

## WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL

### REGULAR SESSION February 3, 2026

The Wells County Council met in regular session Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 7PM in the Wells County Carnegie Annex, 223 W Washington St., Bluffton, IN. Present at the meeting were: Seth Whicker, Vicki Andrews, Todd Mahnensmith, Scott Elzey, Brian Lambert, Brandon Harnish and Deputy Auditor Lisa Eichler. Steve Huggins was present on the phone, not a voting member.

**Minutes:** A motion was made by Todd Mahnensmith, seconded by Brian Lambert to approve the minutes from January 6, 2026, regular session and January 8, 2026, joint executive session. Motion carried 6-0.

**Additional Appropriations:** A motion was made by Vicki Andrews, seconded by Todd Mahnensmith to approve the Additional Appropriation request in LIT Public Safety fund. Motion carried 6-0. A motion was made by Vicki Andrews, seconded by Brandon Harnish to approve the Additional Appropriation request in the PHEP Cooperative Agreement Grant fund. Motion carried 6-0.

**EMA Auto Request and Annual Review:** EMA Director John Petro provided an annual review regarding his department. Petro outlined training hours completed, and classes taken. Petro also hosted multiple training sessions for departments from all units of government. Discussed was Petro's desire to implement a volunteer program to assist fire and law enforcement personnel with traffic control. Petro would like to purchase two or three vehicles from Community Corrections, that are not currently being used, for that program and would need an Additional Appropriation for that purchase.

**Library Updates:** Sarah MacNeill and Dayle Mentzer presented an update of statistics for the Wells County Public Library. 438 children have completed 1,000 books before kindergarten program. Sarah discussed many accomplishments the library has seen throughout 2025 such as participation in community events, cooperating with local businesses, daycare storytime visits, offered tax assistance, free lunches during school breaks, a mini golf event, and hosted many programs for all ages. 2025 stats were holding steady from 2024. 53% of the potential population have a library card. Circulation material is up by .34%, eAudiobooks increased by 10%, eBooks decreased by 10%, eMagazines increased by 35%, Hoopla increased by 35%, the public computer use decreased by .5%, wireless connections increased by 6%, Meeting use room is up by 35%, the study room increased 6%, book-a-librarian increased by 13%, and notary services increased by 8%. Due to state legislation an estimated \$200,000 will need to be reduced from the library budget. MacNeill listed digital and physical offerings that will be discontinued as well as increases in meeting room fees.

**Highway Job Classifications and Matrix:** Matt Witt addressed the County Council regarding two additional job classifications and an updated pay matrix allowing for those classifications. New positions for lead mechanic and crew leader (2) were discussed with County Council; job descriptions were supplied for each. The crew leader positions will be filled with existing employees; the lead mechanic will be a new hire to fill an existing mechanic position. In addition, a proposed pay matrix including the new job classifications was provided for review. Brandon Harnish addressed an issue with changing the current salary ordinance mid-year and would like to wait until budget meetings to address the changes. A motion was made by Todd Mahnensmith, seconded by Brian Lambert to approve the job descriptions and updated pay matrix, effective February 7, 2026. Motion carried 5-1, Brandon Harnish opposed.

**Bluffton Economic Development Board Nomination:** A motion was made by Scott Elzey, seconded by Brian Lambert to nominate Phil Swain as the Wells County Council nominee to the Bluffton Economic Development Commission for a four-year term and allow the President to sign the certificate of nomination. Motion carried 6-0. The certificate of nomination will be given to the City of Bluffton for the appointment.

**Adjourned:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM. The motion was made by Vicki Andrews, seconded by Scott Elzey. Motion carried 6-0.

**WELLS COUNTY COUNCIL**

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President, Seth Whicker

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Vice President, Vicki Andrews

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Attest: Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor