

Wells County Commissioners

Regular Session March 15, 2021

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday March 15, 2021 at 9:30AM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. Those in attendance were Commissioners, Blake Gerber, Kevin Woodward, and Michael Vanover. Also, in attendance were County Attorney, Roy Johnson and County Auditor, Lisa McCormick.

Minutes: Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the minutes from March 1, 2021 regular session. Motion carried 3-0.

Payroll and Claims: Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve Payroll #5 in the amount of \$246,443.58 and 164 claims totaling \$338,471.18. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Sheriff: Sheriff Holliday reported 74 inmates, 32 pretrial Superior, 19 pretrial Circuit, 9 DOC and 10 F6 DOC.

Wells County Highway Supervisor: Kim Bennett presented the Commissioners with the Dust Control bids from the March 1st meeting. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to accept the dust control bid from the Klink Group. Motion carried 3-0. The advertising for dust control will be in the News Banner April 3 – April 19th. Signups will be held April 5th through April 30th. Bennett also informed the commissioners that his department has graded gravel roads three to four times. Township stone will be hauled to all gravel roads as needed. His crews have been cold mixing potholes north and south.

Highway Engineer: Nate Rumschlag informed the commissioners that he received 5 bids for the Community Crossing Matching Grant 2020-02. This grant is for two projects: Bridge 121 rehabilitation and a guardrail extension CR 600 E over Eight Mile ditch. Rumschlag recommended signing a letter of intent to award for both projects to R.G. Zachrich Construction for the total base bid of \$408,215.23. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to sign a letter of intent to award to R.G. Zachrich Construction. Motion carried 3-0. Rumschlag had a conference call with RQAW and Alt & Witzig to review project options and development of the proposed highway garage site. Discussed were soil borings for the proposed site, 5 foundation borings and 1 boring for a radio tower. The amount of the proposal for the borings is an estimated fee of \$3,700. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to proceed with the 6 borings for an estimated fee of \$3,700. Motion carried 3-0. Nate Rumschlag also presented an agreement with Janssen & Spaans Engineering to perform small structure inspections for 2021-2024. This agreement is for \$56,807.30. This agreement will cover the physical inspection and reporting of small structures from 4' up to 19.99'. The funding for the agreement will come from LIT Bridges. Motion made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve the agreement for small structures with Janssen & Spaans Engineering (Misc. 2021-05) for 2021-2024 upon the review of County Attorney, Roy Johnson. Motion carried 3-0. Three utility permits were presented for the commissioner's approval. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the three utility permits. Motion carried 3-0.

Flood Safety Awareness: County Surveyor Jarrod Hahn presented a proclamation to the Board of Commissioners to proclaim March 15-19, 2021 as "Flood Safety Awareness Week". Jarrod stated a fact regarding floods; more than 70% of flood related insurance claims are generated from outside of flood

zones. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to proclaim March 15-19, 2021 as Flood Safety Awareness Week. Motion carried 3-0.

National Ag Day: Jacob Slusher, President of Wells County Farm Bureau, came to the Commissioners to proclaim March 23, 2021 as National Agriculture Day. The member count for the local bureau is 1,000.

Nationwide: An additional option for employees who are enrolled in the Nationwide 457 plan was presented to the Commissioners for approval. Nationwide guarantees protection from losses while allowing for the potential for growth associated with a market index. The plan is called Nationwide Indexed Principal Protection. There is no cost to add the option and no fees for employees who choose the option. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to allow the Nationwide Indexed Principal Protection plan for employees pending approval of Attorney Roy Johnson. Motion carried 3-0.

Disaster Declaration Form: Two disaster declaration forms were presented to the Commissioners for approval. Version 1 stated that a local disaster emergency exists for the next seven days. Version 2 has no length listed; the length of time is inserted at the time of the emergency. Motion made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve County Disaster Emergency Declaration for Travel Restriction - Version 2 (Misc. 2021-07), of which length of time of emergency is inserted into the document. Motion carried 3-0.

Highway Garage: The Commissioners discussed the County farm and selling it to create revenue for the new highway garage project. Attorney, Roy Johnson, will investigate steps needed to facilitate selling the farm ground. Also discussed was a request for retiling of an adjoining property to the proposed highway garage site. Highway garage will be added to the April agenda for further discussion.

Southern Wells Signage: Commissioner Woodward had been questioned about providing signage for Southern Wells Schools for school crossings. Schools that are located on a state road are provided signage through INDOT. Since Southern Wells is located on a county road, signage is not provided through INDOT. Commissioner Woodward stated that the county would provide the right of way or installation for signage but felt the school board should pursue funding through grants or donations for the signage first. Commissioner Vanover has received calls on signage and is glad they are talking about it. Nate Rumschlag explained issues with drop off at Southern Wells. Discussion will follow after more information is gathered from the school board and superintendent.

Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to suspend the Wells County Commissioner regular session for a Public Hearing for a County Cumulative Development fund. Motion carried 3-0.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex at 10:30AM regarding the creation of a County Cumulative Capital Development fund, IC 36-9-14.5. Attorney Roy Johnson asked for public comment. Council President, Steve Huggins, stated a need for the creation of the fund. He stated that there are projects in the works that Council needs tools in place to fund those projects. Ed Herman commented that with increased gas tax for coming years and relinquishment funds from SR 301, he felt the county could use that revenue to pay for upcoming projects. Engineer Nate

Rumschlag commented that the relinquishment revenue from SR 301 is earmarked for future highway projects.

Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to adjourn the public hearing, and resume the regular session when no further comments were made. Motion carried 3-0.

Resolution 2021-04: A resolution creating a County Cumulative Capital Development fund under IC 36-9-14.5 was presented to the Commissioners for approval. This resolution will create a proposed tax to be levied on all taxable real and personal property within the county taxing district and will not exceed \$.0167 for 2022, and \$.0333 for 2023 forward – per \$100 of assessed valuation. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve Resolution 2021-04 creating a County cumulative Capital Development fund, IC 36-9-14.5. Motion carried 3-0.

Notice of Adoption: Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve a Notice of Adoption (Misc. 2021-06) to be published one time in two county newspapers to start the remonstrance period for the creation of the County Cumulative Capital Development fund. Motion carried 3-0.

Adjourned: Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 10:44 AM.

Wells County Commissioners

President, Blake Gerber

Vice President, Kevin Woodward

Michael K Vanover

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor