

**STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2023**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 2:30 PM, in person at the Starke County Annex Building, Knox, Indiana, with Charles Chesak, Mark Gourley, and Don Binkley, present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner President Chares Chesak directly at 2:30 PM.

**INDIANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

Shield Paul, Regional Administrator, from the Indiana State Department of Health came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss the new health funding initiative. She explained that Health First Indiana is from Senate Bill 4 that went through the legislator because public health in Indiana has been underfunded and it is showing in the health of the communities. They wanted to get this money to local health departments so that we could make decisions based on what is best for our own community. She advised that they have the option to opt in or opt out of the funding. If they opt in there are two funding amounts the first year is half of the amount of the second year because the State knows that the first year is a planning year. Mrs. Paul advised that at her level they are also building a team to help get resources to the local health departments. She is the regional administrator, they also have a public health nurse, maternal and child health specialist, and a school liaison health specialist. Another part of her team is a financial specialist and a data analyst to also health the local health department. She advised they would have to opt in by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mrs. Paul stated a budget has to be submitted by September 1<sup>st</sup> as well, but the budget can be very broad and very high level because they understand local health departments may not know what they are going to need just year. Right now, local health departments have a health maintenance fund and a trust account and this is what the new funding is replacing, currently Starke County gets about \$50,000 per year with their legacy funding and this is the funding that we would still receive if we opt out. If the county opts in for 2024 we would be getting a little over \$254,000. This is not a grant so this is non-reverting and non-diverting, the money does not go back to the state. The second year in 2025 the funding amount would be about \$508,000. She explained that what happens is if a county does not opt in that money goes to another county. At least 60% of the funds have to go towards health services or preventative services and 40% is required to go towards regulatory services. There is a 10% cap on what they are calling capital outlays, this would be land, vehicles, and buildings.

Mrs. Paul advised that ideally, they are wanting local health departments to have a solid foundation and plan of what they are going to be spending the money on the the programs they want to be put in place by the end of 2025. Councilman Pearman explained that during a council conference presentation given by Dr. Weaver, she had EMS on there as well, he asked what could be purchased for EMS. Mrs. Paul explained that EMS was originally in the plan but the legislators took that out. She advised there are some things they could still do if it falls into the core services. For example, if it is for emergency preparedness and radios need to be purchased then that would fall into the core health of emergency preparedness. Councilman Pearman asked if there are any rules about not investing the money. Mrs. Paul advised that she asked that question and she has not gotten an answer for that but she will check again. Anything they are spending this funding specifically on has to go towards the core services and any contracts or new positions that are created with this funding have to be posted 30 days.

Commissioner Gourley asked about KPI's and how much of the defining the KPI's are we going to be responsible for and how many are we going to inherit from the state is we go along with the funding. Mrs. Pail explained that every core service has a KPI assigned to it and that is a measurable metric to say what the health department has done for that service. She advised that the local health department may need to develop their own KPI to make sure they are going to meet the state KPI standard. The local KPI should do whatever it needs to do as well as the state KPI but also whatever it is locally you want done. Commissioner Gourley advised he wants to see what we have to report on before we accept the money. Mrs. Paul advised that understand is going to take some time and ideally by year two (2025) they want to see strides in meeting those KPI's but in year one it is not an expectation. Further discussion was held around the room regarding the public health initiative.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

With there being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Binkley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 PM.

**MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2023**

---

Charles Chesak, President

---

Mark Gourley, Vice-President

---

Don Binkley, Member

---

Rachel Oesterreich, Auditor and Secretary to  
the Board of Commissioners