

## WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

### PUBLIC HEARING REGULAR SESSION July 5, 2022

The Wells County Council met in regular session Tuesday, July 5, 2022, at 7PM in the Wells County Carnegie Annex Building, 223 W Washington St., Bluffton, IN. Present at the meeting were: Steve Huggins, Todd Mahnensmith, Chuck King, Jim Oswalt, Vicki Andrews, Scott Elzey and Auditor Lisa McCormick. Seth Whicker participated in the meeting by electronic means of communication, Zoom, which allowed him to simultaneously attend and observe the meeting. All votes taken during the meeting were taken by roll call vote.

### PUBLIC HEARING

County Council held a public hearing on the matter of appropriating the proceeds from the sale of certain County-owned real estate to the Wells County, Indiana Building Corporation (the "Corporation"), together with any interest earnings thereon. Such additional appropriation shall be used for the purpose of paying the costs of construction, improvement and/or equipping one or more buildings, structures and associated infrastructure comprising a new county highway garage facility, which is anticipated to be located southwest of the intersection of County Road 200 South and Adams Street, in Harrison Township, Wells County, Indiana, including preliminary expenses and the costs of issuing bonds of the Corporation for such purpose. There were no public comments.

### REGULAR SESSION

**Resolution 2022-06:** Attorney Colin Andrews presented a Resolution that would establish a construction fund for proceeds to be received from the sale of real estate to the Wells County, Indiana Building Corporation and make an Appropriation from such fund for the County Highway Garage project. This resolution states that The Council hereby approves the sale of the real estate to the Building Corporation in connection with the financing of the project. There is hereby established a fund of the County designated as the "Wells County, Indiana County Highway Garage Construction Fund". Upon receipt from the Building Corporation the sale proceeds shall be deposited into the Fund and used for the payment of costs of all, or any portion of the project not paid for by the Building Corporation. The appropriated sum of \$175,000, which is to be received by the County and deposited into the Fund, for the purpose of paying the costs of the project. Such appropriation shall be in addition to all appropriations provided for in the existing budget and shall continue in effect until the completion of the project. Motion was made by Scott Elzey, seconded by Jim Oswalt to approve Resolution 2022-06 establishing a construction fund for proceeds from the sale of real estate and make an appropriation from such fund when proceeds are received. Motion carried 7-0 by roll call vote.

**Minutes:** Motion made by Todd Mahnensmith, seconded by Vicki Andrews to approve the minutes from June 7, 2022, meeting. Motion carried 7-0 by roll call vote.

**Transfers:** Motion was made by Chuck King, seconded by Vicki Andrews to approve the transfer requests in the General Fund for the Veteran's Service Officer and Election Board, and in the Cares Act Infectious Disease Fund. Motion carried 7-0 by roll call vote.

**Additional Appropriations:** Motion was made by Vicki Andrews, seconded by Seth Whicker to approve the Additional Appropriation requests in the General Fund for the Election board and Area Plan, the Highway Maintenance and Repair Fund, Statewide 911 Fund, and LIT Correctional/Rehab Facility Fund. Motion carried 7-0 by roll call vote.

**Wells County Sheriff:** Sheriff Holliday reported 87 inmates, 30 pretrial Superior, 22 pretrial Circuit, 23 F6 Doc and 3 DOC. The monthly Officer/Jail report for June was presented to Council Members. The Commissary Report was also distributed for the period of January through June.

**Bi-County Services:** Tim Ramsey presented his annual financial report and request for funding for Bi-County Services to County Council. Tim stated that Bi-County's biggest challenge is staffing. Finding qualified staff is a difficulty that they are constantly working to overcome. Their focus currently is on maximizing program revenue, controlling operating expenses and improving staffing levels. Bi-County is asking for \$41,280 for 2023, the same amount that was requested for 2022. Motion was made by Todd Mahnensmith, seconded by Chuck King to approve the 2023 funding of \$41,280.00 for Bi-County services. Motion carried 6-0-1 by roll call vote, Seth Whicker abstained stating he is a board member for Bi-County Services.

**Highway Garage Update:** Conor Jackson updated Council on the County Highway Garage progress. They are currently at a 95% construction set with a proposed budget of \$9.4 million. This is up a bit from the last update, they had a conservative electrical estimate in the previous construction set. A salt storage building has been ordered and will be included in bid package #2. Bids will be advertised on July 12 with an August 2 bid date. This will be possible if he receives the Construction documents by end of day Wednesday July 6<sup>th</sup>. Council questioned Conor on pricing of utilities to the garage site, the pricing is in the proposed budget. The City of Bluffton would like a size upgrade on the utilities, that pricing will be in an alternate bid. Equipment and furnishings are included in the proposed budget, but the purchases of the equipment and furnishings might be handled directly by the Highway personnel and not through the Jackson Construction contract.

**Library Update:** Dustin Brown was on hand to present Council with an update on library activity. The current fine free program continues to be a success. Brown stated that there was a decrease in missing items, which he attributed to the fine free program. He felt fines were no longer a roadblock for patrons so there is less theft of items. 207 new library cards were issued in the period of March through June. The 2023 library budget will include a 5% increase in wages. A landscaping remodel will be in future updates for the library.

**Low Income Funding:** Leon Berning informed Council of a funding option for Regional Sewer District services for low-income residents. The Regional Sewer District has completed sewer systems in Murray and Liberty Center. Individuals that must connect to the new systems have to decommission their current system and install electric hookup. Some of these individuals are in a low-income threshold. Berning reached out to the Wells County Foundation and Chamber of Commerce for assistance in starting a fund for donations for these individuals. Letters were mailed to Chamber members to solicit donations. These donations will be accepted and distributed by the Wells County Foundation. A screening process will identify the eligible individuals and funds will be distributed directly to the contractors for those individuals. Berning stated that it has been a yearlong process to bring this to fruition.

**RSD Line of Credit Report:** A quarterly report was presented to County Council on the Regional Sewer District line of credit. A \$500,000 line of credit was issued on February 22, 2022. If paid off today, July 5<sup>th</sup>, the payoff would be \$501,835.62.

**Adjourned:** 8:02 PM Motion was made by Vicki Andrews, seconded by Todd Mahnensmith to adjourn. Motion carried 7-0 by roll call vote.

WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

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President, Steve Huggins

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Vice President, Seth Whicker

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Attest: Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor