

## WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

### BUDGET SESSION August 10, 2023

The Wells County Council met in budget session Wednesday, August 10, 2023, at 8:00AM in the Wells County Carnegie Annex, 223 W Washington St., Bluffton, IN. Present at the meeting were: Seth Whicker, Vicki Andrews, Todd Mahnensmith, Steve Huggins, Scott Elzey, Brandon Harnish, Brian Lambert, and Auditor Lisa McCormick.

The first budget meeting for the 2024 Budget Year started with Council Members meeting with all Elected Officials and Department Head to review their 2024 budget requests.

**Commissioners:** Commissioner Vice President Blake Gerber presented a budget request of \$3,851,964 for the Commissioner's general fund budget and a request of \$1,173,700 for the LIT Economic Development Fund. Council members inquired if Gerber thought the Public Information Officer was working out, he thought it was and should continue.

**Solid Waste District:** District President Blake Gerber and Controller Lisa McCormick presented a budget request of \$116,240. 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 \$4,840,944 and a LR&S Budget Request of \$665,600. Bonar is requesting an additional highway employee.

**Cum Bridge:** Nate Rumschlag presented a budget request of \$377,559 for the Cumulative Bridge Fund.

**Surveyor:** Jarrod Hahn presented the Surveyor budget request of \$120,888, the Drainage Board request of \$22,860, and the Corner Perpetuation request of \$35,000.

**Health:** Marlene Hoag presented a Health Department budget request of \$367,345, and Local Health Maintenance budget request of \$33,139, and a Local Health Dept. Trust Budget of \$18,638.

**Assessor:** Laura Roberts presented the Assessor general fund budget request of \$146,408, the Reassessment Fund budget request of \$312,860, and the Sales Disclosure Fee Fund request of \$5,000.

**Recorder:** Carolyn Bertsch presented the Recorders general fund budget request of \$102,552. The Identification Security Protection budget request was \$3,000. The Recorder's Perpetuation Fund budget request was \$23,195 for part time clerical assistance.

**Treasurer:** Kathy Peeper presented a budget request of \$164,563.

**Court House:** Bobbie Studebaker presented a budget request of \$350,393.

**IT Department:** Roger Richardson submitted a budget request of \$202,753.

**Coroner:** Hilarie Gaskill presented a budget request of \$84,738.

**Extension Office:** Bill Horan presented a budget request of \$266,690.

**Veteran:** Dewey Randall submitted a budget request of \$48,563.

**EMA:** Rick Velasquez presented a budget request of \$102,647 for his general fund budget and \$9,100 for the LEPC Fund budget.

**Area Plan & GIS:** Mike Lautzenheiser Jr. presented his Plan Commission budget request of \$214,293 and his GIS budget request of \$32,325. Lautzenheiser requested increasing his board pay to \$70 per meeting and a pay rate of \$16.81 per hour for his part time employee.

**Soil & Water:** Eric Johnson presented the budget request of \$45,050.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Colin Andrews presented his general fund budget request of \$648,938, his Pre-Trial Deferral fund budget request of \$16,971, and his Pre-Trial Diversion Budget request of \$1,125. Andrews is proposing a part-time investigator at \$21 per hour.

**Superior Court:** Judge Andrew Antrim presented his budget request of \$193,795. The largest percentage increase in his budget was for translation services, which he stated is becoming an ever-increasing issue.

**Circuit Court:** Judge Kent Kiracofe presented his general fund budget request of \$894,109, the Supp Public Defender Fund budget request of \$15,000, Jury Pay Fund budget request of \$5,000. Adult Probation Fund budget of \$75,152, Juvenile Probation fund budget of \$10,220, the Urinalysis fund budget of \$15,000, and the Substance/Indigent Fund budget request of \$1,300. A request for an Assistant Chief Probation Officer stipend was added to the general fund budget for \$5,000.

**Community Corrections:** Community Corrections presented a general fund budget request of \$138,338, a Project Income budget request of \$2231,103, a Community Corrections Grant I budget request of \$232,657 and the Misdemeanor Fund budget request of \$18,711.

**Sheriff:** Sheriff Scott Holliday presented the general fund Sheriff's Office budget request of \$2,326,018, the Jail budget request of \$1,880,363 and LIT Public Safety budget request of \$543,170. The Sheriff was proposing one full-time security officer. Two additional jailers were included in the jail budget request.

**Clerk:** Beth Davis presented her Clerk's office budget request of \$348,664. The requested Election Board budget was \$281,770 which included an increase in board pay, election secretary pay and \$202,000 for new election equipment. The requested Perpetuation Fund budget was \$33,500.

**Statewide 911:** Statewide 911 budget request was \$602,000.

**Auditor:** Lisa McCormick presented her general fund budget request of \$237,835, Auditor's Ineligible Deduction fund budget request of \$6,000, Plat Book Fund budget request of \$13,970, and the County Elected Official Training Fund budget request of \$5,000.

**Innkeepers Tax Collection Fund:** Audry Dudley presented her Innkeepers Tax budget request of \$70,000.

**County Council:** County Council presented a budget request of \$54,111 and LIT Correctional/Rehab Facility budget request of \$340,863 which covers the jail bond payment for 2024. Rainy Day had a budget request of \$250,000, and the Cumulative Capital Development Fund was budgeted for the Highway bond payment of \$326,500 for 2024.

**Public Comment:** Roger Thornton commented that government should consider re-shifting of the trending aspect or "tax shifting". He felt it needs to be resolved at the state but that will take local input with the legislators.

The most requested increases to 2024 budgets were wages.

The next scheduled budget meeting will be on Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 6:00PM followed by the meeting on Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00PM, Thursday August 24<sup>th</sup> at 6PM, and Tuesday, August 29<sup>th</sup> at 6PM, all meetings are only if needed.

**Recess:** meeting recessed until Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.

#### WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

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President, Seth Whicker

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Vice President, Vicki Andrews

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Attest: Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor