

**Wells County Commissioners
Wells County Council**

Special Session March 1, 2024

The Wells County Commissioners and Wells County Council met in special session on Friday, March 1, 2024, at 9:30AM in the Commissioner's Room of the Wells County Carnegie Annex, Bluffton, IN. Those in attendance were Commissioners, Jeff Stringer and Blake Gerber, Council members, Vicki Andrews, Brandon Harnish, Todd Mahnensmith, and Scott Elzey, and County Auditor, Lisa McCormick. Commissioner Michael Vanover, Council members Steve Huggins, Seth Whicker, and Brian Lambert were absent.

Sheila Paul, Northern Regional Director of Health First Indiana, spoke to Wells County Commissioners and Wells County Council regarding 2025 health funding. Also attending from Health First Indiana were Anne Lowe, Northern Regions Health Services Director, Ruthie Olson, Northern Region School Health Liaison, and Mike Sutton, Central Regional Director. Wells County is eligible for a minimum of \$549,510 in health funding, a maximum of \$732,680. The local match minimum is \$137,377.50, maximum is \$183,170, which is satisfied via property tax revenue. The current property tax levy for the Health Department is \$154,565, which would satisfy the minimum local match. The Board of Commissioners has a deadline of June 1, 2024, to opt in for 2025 funding. At least 60% of the funding must be spent on core services such as communicable disease prevention and control, student health, testing and counseling for HIV, HCV and STI, referrals to clinical care, vital statistics, fatality review, TB control and case management, chronic disease prevention and education, tobacco prevention and cessation, maternal and child health, emergency preparedness, childhood lead screening and case management, and child and adult immunizations. No more than 40% of funding may be spent on food protection, residential onsite sewage system permitting and inspections, sanitary inspection and surveys of public buildings, pest/vector control and abatement, orders for decontamination of property used to illegally manufacture controlled substance, sanitary operation of tattoo parlors and body piercing facilities, public/semipublic pool inspection and testing and sanitary operation of facilities where eyelash extensions are performed. The new funding will be received into a new non-reverting local public health services fund. Grants with local partners can be issued to provide core public health services. 10% of funding can be budgeted for capital projects. Any contract or new hire must be posted publicly for 30 days prior to signing the contract or hiring new personnel. The Health Department would be responsible for submitting a proposed budget to the State. This budget would go through the same budgeting process through the Wells County Council as all other County budgets. The Health Department will be responsible for submitting tracking to the state regarding how the funds are used and what percentage of key performance indicators have been met. Sheila Paul stated that this should be a community effort, with the funding used to expand existing and create new health services. Paul also encouraged officials to review the 2023 Senate Enrolled Act 4 and to work with our county attorney.

Wells County Commissioners

President, Jeff Stringer

Vice President, Michael K Vanover

Member, Blake Gerber

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor

Wells County Council

President, Seth Whicker

Vice President, Vicki Andrews

Todd Mahnensmith

Steve Huggins

Scott Elzey

Brandon Harnish

Brian Lambert

Attest: _____
Lisa McCormick, Wells County Auditor