

Wells County Commissioners

Regular Session February 5, 2024

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 5, 2024, at 5:00PM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. Present at the meeting were Commissioners, Jeff Stringer, Michael Vanover and Blake Gerber, County Attorney Ted Storer and Auditor Lisa McCormick.

Minutes: A motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve the minutes from January 16, 2024, regular session. Motion carried 3-0.

Payroll and Claims: A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve Payroll #2 in the amount of \$297,346.17, Payroll #3 in the amount of \$292,579.28 and 206 claims totaling \$1,519,976.06. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Sheriff: Sheriff Holliday reported 83 inmates, 28 pretrial Superior, 39 pretrial Circuit, 2 F6 DOC and 14 DOC. Holliday discussed an ongoing smell issue in the administrative portion of the jail. Upon further investigation, it was found to be cracked metal pipes contained between cement block walls. To be repaired, one wall will have to be removed and replaced. The Sheriff brought two estimates for the repair. Allied Mechanical presented a proposal for the repair of the plumbing fixtures of \$9,500. Kanning & Phillips Masonry presented a proposal for masonry work for \$2,400. The total estimated cost for the repair is \$11,900. Havel presented a proposal for the repair which included masonry work for a total cost of \$22,030. The Sheriff preferred the lower proposal of \$11,900. The Commissioners asked if the painting of the masonry was included in both proposals. Holliday will reach out to clarify. The Commissioners were agreeable on proceeding with the repairs. The Sheriff will go to the County Council for an Additional Appropriation for the funding.

Ameresco: Brad Driver, senior project developer for Ameresco, addressed the Commissioners regarding closeout billing for the jail renovation project. Some closeout items are still not complete, and the Commissioners were reluctant to issue the final payment. Driver stated that a notice of substantial completion was signed October 2, 2023, listing five final items left for completion. HVAC in the conference room, proper exhaust air for the new storage area, new kitchen doors and touchups, landscaping, and install proper hook stick on new disconnect located in the electrical room were the five outstanding items listed in the notice. Driver stated that the remaining outstanding items currently are HVAC in the Conference room and condensation in windows in the booking area. Commissioner Stringer stated that over a year has passed since the project was supposed to be completed. Stringer did not feel comfortable making final payment until the project was completed. The HVAC issue was apparent in the warmer months, Driver said that they would have to reproduce the same climate and cycling of the system to resolve the issue. Which means it would have to be addressed in the summer months. Data logs for the Conference area and booking area are not available and will have to be reproduced. A letter will be attached to the Final Completion Certificate from Primary Engineering stating that they will investigate the controls every thirty days to capture trends. Cell Block A has had some roof leakage, which will have a water test preformed to diagnose the issue. The Commissioners agreed to revisit the subject during the March 4th meeting.

Highway Supervisor: Shawn Bonar updated the Commissioners on projects. Grading stone and hauling base stone to road conversions is ongoing. The highway department is completing tasks in the new

highway garage. Road conversion updates include 450S is getting cross pipes replaced and resized, 450E is getting a top stone layer, and 100N is ready for base stone. The garage update included electrical is finishing in the wash bay area, painting continues, Stylus is waiting on a Maglock for the break room door. The estimated move date is February 13th. The Commissioners requested any punch list items be submitted to Conor Jackson for completion. Bonar presented a bid tab for CR 450E rehabilitation, CCMG 2023-02. The lowest bid was E&B Paving for \$555,848. The engineer's estimate for the project was \$560,913.20. A motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve the contract with E&B Paving for CR 450 E rehabilitation for \$555,848. Motion carried 3-0.

AED Purchase: A resolution was passed in 2020 establishing an AED policy, Resolution 2020-09. This policy outlined the board makeup, the responsibilities of the board, and the authorization to purchase 8 AED systems and cabinets. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to appoint Lynn Blevens as the AED program coordinator and to fund the purchase of \$8,482.42 for 8 AED systems and cabinets out of LIT Economic Development. Motion carried 3-0.

Zanesville Lions Park: A representative from the Zanesville Lions Park, Melba Edwards, requested financial support from the Commissioners for upkeep of the park. Edwards presented a list of annual expenditures. The Commissioners suggested she create a proposal and return to another meeting.

Poka-Bache Connector Task Force: The poka-bache connector task force wishes to extend appointment terms to three years. The Commissioners appointed Michael Lautzenheiser Jr. for a one-year term effective January 1, 2024-December 31, 2024. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to appoint Michael Lautzenheiser Jr. to the Poka-Bache Task Force for a three-year term ending on December 31, 2026 and sign the appointment document. Motion carried 3-0.

Washington Commons: The Wells County Solid Waste District was requesting permission to use the Washington Street Commons Saturday, May 4, 2024, from 9AM – 11AM for a shredding event. Approval has already been given by the City of Bluffton. A motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Blake Gerber to allow use of the Washington Commons on May 4, 2024, from 9AM-11AM for a Shredding event and sign the event permit. Motion carried 3-0.

ADA Coordinator: A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to pay for the ADA Coordinator stipend out of the Commissioners budget. Motion carried 3-0.

Right of Way: Two right-of-way documents were presented for Commissioner approval. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the two rights-of-way. Motion carried 3-0.

ARPA Funds: There are remaining ARPA funds to be spent in 2024. Topics of discussion were a shared Health Department vehicle and/or the utilities that will be run to the new highway garage site. Commissioner Stringer will discuss the utilities with City Council member Scott Mentzer for more clarification. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to supply utilities to the new highway garage with ARPA funds and any remaining funds to be used for a health department vehicle. Motion carried 3-0.

Local Health Officer: Attorney Storer stated that the county and the board of health have been attempting to resolve the existing disputes in an amicable and fair manner and may be close to a resolution. This resolution will require the preparation and execution of various documents to do so.

Attorney Ted Storer requested approval from the County Commissioners to allow Commission President Jeff Stinger to develop a settlement package with the County Attorney and to approve and to execute documents Stringer deems necessary with County Attorney's approval as to form; and to authorize the County Auditor to attest to the signatures outside of a further public meeting. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to allow Commissioner Stringer to develop and sign a settlement package to be attested by Auditor Lisa McCormick. Motion carried 3-0.

Emergency Closure Resolution: A motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve Resolution 2024-02 for compensation of county employees due to certain emergency conditions. Motion carried 3-0.

Public Comment: Larry Heckber and David Dickes came before the Commissioners requesting chip and seal for 1100N. There is one right-of-way holdout on their section of road. Attorney Storer suggested a consultation between himself and Shawn Bonar to create a plan which will be submitted to the Commissioners for approval.

Adjourned: Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 6:15PM, motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Blake Gerber. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Commissioners

President, Jeff Stringer

Vice President, Michael Vanover

Member, Blake Gerber

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor