

## Wells County Commissioners

### Regular Session August 21, 2023

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, August 21, 2023, 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, Ted Storer and County Auditor, Lisa McCormick.

**Minutes:** A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve the minutes from the August 7, 2023, regular session minutes. Motion carried 3-0.

**Payroll and Claims:** A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve Payroll #17 in the amount of \$282,030.03 and 184 claims totaling \$1,090,806.88. Motion carried 3-0.

**Wells County Sheriff:** Sheriff Holliday submitted jail totals via email and Commissioner Stringer reported 72 inmates, 26 pretrial Superior, 21 pretrial Circuit, 5 F6 DOC and 17 DOC.

**Wells County Highway Supervisor:** Shawn Bonar updated the Commissioners on projects. This week, chip and seal will be completed with 72 miles in total. Corn at several intersections has been cut for increased sight distance. Crews will be out this week mowing and repairing broken tiles. Bridge 147 is showing signs of failure on the north side of the bridge, identical to the failure on the south side earlier in the spring. Bonar will be closing 400W between 1100N and 1200N for two to three days this week to make those repairs. Bonar will notify the schools and dispatch of the closure. Ramseyer excavating will be replacing larger structures this week. Road closures will be Meridian Road between SR124 and 100S and 1000S between 100E and Meridian. The highway garage updates included: HVAC is being assembled, window and door frames are being installed, electrical is being installed in the office area, concrete on the northside of the building is to be poured this week, all concrete planks have been installed, and caps poured in the locker room and parts room areas.

**Highway Engineer:** Nate Rumschlag reported on project updates. Asphalt has been completed on CR450E with aggregate shoulders and striping pending. Rumschlag thought the subgrade treatment worked well and he will look at other locations that could use this form of treatment. He felt it would allow more road miles to be done faster. Rumschlag reported on the Cumulative Bridge fund projections. There are currently 6 bridge projects committed with Cumulative Bridge funds. The funding for those projects is sufficient unless the projects move ahead of schedule. Rumschlag stated that he might have to move Bridge 54 back a year or more depending on other project overruns. Also discussed was road and bridge funding in the Local Income Tax Economic Development fund. Rumschlag stated that funding is a problem if he funds two or more projects per year. He is working with Supervisor Shawn Bonar to develop more road projects under \$500,000 that would fit into the schedule.

**Council on Aging:** Betsy Collier presented the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2023 claim for reimbursement. The claim amount is \$137,363.00. A motion was made by Jeff Stringer, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve, and allow the President to sign the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2023 claim. Motion carried 3-0. Betsy also asked if there were any stipulations from the Commissioners that would require the Council on Aging to undergo a complete audit annually. Each year Culp CPA performs an audit on the Council on Aging. INDOT has

recommended that the Council on Aging consider having that audit every three years. The Commissioners have no issue with a complete audit every three years.

**Opioid Funding Request:** Erin Prible, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, came to the Commissioners to request funding from the Opioid Restricted funds. The Wells County Government task force committee is planning an event promoting drug awareness in area schools. Speakers, Cody and John Speak, will be visiting all 3 school systems each day from September 12-14<sup>th</sup>. An evening community event will be held in the 4-H community building on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Prible requested \$2,000 from restricted Opioid funds for help with this event. Attorney Storer agreed that this request met the standards of expenditures that were allowable from the Opioid Restricted funds. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve the request of \$2,000 from the Opioid Restricted Settlement fund for the community awareness event. Motion carried 3-0.

**Park Center Board Appointment:** House Enrolled Act 1454 allows a Commissioner a seat on the board of the mental health organization that receives their mental health dollars. Wells County's mental health dollars go to Park Center. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to appoint Jeff Stringer to the Park Center board. Motion carried 3-0.

**Ossian Spec II:** Chad Kline, Economic Development Director, presented an interlocal agreement for reimbursement between the Town of Ossian and Wells County Board of Commissioners. The Town of Ossian has contracted with Logan Properties for the construction and development of a spec building located on the 400 block of Industrial Parkway, Ossian, IN. The spec building will be approximately 30,000 square feet, expandible to 125,000 square feet, with a construction cost of \$3,200,000. The Town of Ossian has agreed to reimburse Logan Properties for interest carrying costs incurred not to exceed \$350,000. This amount shall be paid during a period not to exceed 36 months. The Town has requested that the County assist in the payment of that obligation. If approved, the County would pay to the Town of Ossian 60% of its obligation under the Agreement. The County will only be obligated to the Town for payments so long as the terms of the Agreement remain in effect and so long as the Town and Logan Properties comply with the terms of the Agreement. A motion was made by Jeff Stringer, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve, and allow the President to sign the Interlocal Agreement for Reimbursement. Motion carried 3-0.

**Letter of Support:** Commissioner Gerber proposed a letter of support regarding an application for funding for the development and implementation of the Wabash River Basin Watershed Management Plan and Implementation. The funding would support the Wabash River Basin Commission's desire to reduce sediment and pollutants from entering the Wabash River and to improve the recreational enjoyment of the river. A generic letter will be submitted to Attorney Ted Storer to amend for approval by the Commissioners.

**Opioid Settlement Reporting:** The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) must submit an annual comprehensive report of the use of all opioid settlement funds, including funds received by the local units of government, to the Indiana General Assembly. All local units of government that received funds from the National Opioid Settlement are required to report their use of funds to FSSA. This information will be included in a final report. Each entity is responsible to delegate one representative to complete the electronic form on behalf of your community. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to delegate the Auditor, Lisa McCormick, to complete the Opioid reporting. Motion carried 3-0.

**ROW and Utility Permits:** One utility permit and four rights-of-way were presented to the Commissioners for approval. A motion was made by Jeff Stringer, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve the utility permit and four rights-of-way. Motion carried 3-0.

**2024 Holiday Schedule:** The 2024 Holiday schedule was presented to the Commissioners for their review and comment. Commissioner Gerber would like to table the discussion until the September 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**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 22<sup>nd</sup>. Also requested was to close Wells County Offices (Courthouse, Annex and County Extension) at 2 PM on Friday, 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, the streets are shut down around the Annex Building for the Bluffton Street Fair September 18-23, 2023, a motion was made by Jeff Stringer, seconded by Blake Gerber to cancel the September 18, 2023, meeting. Motion carried 3-0.

**Adjourned:** Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 5:33PM. The motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to adjourn. Motion carried 3-0.

### **Wells County Commissioners**

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President, Michael K Vanover

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Vice President, Blake Gerber

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Member, Jeff Stringer

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