

Wells County Commissioners

Regular Session June 21, 2021

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday June 21, 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 June 7, 2021, regular session. Motion carried 3-0.

Payroll and Claims: Motion made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve Payroll #12 in the amount of \$234,926.68 and 229 claims totaling \$764,221.48. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Sheriff: Sheriff Holliday reported 73 inmates, 24 pretrial Superior, 12 pretrial Circuit, 14 F6 and 16 DOC. The Sheriff informed the Commissioners that video court for Superior and Circuit Courts is going live this week.

Wells County Highway Supervisor: Shawn Bonar informed the Commissioners that equipment is being serviced for chip sealing, tentative start date of July 12th. The drainage project at 300N & 700E is about complete. Round 2 of dustay is complete. Mowing crews are out as well as hand patching crews getting the roads ready for chip and seal. Shawn has been purchasing additional safety equipment, road construction signs and cones, for the safety of his workers and the public.

Highway Engineer: Rumschlag informed the Commissioners that applications for 2021-02 Community Crossing Matching grant opens in July. He will submit one of four projects. Nate would like to work with Attorney Roy Johnson on a letter to reissue requests for rights-of-way previously selected for road conversions to encourage easement dedication. Three right-of-way documents were presented to the commissioners for their approval. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the three right-of-way documents. Motion carried 3-0.

Assessor: Assessor Kelly Herman requested bids for the Cyclical Reassessment Contract 2022-2025. Only one bid was received. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to take the bid under advisement until the July 6th meeting pending Attorney Roy Johnsons review. Motion carried 3-0.

Disaster Declaration: A County Disaster Emergency Declaration for Travel Restrictions was presented to the Commissioners for their signatures. This emergency declaration was for February 15, 2021, to February 16, 2021. Snow accumulated 2 inches per hour with a total snow fall of 9 inches. Winds were 12mph to 15mph. A red warning level was issued, all traffic refrained except for emergency vehicles. Essential travels only from 5AM February 15 to 5PM February 16, 2021. At 5PM on February 16, 2021, the red warning level was dropped to yellow, advisory level. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to sign the disaster declaration from February 15 - 16, 2021. Motion carried 3-0.

E-911 Advisory Board: The Commissioners approved Ordinance 2021-06 authorizing the creation of an E-911 Advisory board at the June 7th meeting. The appointments the Commissioners selected to serve on that board were:

Commissioner: Michael Vanover

County Council: Seth Whicker

Sheriff: Scott Holliday

EMS: Rick Piepenbrink

Bluffton City Police: Chief Kyle Randall

Bluffton Fire: Don Craig

EMA: Rick Velasquez

911 Director: Mike Miller

City Council: Josh Hunt

Volunteer Fire: Sam Bisel

Ossian Police: Chief David Rigney

These appointments are annual with the current term ending on December 31, 2022. Motion made by Mike Vanover, seconded by Kevin Woodward to appoint the E-911 board members as presented. Motion carried 3-0.

2021 LIT 3 Year Plan: The Commissioners had a discussion on the 2021 LIT Economic Development three-year plan for 2022-2023-2024. This plan estimates the revenue that will be received into LIT Economic Development for the coming three years, as well as the current balance in the fund. The Commissioners must budget at least 75% of that estimated total over the three years in the plan. After a brief discussion it was suggested that the additional funds will go into the Economic Development line for projects. 2022 will be the only year to be budgeted for Regional Sewer District salary for the Highway Engineer, Nate Rumschlag. The plan will be presented to the Commissioners at the July 6th meeting.

ARPA Council: Barnes & Thornburg presented a proposal for American Rescue Plan counsel. The firm will assist Wells County regarding the Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal recovery Fund of the American Rescue Plan Act. The Commissioners are holding off on the contract.

County Farm: Attorney Roy Johnson proposed drafting a letter requesting proposals from licensed auctioneers for the sale of the County Farm. The proposals received from the auctioneers would give the Commissioners options for consideration. The Commissioners instructed Attorney Johnson to draft the letter to be approved at the July 6, 2021, meeting. The farm is currently being appraised; the commissioners will then set the minimum price after they receive the appraisals.

Covered Bridge Certificate: The Annual Certificate for Covered Bridges was presented to the Commissioners. Wells County has zero covered bridges in our county. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to sign the Annual Certificate for Covered Bridges. Motion carried 3-0.

Courthouse Request: John Bodner requested the step area of the courthouse on June 26th at 7PM. A group of individuals would like to meet and have speakers for approximately one hour. They will be discussing and speaking on the American Rescue Act. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to allow the use of the Courthouse steps on June 26th at 7PM. Motion carried 3-0.

Alcoholic Beverage Board Appointment: An application for the Local Alcoholic Beverage Board was submitted for Commissioner approval. Motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover to appoint Janessey Kline to the Alcoholic Beverage Board through December 31, 2021. Motion carried 3-0.

Adjourned: Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 10:06AM, motion made by Kevin Woodward, seconded by Michael Vanover. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Commissioners

President, Blake Gerber

Vice President, Kevin Woodward

Michael Vanover

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor