

Wells County Drainage Board Minutes
Monday - July 21, 2025 4:30 P.M.

The Wells County Drainage Board met in a regular scheduled meeting at the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223W. Washington St., Multi-Purpose Room 105, (Lower Level) Bluffton, Indiana.

Drainage Board members present: Voting members Blake Gerber, Michael K. Vanover, Jeff Stringer; Attorney Ted Storer; Engineer Nate Whitacre; Surveyor Jarrod Hahn; Secretary Diana Collins.

Determination of Quorum:

A quorum was present for the meeting.

Minutes:

Mr. Gerber mentioned the first item to approve the Board's regular meeting minutes on June 16, 2025.

Mr. Vanover motioned to approve the Drainage Board regular meeting minutes on June 16, 2025. Mr. Stringer 2nd. Mr. Gerber concurred, motion carried 3-0.

Old Business:

2025 Spray Program-North:

Mr. Hahn mentioned that contractor Chad Baker of Right-a-Way Management has completed spraying the northern half of the county. Hahn mentioned that there are no reports this year about spraying so far, and if there is the contractor is always willing to come back and spray. Hahn did mention 1 landowner called about a ditch from 2024 southern part of the county that was not sprayed, so Hahn road out with the contractor to get it sprayed.

Carl Helms Tile System-Lancaster Township- Almco Steel Project Plans: Discussion on Transfer of Jurisdiction:

Mr. Hahn asked Mr. Storer if any language has been drawn up for the county to relinquish the Carl Helms tile system in Lancaster Township, section 33, range 12E. Mr. Storer has been working on the interlocal agreement between the Commissioners, Drainage Board, and City of Bluffton. Mr. Stringer ask if Hahn has met with the Board of Works on accepting the Carl Helm tile System. Hahn mentioned they know it's coming. Hahn mentioned he has had several discussions/meetings with city council members and Board of Works discussing Almco Steel plans on the Helms tile and to transfer jurisdiction from the County to the City of Bluffton accepting the tile system for future maintenance. Hahn noted that City of Bluffton and department leaders have said they want the tile to be replaced where it is broken first. Hahn noted that he would like to get the tile repaired and relinquish the tile system as soon as possible. Mr. Storer made note that he will write both the ordinance documents for the County to transfer and for the City of Bluffton on accepting the Carl Helms tile system.

Craven Tile Drain- NIPSCO Utility-Harrison Township:

Mr. Hahn asked Mr. Storer if he had come up with any language after receiving NIPSCO proposed language change for "Consent for Utility for Construction Project in Drainage Easement". Mr. Storer noted that he doesn't remember receiving that email and for Hahn to resend it.

Mr. Hahn reminded the Board that at the last meeting, NIPSCO Utility had sent in a Consent for Utility for Construction Project in Drainage Easement on the Craven tile drain in Harrison Township, section 16, range 12E and had crossed out some language and was not approved. Hahn provided the document showing the cross-out language, and noted Mr. Storer had prepared some new language on page 1. Sections A.B.C.D. and page 4. The prepared instrument (bottom of page) should read Attorney Mr. Storer as the Wells County Attorney. Hahn noted that he can see the concerns and the revision needed but also sees the utilities companies have had some language that exempts us and the contractor for any damages, so NIPSCO had sent an email with proposed language change. Mr. Storer will look at the email and correspond with Hahn on the language change for the next meeting on August 4th.

Hahn made note that we have another utility company wanting to file a Consent for Utility for Construction Project in Drainage Easement, but we have them waiting for the new language on the form to be approved, which the company noted they don't need the form until the end of August.

Continued July 21, 2025

New Business:Additional Quote for On-Call Emergency Drain Repair Maintenance Contracts:

Mr. Hahn mentioned he received another contractor signed contract for the On-Call Emergency Drain Repair and Maintenance. Hahn mentioned that Jack Ford of J & J Renovation have worked in the past for Wells County and his rates are in line with the other contractor's rates. The Board members reviewed the contractor's list of costs on equipment and labor, and with Hahn recommendation to approve J & J Renovation contract.

Mr. Stringer motioned to approve the additional J & J Renovation submitted for On-Call Emergency Drain Repair as recommended. Mr. Vanover 2nd. Mr. Gerber concurred, motion carried 3-0.

Wm. Pace-McClain Open Drain-Nottingham Township:

Mr. Hahn mentioned that contractor Penrod Exc. has completed bank repairs on the Pace-McClain open drain in Nottingham Township, section 12, range 12E 500E North of 800S. Hahn noted the contractor pulled back bank in several areas, placed riprap, and seeded the bank.

Grant County-5th Joint Board Member:

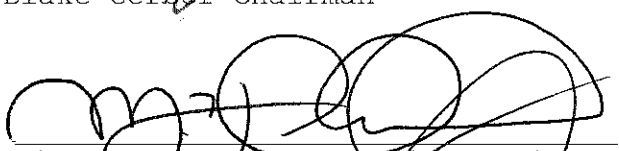
Mr. Hahn mentioned he received a call from Grant County looking for a 5th joint board member to serve sometime in September or October. Hahn noted the hearing will be between Grant and Blackford County therefore need a 5th member that has no ties to those two counties. Hahn mentioned that he is willing to serve as the 5th joint board member but if a date is picked and has other prior commitments he would like for one of the Drainage Board members to be willing to serve. Mr. Vanover noted that since he is in the southern district he would be willing to serve if need be. Hahn noted he will receive a letter of a joint board being formed and will keep the Board informed as details are received.

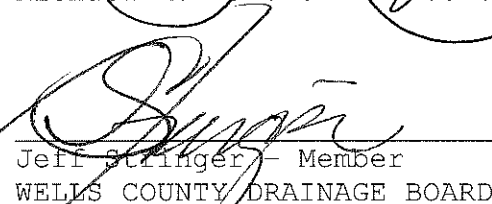
Adjournment:

Mr. Stringer motioned to adjourn the Drainage Board regular meeting at 4:45 p.m. Mr. Vanover 2nd. Mr. Gerber concurred, motion carried 3-0.

*Next regular scheduled Drainage Board meeting will be on Monday-August 4, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.


Blake Gerber Chairman


Michael K. Vanover Vice Chairman


Jeff Stringer - Member
WELLS COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD

ATTEST: 
Diana L. Collins
WELLS DRAINAGE BOARD SECRETARY