

Wells County Commissioners

Regular Session February 18, 2020

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday February 18, 2020 at 9:30AM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. Those in attendance were Commissioners, Blake Gerber and Tamara Robbins. Also, in attendance were County Attorney, Roy Johnson and County Auditor, Lisa McCormick. Kevin Woodward was absent.

Minutes: Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2020 regular session and the February 3, 2020 Executive Session. Motion carried 2-0.

Payroll and Claims: Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve Payroll #3 in the amount of \$238,916.63 and 183 claims totaling \$323,339.55. Motion carried 2-0.

Wells County Sheriff: Sheriff Holliday reported 88 inmates, 33 pretrial Superior, 19 pretrial Circuit, 13 F6 and 11 DOC. Sheriff Holliday discussed repairs for his department which included a parking lot resurface on the public side, lighting for the parking lot and shower door frames that needed replaced. He is obtaining quotes on the improvements.

Wells County Highway Supervisor: Josh Cotton informed the commissioners that his department has been trimming brush as weather permits. They are still grading gravel roads. Cotton and Rumschlag are compiling the list of small structures to be replaced for 2020. A dump truck was involved in a traffic accident and was damaged heavily. Cotton is working with a body shop to see if it will be fixed or replaced. Cotton also discussed plowing snow on gravel roads. He fielded complaints from the public and wanted to explain to the Commissioners his concerns. If a gravel road is not frozen the plow cannot effectively or safely remove snow. The blade can become wedged in the gravel and cause damage to the blade and/or truck and safety concerns for the driver.

Highway Engineer: Nate Rumschlag informed the Commissioners that INDOT is processing the agreement for Bridge 106, but he has been authorized to have USI proceed with the design work. NOFA 2025 – Wells County has been awarded full funds on all three of the project applications that were submitted. Total funding was \$4,826,000 for construction and inspection in 2025. Rehabilitation on Bridge 54 (Des#1902846), replacement of Bridge 51 (Des#1902844) and replacement on Bridge 105 (Des#1902843). The local matching funds will come from the Cumulative Bridge Fund. INDOT has requested the start of the proposal phase of the National Bridge Inspection report 2021-2024 (Des#1902082). The consultant selection process and agreement phase can take 12 months to complete. A utility permit for Citizens telephone was presented for Commissioner approval. Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve the utility permit. Motion carried 2-0.

Right of Way: 8 right of way documents were presented for Commissioner approval. Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve the 8 right of ways. Motion carried 2-0.

Bridge 99 Easement Acquisition Offer: The County Attorney reported that he had prepared and presented to the Commissioners for their approval a form agreement following the statutory UNIFORM PROPERTY OR EASEMENT ACQUISITION OFFER in IC 32-24-1-5(c) for the Bridge 99 easement acquisitions. The County is NOT required to obtain an appraisal to make a good faith offer for eminent domain purposes (as opposed to the statute for acquisition of real estate equal to or over \$25,000).

However, County Council is required to approve the offer agreement. The Easement Acquisition Offer agreement form will be on Commissioners' and Council's agendas in March.

Executive Session: Commissioners and County Council will be holding a joint Executive Session on February 27, 2020 at 8AM to discuss the Highway Garage property.

Adjourned: Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 9:55 AM

Wells County Commissioners

President, Blake Gerber

Vice President, Kevin Woodward

Tamara Robbins

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor