

Wells County Drainage Board Minutes  
Monday - January 5, 2026 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; Surveyor Jarrod Hahn; Secretary Diana Collins.

Determination of Quorum:

A quorum was present for the meeting.

Re-Organize Wells County Drainage Board 2026:

Mr. Gerber opened the Drainage Board meeting and turned the floor over to Mr. Hahn to re-organize the Wells County Drainage Board 2026 officers. Mr. Hahn mentioned the nominations are opened for a chairman and vice-chairman, and to reappoint the attorney and secretary.

Mr. Stringer motioned for officers and appointees to retain their positions for 2026, Blake Gerber as the Chairman, Michael Vanover as Vice Chairman; appointees Attorney Ted Storer and Diana Collins as the secretary. Mr. Vanover 2<sup>nd</sup>. Concurred by Mr. Gerber, motion carried 3-0.

County Engineer Nate Whitacre-Proposal Technical Adviser:

Mr. Hahn mentioned that the Drainage Board members received an email from the County Engineer Nate Whitacre who is proposing to serve only as a technical advisor and not attend the Drainage Board meetings since Mr. Hahn has become a Professional Land Surveyor. Mr. Whitacre asked not to be appointed as a member of the Drainage Board for 2026, but to be available as a technical advisor should my professional input be needed. Hahn asked the Board members if they have any objections to the proposal, no one had any objections.

Mr. Stringer motioned for the County Engineer Nate Whitacre not to be a member on the Drainage Board but to serve only as a technical advisor if the Surveyor should have the need. Mr. Vanover 2<sup>nd</sup>. Concurred by Mr. Gerber, motion carried 3-0.

Minutes:

Mr. Gerber mentioned the next item is to approve the Board's regular meeting minutes on December 15, 2025.

Mr. Vanover motioned to approve the Drainage Board regular meeting minutes on December 15, 2025. Mr. Stringer 2<sup>nd</sup>. Concurred by Mr. Gerber, motion carried 3-0.

Old Business:

Hahn reported that there are no new reports to be made on the ongoing projects for the Carnes open and the Craven tile Drains.

Carl Helms Tile Drain-Tree Roots-Lancaster Township:

Mr. Hahn mentioned that Culy Contracting from Winchester jettied out a portion of the Carl Helms tile in Lancaster Township, section 33, Range 12E.

Hahn reported the 39-inch tile had tree roots blocking 50 percent of the tile and the contractor has opened it to get a good flow. Hahn noted that Culy Construction is to send a file of the camera viewing the tile. Mr. Stringer asked if the City of Bluffton is interested in taking over the Carl Helms tile system. Hahn feels that they will but have not committed to it. Mr. Gerber questions if the City would trust just seeing a camera view. Hahn feels that they would for the City of Bluffton wants to view that footage with the roots in it. Hahn noted contractor Culy Construction had mentioned of a product that is something like foam to put in the tile.

Carl Helms Tile and Prong 1:

Hahn mentioned that Habig Construction is working on groundwork and building the building pad, and hopefully to start replacing the Carl Helms Prong #1 18-inch tile as weather permits.

Jacob Johnson Joint Drain-Jurisdiction Allen County Union and Jefferson Townships:

Mr. Hahn mentioned the Jacob Johnson joint drain in Union Township, Sections 1 and 2, Range 11E and Jefferson Township, Section 6, Range 12E to increase the assessment will be in March sometime. Hahn noted that we collecting information on our side to send to Allen County who holds jurisdiction.

Continued January 5, 2026

New Business:2026 Certify Collection of Watersheds-Detail Listing Sheet:

Mr. Hahn provided a detailed listing sheet on the watersheds and their assessment amounts to certify for collection for 2026. Hahn noted the orange highlighted areas are drains that are either at or close to 4 times the annual amount but has plans to use the funds in upcoming projects this year, therefore remains to collect. Hahn mentioned the green color is to turn back on is for Flat Creek and Maddux watersheds for collection. Hahn mentioned the red color is to turn off the Kelly and Runkle watersheds. Hahn also mentioned the yellow highlights are drains that the assessment collections are already turned off and will remain off. Mr. Hahn noted that all other drains not highlighted or mentioned will remain on for collections for 2026.

Mr. Vanover motioned to approve to certify for collection of non-highlighted and the orange highlighted for collection watersheds for 2026, also to turn back on Flat Creek and Maddux watersheds for collection, and stop collecting the Kelly and Runkle watershed as recommended. Mr. Stringer 2<sup>nd</sup>. Concurred by Mr. Gerber, motion carried 3-0.

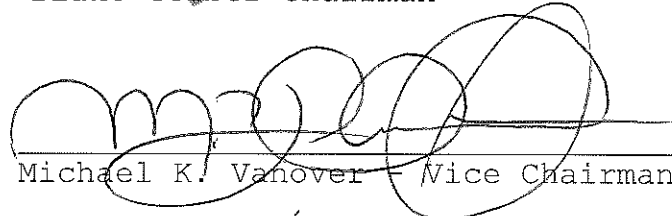
Mr. Vanover motioned to adjourn the Drainage Board regular meeting at 4:44 p.m. Mr. Stringer 2<sup>nd</sup>. Concurred by Mr. Gerber, motion carried 3-0.

\*Next regular scheduled Drainage Board meeting will be on Tuesday-January 20, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.




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 Blake Gerber Chairman




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 Michael K. Vanover - Vice Chairman




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 Jeff Stringer - Member  
 WELLS COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD

ATTEST:   
 Diana L. Collins  
 WELLS DRAINAGE BOARD SECRETARY