost sewer systems.</p>
7.	Meeting Adjournment	<p>Motion to adjourn made by Makaye Conrad; seconded by Leon Berning; motion carried and meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. by Lee Von Gunten</p>
8.	Next Regular Board Meeting	<p>Monday, May 20, 2013, 6:30 P.M., Wells County Carnegie Annex</p>