

Wells County Drainage Board Minutes
Tuesday - January 16, 2024 4:30 P.M.

The Wells County Drainage Board met in a regular scheduled meeting at the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223W. Washington St., Multi-Purpose Room 105, (Lower Level), Bluffton, Indiana.

Drainage Board members present: Voting members Blake Gerber, Michael K. Vanover, Jeff Stringer; Attorney Ted Storer, Jarrod Hahn, Secretary Diana Collins. Michael K. Vanover was absent.

Determination of Quorum:

A quorum was present for the meeting.

Minutes:

Mr. Gerber opened the Drainage Board meeting with the first item to approve the Board's regular meeting minutes on January 2, 2024.

Mr. Stringer motioned to approve the Drainage Board regular meeting minutes on January 2, 2024. Mr. Gerber 2nd, motion carried 2-0

Werling Prong Drain Easement-Jefferson Township:

Mr. Hahn mentioned that landowners Brian P. and Janice L. Scheumann on property address 4138E 700N Ossian in Jefferson Township, section 35, range 12E has filed a "Request for Variance Agreement and Covenant" to be in the easement of the Werling Prong 8-inch tile drain to build a 56' x 72' pole barn. Hahn presented a detailed map of the area. Hahn recommends approving the 56' x 72' pole barn to be in the easement no closer than 25 feet from the center of the Werling Prong tile drain.

Mr. Stringer motioned to approve landowners Brian P. and Janice L. Scheumann on property address 4138E 700N Ossian in Jefferson Township, section 35, range 12E to be in the easement of the Werling Prong drain to build a 56' x 72' pole barn no closer than 25 feet from the center of the tile as recommended. Mr. Gerber 2nd, motion carried 2-0.

Casteel Tile Drain-Allen County Jurisdiction-Jefferson Township:

Mr. Hahn mentioned that he received an e-mail from Allen County Surveyor Mike Fruchey who holds jurisdiction on the joint Casteel tile drain. Hahn mentioned Surveyor Mike Fruchey and the Allen County Highway's has an ARPA grant project request on the Smith Road to include replacing the Casteel tile that runs along the west side of Smith Road and will be an 80/20 split between the Allen County Highway and the Allen County Drainage Board on the Casteel tile watershed landowners. Hahn noted that Mr. Fruchey is asking if Wells County wanted to either waiver of rights to this proceeding or form a joint drainage board which would require appointing two board members to sit on the joint board. Hahn presented a map of the Casteel projected watershed area in Jefferson Township, section 5 and 6, range 12E with only 7 parcels with 1 of those landowners owning 2 parcels. Hahn noted that the Casteel drain is mostly in Allen County who has the greatest length with Wells County having about 25 feet of tile in the road right-of-way across 1200N. Hahn noted there is less than 3 percent of the total landowners and length of drain in Wells County, therefore recommends waiving our rights to this proceeding only but to be notified of future hearings. Hahn noted the project is in its early stages so will keep the Board informed as the project moves along as Allen County will send more detailed information on the reconstruction and public hearing.

Mr. Stringer motioned that Wells County will waive their rights to the public hearing proceeding only on the on the Casteel tile joint drain reconstruction through the ARPA grant Smith Road project affecting landowners in Jefferson Township, section 5 and 6, range 12E to retain the right for future representation. Mr. Gerber 2nd, motion carried 2-0

Update Drainage Project:

Mr. Hahn mentioned that there are no projects to update due to the cold weather but noted that he received a call today on a tile that maybe plugged in one of the small towns. Hahn noted that he has contacted a contractor to investigate the tile as soon as it's above freezing, hopefully here soon.

2024 Legislature Bills:


Mr. Gerber asked if any legislation is a concern in this session. Mr. Hahn mentioned there are a few bills that he is watching the language and will be testifying this Wednesday on SB246-Assessment of wetlands classified as wildlands. Hahn noted the others bills he is watching are SB184-Removal of Debris from Streams Logjam Removal, SB105-Updated Indiana Drainage Handbook.

Adjournment:

Mr. Stringer motioned to adjourn the Drainage Board regular meeting at 4:42 pm. Mr. Gerber 2nd, motion carried 2-0

Next regular scheduled Drainage Board meeting is Monday-February 5, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.


Blake Gerber Chairman


Michael K. Vanover Vice Chairman


Jeff Stringer Member
WELLS COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD

ATTEST:


Diana L. Collins