

Wells County Commissioners

Regular Session November 15, 2021

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday November 15, 2021, at 9:30AM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. Physically in attendance were Commissioners, Michael Vanover and Jeff Stringer, County Attorney, Roy Johnson and County Auditor, Lisa McCormick. Commissioner Blake Gerber participated in the meeting by electronic means of communication, Zoom, which allowed him to simultaneously attend and observe the meeting. All votes taken during the meeting were taken by roll call vote.

Minutes: Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve the minutes from November 1, 2021, regular session and the November 10, 2021, Executive Session. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

Payroll and Claims: Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve Payroll #23 in the amount of \$238,585.30 and 261 claims totaling \$357,902.22. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

Wells County Sheriff: Sheriff Holliday reported 74 inmates, 28 pretrial Superior, 22 pretrial Circuit, 13 F6 DOC and 7 DOC. Sheriff Holliday stated that bi-weekly construction meetings are being held at his facility with the contractors regarding the current jail project.

Wells County Highway Supervisor: Shawn Bonar informed the commissioners that all gravel roads will be graded that have bad dustay strips. The road conversion has started on 800E. Winter prep patching is soon to be complete for the fall. Bids for Bituminous, Stone, Dustay and fuel will be advertised on November 18th and December 2nd. Bid opening will be January 3, 2022.

Highway Engineer: Nate Rumschlag updated the commissioners on ongoing projects. Rumschlag is working on applications for INDOT NOFA 2027 federal grant funds. He prepared a list of 3 possible projects. CR 200 S (phase 2) between Clark St. and SR1, Bridge 72 and Bridge 76. Each of the three projects were discussed. Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to sign a letter of commitment for CR 200 S between Clark St. and SR1 (phase 2) for \$4,637,000 with a local match of \$927,400 to be paid out of the SR 301 Relinquishment fund or LIT Funds. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote. No action was taken on Bridge 72 or Bridge 76. Wells County was awarded \$266,400.75 for CCMG 2021-02 for the construction of Bridge 403 on CR 800S. Bid documents will go out in December for a January bid opening. The grant has a local match of \$88,800.25. Rumschlag requested two Geotech investigations with Alt & Witzig Engineering. One for a small pipe structure crossing CR 300W north of 400S and one for Wells County Bridge 65. The small pipe structure for CR 300W has poor soils and the roadway and drainage pipe have sunk. He would like to know what the soil will do before the repair. The proposal is for 4 borings for a fee of \$4,250.00. Bridge 65 proposal estimates are between \$15,000 - \$18,000 depending on the final boring depths necessary. The proposals will be paid out of LIT Bridges. Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stinger to approve of the Geotech investigations with Alt & Witzig Engineering for CR300W and Bridge 65. Motion carried 3-0 by a roll call vote. Four rights-of-way were presented to the commissioners for their approval. Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve the rights-of-way. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote. A Quitclaim deed was presented to the Commissioners for release and quitclaim to the City of Bluffton for a portion of the right of way on CR 200N. Motion was

made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve and sign the quitclaim deed. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

Extended Medical Leave: Prosecutor Andrew Carnall has an employee on FMLA. The current leave will expire on November 24, 2021. Carnall was requesting a 30-day extended medical leave for his employee from the Commissioners. Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to extend the medical leave an additional 30 days. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

COVID Update: Health Administrator, Marlene Hoag, updated the Commissioners on Wells County's COVID status. Wells County is designated as Orange. 25 new cases have been reported. There have been 92 deaths. Testing is done at the Health Department on Monday mornings and Thursday's, all day. The Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson and Johnson vaccines are being administered at the Health Department on Monday afternoons and Wednesday's, all day. Boosters are available for Pfizer and Moderna.

PHP: A renewal for health coverage was presented to the commissioners with PHP. The PHP proposal included a 5% premium increase. UHC and Anthem were not competitive offers and Cigna declined to submit a proposal because they could not be competitive. Motion made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to renew the health coverage for Wells County employees with PHP for the 2022 plan year and to keep employee contributions at the current rate. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

Resolution 2021-24: A resolution was presented to the Commissioners amending Resolution No. 2021-16. The resolution is authorizing the use of the construction manager as constructor method of contracting for the proposed new county highway garage project and approving certain matters in connection therewith. The amended resolution terminates RQAW Corporation as the architect for the Project, reaffirms its authorization of the issuance of a request for proposal for the services of construction manager as constructor. RQAW was removed from the proposed resolution as a member of the Evaluation Committee and Michael K. Vanover and Jeffrey D. Stringer were added as County Commissioners. Motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve Resolution 2021-24 amending and restating Resolution 2021-16 authorizing the use of the construction manager as constructor method of contracting for the proposed new county highway garage project. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

Constructor Services: The Owner's Evaluation Committee met prior to the Commissioner meeting to review the RFP proposals and to give their recommendation to the Commissioners. Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to name James S. Jackson Co. to serve as the construction manager for the new county highway garage. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

RQAW: The Commissioners requested that Attorney Roy Johnson draft a letter to RQAW notifying RQAW about the completed performance of our requested services regarding a design criteria package for a new highway garage. The commissioners also requested an in person meeting to discuss a resolution to the current issues. Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to have Attorney Roy Johnson draft a letter with a meeting request to RQAW. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

County Farm Sale: Halderman Real Estate and Farm Management held an Auction to sell the County farm property. Tract 1 sold for \$1,505,000 (\$12,911/acre), Tract 2 sold for \$1,280,000 (\$11,036/acre), and Tract 3 sold for \$16,000 (\$5,654/acre) for a total of \$2,801,000. The final sale price was

approximately 20% higher than the appraised value and approximately \$500,000 higher than the average estimated range of value. The buyer of tract 3 was also interested in purchasing the woods and scrub off the west end of the cemetery lot. The Commissioners could sell to an adjoining landowner for less than \$6,000 with no appraisal but would require publication of notice. The Commissioners expressed no interest in allowing the buyer to purchase additional property. Also discussed were fertility tests for the county farm. Attorney Roy Johnson stated that the Commissioners pay for the testing and Caleb Geiser has the responsibility to restore the soil to the previous levels.

County Attorney: County Attorney Roy Johnson informed the Commissioners that he would not seek reappointment for 2022. The Commissioners asked Johnson to draft a request for RFPs for a County Attorney to be distributed to area law firms. The deadline date for proposals to be submitted back to the Auditors office is December 10, 2021. Motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Jeff Stringer to distribute the RFP to area attorney offices. Motion carried 3-0 by roll call vote.

Adjourned: Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 10:07AM

Wells County Commissioners

President, Blake Gerber

Vice President, Michael K Vanover

Member, Jeff Stringer

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor