

WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

BUDGET SESSION August 10, 2022

The Wells County Council met in budget session Wednesday, August 10, 2022, at 8:00AM in the Wells County Carnegie Annex, 223 W Washington St., Bluffton, IN. Present at the meeting were: Steve Huggins, Seth Whicker, Todd Mahnensmith, Chuck King, Jim Oswalt, Vicki Andrews, Scott Elzey and Auditor Lisa McCormick.

The first budget meeting for the 2023 Budget Year started with Council Members meeting with all Elected Officials and Department Head to review their 2023 budget requests.

Commissioners: Commissioner Vice President Blake Gerber presented a budget request of \$3,667,939 for the Commissioner's general fund budget and a request of \$1,197,200 for the LIT Economic Development Fund. Proposed in the Commissioner budget is a new part time position for a Public Information Officer. A discussion of moving \$100,000 of EMS funding and \$100,000 of Care of Students funding into the LIT Economic Development fund. Commissioner Gerber stated that he did not have a problem moving the EMS funding and up to half of the Care of Student funding into the LIT Economic Development fund. This would require the Commissioners pass a new LIT Economic Development 3-year plan. The County Highway Garage Fund and ARP Coronavirus Local fiscal Recovery Fund are not being budgeted in the 2023 budget cycle.

Solid Waste District: District President Blake Gerber and Controller Lisa McCormick presented a budget request of \$110,629. This amount is reimbursed to the county 100%.

Highway and LR&S: Highway Supervisor Shawn Bonar and Highway Engineer Nate Rumschlag presented a total Highway budget request of \$4,740,450 and a LR&S Budget Request of \$714,725. Bonar is proposing a new pay structure with an hourly amount for different job descriptions instead of all employees making the same wage.

Cum Bridge: Nate Rumschlag presented a budget request of \$177,500 for the Cumulative Bridge Fund.

Surveyor: Jarrod Hahn presented the Surveyor budget request of \$135,005, the Drainage Board request of \$21,188, and the Corner Perpetuation request of \$33,000.

Health: Marlene Hoag presented a Health Department budget request of \$341,434, and Local Health Maintenance budget request of \$33,139, and a Local Health Dept. Trust Budget of \$18,638. Hoag is requesting an increase in Grant Administrator compensation to \$3,500 annually.

Assessor: Kelly Herman presented the Assessor general fund budget request of \$150,550, the Reassessment Fund budget request of \$301,240, and the Sales Disclosure Fee Fund request of \$4,920.

Treasurer: Kathy Peeper presented a budget request of \$151,295. Peeper also presented an updated job description for the Treasurer Deputy.

Court House: Bobbie Studebaker presented a budget request of \$328,696.

IT Department: Roger Richardson submitted a budget request of \$211,141.

Coroner: Hilarie Gaskill presented a budget request of \$77,948.

Veteran: Dewey Randall submitted a budget request of \$44,481.

EMA: Rick Velasquez presented a budget request of \$95,137 for his general fund budget and \$9,100 for the LEPC Fund budget.

Extension Office: Bill Horan presented a budget request of \$254,788.

Area Plan & GIS: Mike Lautzenheiser Jr. presented his Plan Commission budget request of \$196,365 and his GIS budget request of \$32,425. Lautzenheiser also discussed a \$25,000 funding request for Bluffton NOW for a Downtown Pathways Project. Council President Huggins struggles using taxpayer money for

such requests. Lautzenheiser requested increasing his board pay to \$70 per meeting and a pay rate of \$15 per hour for his part time employee.

Statewide 911: Statewide 911 budget request was \$532,000.

Soil & Water: Jarrod Kunkel presented the budget request of \$40,554.

Prosecuting Attorney: Andrew Carnall presented his general fund budget request of \$585,007, his Pre-Trial Deferral fund budget request of \$16,971, and his Pre-Trial Diversion Budget request of \$1,125. Carnall is proposing making a part-time IV-D position into a full-time IV-D position, the difference in salary is \$22,826.

Circuit Court: Judge Kent Kiracofe presented his general fund budget request of \$792,753, the Supp Public Defender Fund budget request of \$15,000, Jury Pay Fund budget request of \$5,000. Adult Probation Fund budget of \$103,337, Juvenile Probation fund budget of \$10,220, the Urinalysis fund budget of \$12,000, and the Substance/Indigent Fund budget request of \$1,950.

Community Corrections: Community Corrections presented a general fund budget request of \$136,408, a Project Income budget request of \$262,867, a Community Corrections Grant I budget request of \$232,657 and the Misdemeanant Fund budget request of \$18,711. Poindexter is working with the County Attorney to draft a contract for a contracted 1099 employee for his department. Poindexter added an overtime line in the Project Income budget for Case Workers, Field Officers, and Administrative Assistant to be paid overtime if approved.

Auditor: Lisa McCormick presented her general fund budget request of \$219,442, Auditor's Ineligible Deduction fund budget request of \$8,000, Plat Book Fund budget request of \$14,170, and the County Elected Official Training Fund budget request of \$5,000. McCormick is requesting an additional stipend for Grant Administrator duties.

Superior Court: Judge Andrew Antrim presented his budget request of \$174,827.

County Council: County Council presented a budget request of \$53,600 and LIT Correctional/Rehab Facility budget request of \$342,463 which covers the jail bond payment for 2023. The Rainy Day, and Cumulative Capital Development Funds will not be budgeted in the 2023 budget cycle.

The most requested increases to 2023 budgets were wages.

The next scheduled budget meeting will be on Thursday, August 11th, 2022, at 6:00PM followed by the meeting on Tuesday, August 16th at 6:00PM and Thursday, August 18th at 6:00PM meeting only if needed.

Recess: meeting recessed until Thursday, August 11th at 6PM.

WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

President, Steve Huggins

Vice President, Seth Whicker

Attest: Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor