

Wells County Commissioners

Regular Session June 7, 2021

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday June 7, 2021, at 9:00AM 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 Michael Vanover, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve the minutes from May 17, 2021, regular session and the May 17, 2021, Executive Session. Motion carried 3-0.

Payroll and Claims: Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve Payroll #11 in the amount of \$239,538.04 and 187 claims totaling \$548,520.91. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Sheriff: Sheriff Holliday reported 72 inmates, 24 pretrial Superior, 14 pretrial Circuit, 16 F6 and 11 DOC.

Ameresco: Ameresco representatives, Mark Heirbrandt and Garyne Evans, presented refined pricing for the proposed jail project. The major projects include the HVAC system, roof, and reconfiguration of the jail intake area. The negotiated price to accomplish the project is \$7.7 million. \$2.7 million of the project can be directly attributed to COVID modifications that will qualify for ARPA funding. Pricing is effective until August 2021. "Ultimately, at the end of the day, it is the commissioner's responsibility to make sure that the building stands and we provide the safety for our sheriff and his staff" Woodward stated. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the total project, use ARPA funds for qualifying expenditures, and move forward for Council approval and funding. Motion carried 3-0.

Highway Engineer: Nate Rumschlag presented the Commissioners with updates for ongoing projects. A proposal from USI for on-call services was presented for approval. This on-call service may be used for professional engineering, surveying, right-of-way, construction observation services. This agreement is an annual agreement. Motion made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve the on-call professional services agreement with USI (Misc. 2021-09). Motion carried 3-0. ARPA funds were requested by Rumschlag, on behalf of the Regional Sewer District. He explained that the RSD is working on 6 new project service areas. His request was to earmark \$2 million for grant match dollars for development of projects for future grant and construction applications. Commissioner Woodward explained that first and foremost the Commissioners will use ARPA funding for the jail project. The Commissioners acknowledged support for the Regional Sewer District. Funding for the jail project will be maximized prior to distributing funding to other areas. Rumschlag stated that \$1 million would be enough to get projects started and generate matching funding. The Commissioners thought that \$1 million could be earmarked for the RSD, quite possibly to be amended at a later date. Ossian is asking permission to establish a temporary stop sign at the intersection of 800N and 150E, due to construction on CR 850N. Rumschlag was also asking that Ossian provide double signs and install warning ahead of the new stop signs before the start of construction to avoid accidents. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to allow double stop signs at the intersection of 800N and 150E. Motion carried 3-0. Seven rights-of-way were presented to the commissioners for their approval. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the seven rights-of-way. Motion carried 3-0.

Bi-County Services: Tim Ramsey presented his annual financial report and request for funding for Bi-County Services to the Board of Commissioners. Tim stated that Bi-County's biggest challenge is staffing. Finding qualified staff is a difficulty that they are constantly working to overcome. Their focus currently is on maximizing program revenue, controlling operating expenses and improving staffing levels. Bi-County is asking for a 5% increase in funding for 2022, \$41,280. Adams County has approved the same contribution amount. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the 2022 funding of \$41,280.00 for Bi-County services. Motion carried 3-0.

U.S. Treasury Portal: Counties must submit a funding request through the U.S. Treasury portal to receive the allocation of ARPA funds. All counties must designate a contact person and an authorized representative to submit a request for funds. The authorized representative is someone who has legal authority to bind the county. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to designate Auditor Lisa McCormick as the contact and Commissioner President Blake Gerber as the authorized representative. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Farm: Currently the Commissioners are awaiting appraisals for the county farm. Commissioners will discuss at the June 21st meeting if they will be utilizing an auctioneer in the sale process. A cemetery is contained in a notch in a wooded area south of the county farm. That cemetery will be platted under the county ownership and not sold with the farm. The County Cemetery board will then provide maintenance for that cemetery.

Resolution 2021-10: Effective April 20, 2021, IC 5-14-1.5-3.5 was amended to prescribe new requirements by which members of the governing body may participate in a meeting by any electronic means of communication. A resolution establishing a policy by which the members of the Wells County Commissioner board may participate by electronic means of communication was presented to the Commissioners. The resolution allows all participating members of the governing body to simultaneously communicate with each other. This resolution establishes procedures that shall be known as the "Electronic Meetings Policy" of the Wells County Commissioners. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve Resolution 2021-10, the Policy by which members of the Wells County Board of Commissioners may participate by electronic means of communication. Motion carried 3-0.

Ordinance 2021-06: An Ordinance authorizing creation of an E-911 advisory board was presented to Commissioners for approval. The E-911 Advisory Board shall be composed of the following individuals or their respective alternates:

- (a) One member of the Wells County Board of Commissioners;
- (b) One member of the Wells County Council;
- (c) The Sheriff of Wells County;
- (d) The Wells County Emergency Medical Services Director;
- (e) The Chief of the City of Bluffton Police Department;
- (f) The Chief of the City of Bluffton Fire Department or the Chief of the Town of Ossian Fire Department;
- (g) The Wells County Emergency Management Agency Director;
- (h) The Wells County 911 Director;
- (i) One member from the Common Council of the City of Bluffton;
- (i) One member volunteer fireman from a Wells County Volunteer Fire Department; and
- (k) The Chief of the Town of Ossian Police Department.

Each member shall serve on an annual basis from January 1st to December 31st of that year. For the purposes of the initial Board, all members shall serve from the time of their appointment until December 31st, 2022. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve Ordinance 2021-06, authorizing the creation of an E-911 advisory board. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Historical Society: The Board of Commissioners received a letter from the President of the Wells County Historical Society asking for their annual funding request of \$10,000.00 for the 2022 budget year. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the request from the Wells County Historical Society for the 2022 budget. Motion carried 3-0.

Adjourned: Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 10:12AM. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Commissioners

President, Blake Gerber

Vice President, Kevin Woodward

Member, Michael K Vanover

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor

