

Wells County Drainage Board Minutes
Monday- October 20, 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 October 6, 2025.

Mr. Vanover motioned to approve the Drainage Board regular meeting minutes on October 6, 2025. Mr. Stringer 2nd. Concurred by Mr. Gerber, motion carried 3-0.

Old Business:

Craven Tile Drain-NIPSCO-Harrison Township:

Mr. Hahn asked Attorney Ted Storer if the Attorney from NIPSCO has contacted him on the Craven tile drainage easement language. Mr. Storer replied yes, they have responded but just an acknowledgment at this point.

Carl Helms Tile Drain Replacement-Lancaster Township:

Mr. Hahn reported that he attended a meeting with the City of Bluffton Mayor Mentzer and other department heads on the Carl Helms tile in Lancaster Township, section 33, Range 12E. Hahn mentioned that the Water Department had put a camera in the 39-inch Carl Helms tile and found tree roots in a portion of the tile. Hahn noted he has not viewed the video of the tile area yet but was told it was in an area of a group of trees. Hahn mentioned the City wants to hire a consultant to inspect the tile system's condition and if it would be feasible to receive jurisdiction. Mr. Stringer asked what the next step or options would be to set up maintenance or abandon the tile system. Hahn noted yes there would be options to establish a maintenance requiring a landowner to receive 30-day notice before hearing, and a 20-day judicial review after in paper, and possibly to collect in 2026. Also, an option would be to abandon the tile system that would still have to send out notices for a hearing to all affected landowners with judicial review. Mr. Vanover asked if it would be an option to have a joint share-cost in the repair with the City of Bluffton be a possibility before going through the hearings and setting up a maintenance fee. Mr. Stringer mentioned that it could be an option too. Hahn noted that make sense and it could be a possibility. Mr. Storer ask we are currently making a replacement tile repair now and paying for it. Hahn noted yes we are. Mr. Vanover asked if any of the regulated tiles that are in a wooded area or several trees on a property are camera before the roots become a problem. Hahn mentioned that we do not, with almost 400 miles of tile in the county, we rely on the landowners/tenants of the land to say something if something is wrong and that seems works, also we do not have any equipment or crew. Hahn mentioned if a tile is replaced in or along a woods we replace with a solid double wall tile.

Newton Chalfant Open Drain-Jefferson Township:

Mr. Hahn mentioned he received a quote from 3D Company Inc. for \$4,574.98 not to exceed \$4,800.00 to excavate dirt, riprap and seed the area on the Newton Chalfant open drain in Jefferson Township, section 9, range 12E. Hahn noted 3D is currently working for INDOT as a part of the INDOT bridge project just north of Ossian on State Road 1. Hahn recommends 3D company Inc. quote \$4,574.98 not to exceed \$4,800.00 since they are already up there, and the price is reasonable.

Mr. Stringer motioned to accept the quote from 3D Company Inc. \$4,574.98 not to exceed \$4,800.00 to excavate dirt, riprap, and seed as recommended. Mr. Vanover 2nd. Concurred by Mr. Gerber, motion carried 3-0.

New Hoosier Highway Project Report-County Engineer Nate Whitacre:

Mr. Stringer asked about the new Hoosier Highway road project if the side ditches have been mowed. Mr. Whitacre reported that the side ditches have been mowed, and areas have been seeded. Whitacre noted that the grade is less to be desired but has not been a final project meeting date set yet. Mr. Hahn reported on a private tile that was hit during the project and now has been rerouted.

New Business:

Hahn noted that there is no new business to report on.

Adjournment:

Mr. Stringer motioned to adjourn the Drainage Board regular meeting at 4:55 p.m. Mr. Vanover 2nd. Concurred by Mr. Gerber, motion carried 3-0.

*Next regular scheduled Drainage Board meeting will be on Monday-November 3, 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