

Wells County Commissioners

Regular Session December 16, 2024

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday December 16, 2024, at 5:00PM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. The attendees were Commissioners, Jeff Stringer, and Blake Gerber, County Attorney Ted Storer and County Auditor Lisa McCormick. Commissioner Michael Vanover was absent.

Minutes: A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve the minutes from December 2, 2024, regular session and December 2, 2024, executive session. Motion carried 2-0.

Payroll And Claims: A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve Payroll #25 in the amount of \$288,351.28 and 212 claims totaling \$173,540.89. Motion carried 2-0.

Wells County Sheriff: Sheriff Holliday reported 81 inmates, 42 Pretrial Circuit, 19 Pretrial Superior, 16 DOC and 3 F6 DOC. Holliday stated that Ameresco personnel have been on site completing outstanding punch list items.

Ordinance 2024-21: Sheriff Holliday requested approval of days to be paid out to Sheriff personnel who are working additional hours and not able to use accumulated earned days. Staffing is limited due to current staffing shortages. Employees are not able to use their accumulated days by the end of the year, carrying those days over would prolong the inevitable. An Ordinance Amending the Wells County personnel policies regarding payout of paid time off to certain Sheriff personnel was presented to the Commissioners for their approval. The payout is for up to three employees in December 2024. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve Ordinance 2024-21 to allow the payout of 2024 accumulated days not used in 2024. Motion carried 2-0.

Wells County Highway Supervisor: Shawn Bonar updated the Commissioners on current projects. Road conversions will continue until temperatures decrease. Employees are servicing the equipment for the snow season. Minor repairs to bridges are being completed and tree removal is ongoing. Local Trax is at a halt until spring of 2025. Conor Jackson, Shawn Bonar, and TJ Burns did a 10-month walkthrough inspection of the Highway garage. The discussion items from the walkthrough included active leaks in the vehicle bay area, an overhead garage door hits a water line when opened, and overhead door thresholds need to be installed in the maintenance bay area, in the general maintenance area an overhead door threshold needs to be installed and a valve for fire protection is leaking oil, overhead door thresholds need to be installed in the liquids/oils area and the wash bay area, the IT closet is not cooling during the winter in the administration area, in the general area RTU heating/cooling and VAV coils are the issues, in the cold storage area the northern most overhead door does not close completely and the north louver bottom side blades do not open correctly. Bonar will continue to update the Commissioners regarding the progress of the issues. Two rights-of-way were presented to the Commissioners for approval. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve and sign the two rights-of-way. Motion carried 2-0.

Wells County Highway Engineer: Engineer Nate Whitacre opened the annual bids for Bituminous, Stone/Aggregate, Fuel, Aluminum Box Culverts, Precast Concrete Arch Structures and Boxes, Steel Bridge Packages, Bridge Decking Products, Treated Timber Bridge Products, Steel Pipe Products, Misc. Pipe and Fittings and Misc. Guardrail Posts, Rails, Ends, Fittings & Hardware Bid Packages. A motion was

made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to review all bids and return with recommendations. Motion carried 2-0. Whitacre is preparing a bid package for the Community Crossing Matching Grant 2024-2 for Bridge 65. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to sign the title sheet of the plans for Bridge 65. Motion carried 2-0. CR 200S requires a noise analysis, quotes came back for less than half of the original estimate.

Poka-Bache Connector Trail: Michael Lautzenheiser Jr. requested approval of a letter of support for Allen County's RAISE application for the Pola-Bache visionary trail planning. The letter states that as the southern endpoint for the Pola-Bache Connector, Wells County is in support of Allen County's RAISE planning grant application for Poka-Bache Visionary Trail Planning. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to sign the letter of support for the Poka-Bache RAISE grant application. Motion carried 2-0.

Certificate Sale Resolution: A resolution establishing an intent to conduct a Commissioners sale to sell tax sale certificates for properties that are delinquent in payment of property taxes and failed to receive bids equal to or more than the minimum sale price at tax sale was presented to the Commissioners for review. Exhibit A listed properties that are delinquent in the payment of property taxes and were offered for tax sale and received no bids. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to approve Resolution 2024-09 establishing intent to conduct a Commissioners sale. Motion carried 2-0.

SRI Addendum to the Tax Sale Service Agreement: A certificate sale addendum to the SRI tax sale services agreement was presented to the Commissioners for review. The addendum will subcontract SRI to prepare and execute the Commissioners certificate sale for unsold properties from the tax sale. Duties include preparing a list of properties eligible for the Commissioners' sale, preparing a plan of events and procedures to carry out the sale, preparing all notices, publications, postings and documents required, conducting the auction of properties and placing a listing of pertinent sale information in the SRI website. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stinger to approve and sign the SRI addendum to the Tax Sale service agreement. Motion carried 2-0.

2025 Appointments for Department Heads: A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to reappoint Bobbie Studebaker as the Custodian and ADA Coordinator, Ted Storer as the County Attorney/Title VI Coordinator, Nate Whitacre as the County Engineer, Shawn Bonar as the Highway Supervisor, Roger Richardson as the IT Director, Dewey Randall as the Veterans Officer and Mike Miller as the 911 Director for the calendar year of 2025. Motion carried 2-0.

2024 Board Appointments: A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint Tim Rohr and Tyson Brooks to the Area Plan Commission for a one-year term. Motion carried 2-0. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint as alternates for the Area Plan Commission, Blake Gerber for Tim Rohr and Jeff Stringer for Tyson Books for a one-year term. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Balke Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint Bill Dowth to the Cemetery Board for a 5-year term. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to appoint Lisa McCormick as a lay member of the Community Corrections Advisory board for a 4-year term. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint Mary Donley to the Health Department board for a one-year term, and Steve Bales to the Health Department board for a four-year term. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to appoint David E Ferguson Sr. to the Huntington City/Town Public Library for a four-year term. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint Nathan Shrock to the Property Tax Board of Appeals for a one-year term, and re-appoint Ben Beer to the Property Tax Board of Appeals for a three-year term. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint Brice Stinson and Andrew Stoller to the Regional Sewer District board for a four-year term. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint Robert Mautz and Mike Schumm as Directors of the Rock Creek Conservancy for four-year terms, and sign the petition to appoint director document. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint Laura Dalrymple, Shari Duncan, and Diana Collins to the Sick Bank Committee for a one-year term. Motion carried 2-0.

A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to re-appoint Michelle Blount and Jonathan Winne to the Tourism Commission board for two-year terms. Motion carried 2-0.

Maumee River Basin Commission Designee: A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer to designate Diana Collins to serve as their designee and voting proxy on the Board of Directors of the Maumee River Basin Commission. Motion carried 2-0.

Adjourned: Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 5:51AM. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Jeff Stringer. Motion carried 2-0.

Wells County Commissioners

President

Vice President

Member

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor