

## Wells County Commissioners

### Regular Session February 3, 2025

The Wells County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 3, 2025, at 5:00PM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. Present at the meeting were Commissioners, Jeff Stringer, Michael Vanover and Blake Gerber, County Attorney Ted Storer and Auditor Lisa McCormick.

**Minutes:** A motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve the minutes from January 21, 2025, regular session. Motion carried 3-0.

**Payroll and Claims:** A motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Blake Gerber to approve Payroll #3 in the amount of \$309,856.41 and 190 claims totaling \$649,653.75. Motion carried 3-0.

**Wells County Sheriff:** Sheriff Holliday reported 65 inmates, 16 pretrial Superior, 36 pretrial Circuit, 1 F6 DOC and 13 DOC. Holliday is compiling quotes on resealing and lining the west parking lot at the Sheriffs Department. Increased water usage has been detected at the jail. They are researching the increased usage and will report back if there are any issues.

**Highway Supervisor:** Shawn Bonar updated the Commissioners on projects. A software program is being utilized for highway inventory. The highway is in the process of inputting that inventory into the software. Grading gravel roads, dead tree removal, and sand/salt are current tasks. Road conversions are on hold for the winter months. Bridge 51 is on schedule and the anticipated date of the road opening is May 1, 2025. The outstanding issues at the highway garage are: Cold storage door 1 is not closing completely, the wash bay man door not closing, leak in roof, louvers are opening with all the doors closed, the north louver in cold storage does not open correctly, and HVAC does not provide adequate heat. Bonar presented an RFQ bid tab sheet for a 2025 track loader. Bonar was questioning the lowest bid and was not sure if it was following the specs provided in the RFQ. It was suggested tabling the topic until February 18<sup>th</sup> allowing Bonar to validate the results. Three rights-of-way documents were presented for Commissioner approval. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the three rights-of-way. Motion carried 3-0.

**Highway Engineer:** Nate Whitacre discussed projects. Bids for Bridge 65, CCMG 2024-2, will be opened publicly in the County Highway conference room on February 19<sup>th</sup>. The LPA contract with Burgess & Niple, Inc. for durable pavement markings was presented to the Commissioners for approval. The contract was tabled until February 18<sup>th</sup> allowing for Attorney Storer's opinion. A Meridian Road project was submitted for CCMG 2025. Whitacre hopes to hear the results by the end of March. Additional funding was requested in the LIT Economic Development Roads & Bridges account. Whitacre stated that the last increase was in 2016 and currently at \$500,000 annually. The inflation curve would put those dollars today at \$641,000 from the US Department of Labor, or \$950,000 with the National Highway Construction Cost Index.

**Wells Community Pool Funding:** Pool representatives Roger Thornton, Scott Mentzer, and Brandy Fiechter presented history and perspective on the Wells Community pool. The Wells Community pool was built in 1972 and has ongoing issues which makes repair not an option. Wells County has one community pool of which they feel all entities should support. The City of Bluffton has committed \$5 million to the project, Harrison Township has committed \$250,000, and Lancaster Township has

committed \$110,000. Their request for the leaders of Wells County is \$800,000. Wells Counties portion would be committed to a new pool house. The pool could ultimately be moved further north on the existing property to allow for earlier construction. This would also allow for the relocation of the new pool house allowing the existing pool house to be used as a maintenance building. A motion was made by Michael Vanover, seconded by Blake Gerber to contribute \$800,000 to the Wells Community pool from the LIT Economic Development fund. Motion carried 3-0.

**Resolution 2025-01:** Attorney Storer presented a resolution to assign a tax sale certificate to a political subdivision for the Commissioner review. A tax sale certificate was issued to the Board of Commissioners for a property that did not sell at the most recent tax sale. The parcel is located in the Town of Poneto, Indiana and the Town has expressed a desire to obtain the Tax Sale Certificate. The County and Town would adopt substantially identical resolutions to authorize the assignment of the Tax Sale Certificat for the parcel. Following the adoption of the substantially identical resolutions the President of the Commissioners and the Wells County Auditor are authorized to execute and deliver to the Town the Tax Sale Certificat for the parcel. No money will be paid by the town for the parcel. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve and sign Resolution 2025-01 assigning a tax sale certificate to the Town of Poneto. Motion carried 3-0. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to allow President Stringer to sign the assignment of tax sale certificate No. 902400069 upon resolution approval of both boards. Motion carried 3-0.

**2024 Annual Report:** The 2024 Annual Report for Wells County was emailed to the Commissioners prior to the meeting for review. A motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover to approve the submission of the 2024 Annual Report. Motion carried 3-0.

**Cemetery Board:** The cemetery board appointment was tabled until the February 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Miscellaneous:** Attorney Storer reported that the Indiana Department of Environmental Management provided notice of a discharge issue at the Wells County Highway garage. This is the second notice on the matter, the Commissioners and Attorney Storer will contact the insurance provider for coverage confirmation.

**Adjourned:** Wells County Commissioners adjourned at 6:35PM, motion was made by Blake Gerber, seconded by Michael Vanover. Motion carried 3-0.

### **Wells County Commissioners**

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President, Jeff Stringer

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Vice President, Michael K Vanover

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Member, Blake Gerber

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