

WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR SESSION August 6, 2019

The Wells County Council met in regular session Tuesday, August 6, 2019 at 7PM in the Wells County Carnegie Annex Building, 223 W Washington St., Bluffton, IN. Present at the meeting were: Todd Mahnensmith, Steve Huggins, Chuck King, Jim Oswalt, Vicki Andrews, Mike Mossburg, Seth Whicker and Auditor Lisa McCormick.

Minutes: Motion made by Jim Oswalt, seconded by Mike Mossburg to approve the minutes from the July 2, 2019 meeting. Motion carried 7-0.

Transfers: Motion made by Chuck King, seconded by Seth Whicker to approve the transfers in the Community Correction Grant Fund. Motion carried 7-0.

Additional Appropriations: Motion made by Vicki Andrews, seconded by Chuck King to approve the Additional Appropriation requests for LIT Economic Development, 2019 Community Crossing Grant, Local Health Maintenance and the Local Health Dept. Trust Account. Motion carried 7-0.

Wells County Sheriff: Sheriff Holliday was not present at the meeting but he provided the council members with his monthly report.

Economic Development: Economic Director Chad Kline and Heartland REMC manager Nick Caley were in attendance submitting a request for 10 million tax abatement for new technology equipment from County Council. This tax abatement would assist Heartland REMC to offer broadband to their customers in Wells County. A declaratory document was presented to council for their approval. This declaratory document would designate all unincorporated areas of Wells County as an economic revitalization area. 3,400 homes or businesses in Wells County utilize REMC service. Council members expressed concern over abatement for a utility. Employment was also questioned; Caley stated that REMC would employ people to maintain the service. The first step in the process is for Council to approve the declaratory resolution establishing the Economic Revitalization Area. The following steps include; notifying the taxing units, conducting a public hearing, acting on a final resolution for the ERA and then acting on the tax abatement request. Council members tabled the matter until the September 3rd meeting.

Review of 2020 Estimated Property Tax Levy Limits and Circuit Breakers: Per IC 6-1.1-17-3.6 the County Council at the first meeting in August of each year shall review the estimated property tax levy limits and the estimated reductions due to circuit breakers for each taxing unit in the county. Recommendations made by the council shall be distributed to all taxing unit. Council members reviewed the reports that were provided by the Department of Local Government finance and did not see any significant changes in the levy limits; the reports were only showing increases from the growth quotient of 3.5%. Wells County property taxes are still low enough that we are not seeing much of an impact do to the circuit breakers. Most of the circuit breaker loss in Wells County is due to the over 65 deduction. Motion made by Vicki Andrews, seconded by Seth Whicker to notify all taxing units within the county that no recommendation is being made on the estimated property tax levy limits or the estimated reductions due to circuit breakers. Motion carried 7-0.

Adjourned: 7:50PM Motion made by Jim Oswalt, seconded by Vicki Andrews to adjourn.

WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

President, Todd Mahnensmith

Vice President, Mike Mossburg

Attest: Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor