

Wells County Commissioners

Regular Session November 16, 2020

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday November 16, 2020 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 Tamara Robbins. Also, in attendance were County Attorney, Roy Johnson and County Auditor, Lisa McCormick.

Minutes: Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve the minutes from November 2, 2020 regular session. Motion carried 3-0.

Payroll and Claims: Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve Payroll #23 in the amount of \$238,101.93 and 272 claims totaling \$328,765.31. Motion carried 3-0.

Wells County Sheriff: The Sheriff's Department advertised for bids for a 1989 AM General Humvee-H1. One bid was submitted. The high bid is now \$5,500.00. All bidders will be notified, the next bid opening will be at the December 7th Commissioner meeting. The minimum bid for that meeting is \$5,550.00. Sheriff Holliday reported 78 inmates, 20 pretrial Superior, 21 pretrial Circuit, 11 DOC and 20 F6 DOC. Sheriff Holliday discussed the guaranteed energy savings and facility improvement program for Wells County Sheriff's Department with Ameresco. This improvement program is looking at the roof and HVAC system. Also being considered is a reconfiguration on the jail facility to make it more functional for quarantining inmates. Elevatus Architecture is the firm drafting the plans for the proposed jail renovation. Representatives from Ameresco and Elevatus will be on the agenda December 7th for further discussion and updates.

Wells County Highway Supervisor: Josh Cotton informed the commissioners that all gravel roads will be graded this week. 2 crews have been berming roads, this has not been done in the last several years. Equipment is ready for winter operations. Cotton submitted his resignation to the Commissioners on November 9th; November 20th will be his last day of employment as the Highway Supervisor.

Highway Engineer: Nate Rumschlag updated the commissioners on ongoing projects. Rumschlag is working on applications for NOFA 2026 federal grant funds. He prepared a list of 5 possible projects. CR 200 S, Adams Street to Hoosier Hwy and CR 200 S, Hoosier Hwy to SR 1, already have financial commitments provided. The other three would need approved letter of commitments to proceed with the application. Bridge 170, Bridge 19, and Bridge 71 were up for discussion. Each of the three projects were discussed. Bridge 170 and Bridge 19 could possibly be completed via a future Community Crossings grant so those projects were taken out of the NOFA 2026 grant mix. Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to sign a letter of commitment for Bridge 71 for a total commitment of \$453,140. Motion carried 3-0. Funding would come from LIT Bridges and the Cumulative Bridge Fund. USI has prepared a structure analysis for the conversion of a small structure into a bridge, Bridge #403. Two options were given for the type of materials to be used for constructing the bridge, precast concrete, and American timber. The commissioners will review the USI proposal at the December 7th meeting. Nate presented a Mediacom Utility Permit for 2835 E 350 N. Motion Made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve the Mediacom Utility Permit. Motion carried 3-0. Two rights-of-way were presented to the commissioners for their approval. Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve the rights-of-way. Motion carried 3-0.

Engagement Letter: County Attorney, Roy Johnson presented an engagement letter to the commissioners with the Barnes and Thornburg law firm. This engagement letter is for legal services for the county Highway Garage project. Barnes and Thornburg would give legal council to advise the county on options to consider about the environmental issues apparent via a study of the current Highway garage site. The fees charged would depend on the Barnes and Thornburg attorney assigned to the task. Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve and sign the engagement letter with Barnes and Thornburg. Motion carried 3-0.

2021 Sheriff Salary Contract: The Sheriff Salary contract for 2021 was presented to the commissioners for approval. Sheriff Holliday approved and signed the contract. Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to approve the 2021 Sheriff's salary contract, \$102,000. Motion carried 3-0. This contract will go to Council for approval on December 8, 2020.

PTABOA Application: An application for an appointment to the PTABOA board was presented to the commissioners for consideration. Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to appoint Beth Singleton to the Property Tax Board of Appeals. Motion carried 3-0.

PHP: A renewal for health coverage was presented to the commissioners with PHP. There will be no premium increase. UHC, Anthem and Cigna declined to submit a proposal. Motion made by Tamara Robbins, seconded by Kevin Woodward to renew the health coverage for Wells County employees with PHP for the 2021 plan year. Motion carried 3-0.

Adjourned: Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 10:07AM

Wells County Commissioners

President, Blake Gerber

Vice President, Kevin Woodward

Tamara Robbins

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor