

## Wells County Commissioners

### Regular Session August 15, 2022

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, August 15, 2022, at 5:00PM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. Those in attendance were Commissioners, Michael Vanover, Blake Gerber, and Jeff Stringer, County Attorney, Colin Andrews and County Auditor, Lisa McCormick.

**Minutes:** Motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve the minutes from August 1, 2022, regular session minutes. Motion carried 3-0.

**Payroll and Claims:** Motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve Payroll #16 in the amount of \$256,141.47 and 170 claims totaling \$1,595,016.63. Motion carried 3-0.

**Wells County Sheriff:** Sheriff Holliday reported 98 inmates, 30 pretrial Superior, 26 pretrial Circuit, 16 F6 DOC and 14 DOC. Holliday gave an update on the Jail renovation: roof is complete, masonry work on the interior will be finished today, the cement pad for the employee entrance is next on the project list.

**Wells County Highway Supervisor:** Shawn Bonar updated the Commissioners on projects. Road conversions on 800E and Oblique Rd. are progressing well. 2<sup>nd</sup> round of mowing is half complete. The highway department will be trimming corn out of the intersections if the landowners do not. Conor Jackson updated the Commissioners on the Highway garage project. Jackson presented a bid tab to the Commissioners. Some of the bid packages had only one or no bids submitted. Jackson would like those bid packages to be rebid. The bid date is September 1, 2022. This will move the concrete start date from September to the middle of November. Conor believes that they will be moving dirt at the highway site in two weeks. Bid package #4, precast concrete planks, did not have any bids. The contractor that was supplying a bid did not submit in the approved format. That contractor is the only contractor that was expected to bid. Jackson was requesting that we take bid package #4 out of the public bid format and approve them as a sole spec contractor. Motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve bid package #4 to be approved as a sole spec contractor and taken out of the public bid format. Motion carried 3-0.

**Highway Engineer:** Nate Rumschlag reported on project updates. A federal rail elimination grant is available, this grant could assist in the counties cost on the Local Trax project. Rumschlag has a meeting with INDOT on August 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the potential of this grant. Residents in the vicinity of Bridges 106 & 54 will be receiving notice from IDNR regarding permit applications as part of the notification process with the state. Property owners should contact USI's permit coordinator with questions. The Regional Sewer District has been ranked by the Indiana Finance Authority and is in the fundable range in the 2023 project priority list. That paves the way for phase 3 funding. Rumschlag presented a draft agreement with USI for CR 200S phase II professional engineering agreement. INDOT approved of the agreement and recommended approval. This agreement's match will be split between Wells County, City of Bluffton, and the Bluffton Redevelopment Commission. After the agreement is submitted to INDOT, INDOT will return their agreement for reimbursement with Wells County. With authorization, Commissioner President Vanover will digitally sign the agreement with INDOT. Motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve, and sign the professional engineering agreement with USI (Misc. 2022-11) and to allow the Commissioner President Vanover to sign the agreement

digitally with INDOT. Motion carried 3-0. One Utility permit and nine rights-of-way were presented to the Commissioners for their approval. Motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve the Utility permit and nine rights-of-way. Motion carried 3-0.

**2023 Holiday Schedule:** The 2023 Holiday schedule was presented to the Commissioners for their review and comment. Motion was made by Jeff Stringer, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve the 2023 Holiday Schedule. Motion carried 3-0.

**Holiday Closings:** Auditor Lisa McCormick asked for approval for closure of Wells County offices (Courthouse, Annex and County Extension) from Noon – 2 PM for a Thanksgiving luncheon for Wells County employees at the 4-H park on Wednesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Also requested was to close Wells County Offices (Courthouse, Annex and County Extension) at 2 PM on Thursday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> for a Holiday gathering on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Courthouse for employees. Motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to allow the Thanksgiving and Christmas gatherings. Motion carried 3-0.

**Cancellation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting in September:** Consequently, because the streets are shut down around the Annex Building for the Bluffton Street Fair September 19-26, 2022, a motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to cancel the September 19, 2022, meeting. Motion carried 3-0.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Commissioner Jeff Stringer commented that in his opinion, if there is an ongoing investigation with the County Prosecutor, he should resign his position immediately. Commissioner Michael Vanover stated that the Commissioners are unified on that statement. Prosecutor Carnall is under investigation for misconduct by the Indiana Supreme Court Disciplinary Commission. Andrew Carnall has self-reported to the Indiana Supreme Court disciplinary committee for, what we understand to be, interference in a police stop.

**Adjourned:** Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 5:30PM.

### 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