

## Wells County Commissioners

### Regular Session July 24, 2023

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, July 24, 2023, at 5:00PM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. Present at the meeting were Commissioners, Michael Vanover and Blake Gerber, County Attorney, Ted Storer and Auditor, Lisa McCormick. Commissioner Jeff Stringer was absent.

**Minutes:** A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the minutes from the July 10, 2023, regular session. Motion carried 2-0.

**Payroll and Claims:** A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve Payroll #15 in the amount of \$282,056.78 and 245 claims totaling \$557,673.87. Motion carried 2-0.

**Wells County Sheriff:** Sheriff Holliday reported 59 inmates, 15 pretrial Superior, 20 pretrial Circuit, 8 F6 DOC and 14 DOC. Loose ends are being completed regarding the jail renovation.

**Wells County Highway Supervisor:** Shawn Bonar informed the Commissioners that his crew is in full force with chip seal. They will be shutting down 1-mile sections of road, they are chipping at full width. Bonar stated that he would post the closures on Facebook and give the News Banner postings also. The highway department finished striping the Bargain Hut parking lot. His mowing crew is working on the higher traffic areas for better sight distance at intersections. Bonar voiced a plea for farmers to cut the crops back to make the roadways as safe as possible. The highway suggested keeping the plantings back 10 feet from the edge of the pavement. Bonar updated on the highway garage: the roof is 90% complete and pre-case planks have been installed over the wash bays.

**Highway Engineer:** Nate Rumschlag updated the Commissioners on ongoing and upcoming projects. Work is proposed to start the week of August 7<sup>th</sup> on CR 450 E between 1100N and 1200N. Commissioner Gerber stressed notifying all homeowners and the school of the closure. Rumschlag stated that flyers and notices of the road closure will go out in advance of the project. It is expected to be a 30 to 45-day closure. Applications for NOFA 2029 will be open in November of this year. Rumschlag had previously presented Bridge 72 and Bridge 76 as possible projects. The application would need to be updated for current costs. The Commissioners agreed to allow Nate to update the application for the November grant period. Rumschlag is working with Andrew & Crell to update the old ROW documents and establish the new ROW documents for 2023 road conversions. A letter of financial commitment was presented to the Commissioners for Bridge 170 to update the funding source for the local match. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve, and sign the letter of financial commitment for Bridge 170 to include LIT Roads and Bridges. Motion carried 2-0. Rumschlag updated the Commissioners on the Local Trax Project, he has contacted INDOT and DLZ on the next steps.

**Library Update:** John Stauffer presented an update on the Wells County Library. The summer reading program is up in registrations from 2022 by 257 participants. Participants have one more week to log their reading but to date 1,938,893 pages have been logged as read. In 2022 a total of 2,217,829 were logged in total, John stated that some Adults and Teens wait until the last week to register their reading. He is expecting to see the reading numbers increase. The Children's book festival will be held on

October 7, 2023, it is a bi-annual event. Deborah Hopkinson will be the author this year. She is the award-winning author of seventy books for young readers. Musical entertainment will be held on Saturday of the event with Jim Gill. The library expects high attendance for this event, which is funded by the Wells County Foundation and our Friends of the Library.

**ROW and Utility:** Two rights-of-way and one utility permit were presented to the Commissioners for review. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve, and sign the two rights-of-way and one utility permit. Motion carried 2-0.

**Adjourned:** Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 5:25PM, motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover. Motion carried 2-0.

**Wells County Commissioners**

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President, Michael K Vanover

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Vice President, Blake Gerber

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Jeff Stringer

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor