



UPDATE Boone County Local Income Tax (LIT) Fact Sheet

Oct. 11 Local Income Tax joint public hearing:

- A .5 percent increase in Boone County's local income tax was unanimously approved on Tuesday, Oct. 11.
- The Boone County Council unanimously approved a resolution in September, and on Oct. 11, the governing bodies for six communities (Advance, Jamestown, Lebanon, Thorntown, Whitestown and Zionsville) all voted for the tax increase. The Advance, Jamestown, Whitestown and Zionsville town councils unanimously supported the tax.
- The tax, currently set at 1 percent, will increase to 1.5 percent on Jan. 1.
- The tax will create an estimated additional \$12.7 million in revenue annually. In total, 13 police and fire departments throughout the county will receive funds to address their local safety needs.

Background:

- In Boone County, Sheriff Mike Nielsen and local public safety officials led the charge for an increase to the LIT to support public safety, which many local leaders say has been underfunded for years.
- The current income tax rate of 1 percent was adopted over 30 years ago (1986). No increases to local income taxes have been implemented since this date.
- Why .5 %? With the .5% increase, all of the Boone County public safety agencies will receive revenue to address their funding shortfalls. The county could set aside funding each year for the construction of a juvenile detention facility or new jail in the next eight years.
- In Zionsville, a .5 percent LIT increase would lead to an estimated \$3.8 million revenue annually and would be solely dedicated to public safety.
- The Town is understaffed in its public safety departments. The Zionsville Police Department is understaffed by six officers, and the Zionsville Fire Department is understaffed by 12 firefighters.
- To maintain public safety levels over the past few years, the Town of Zionsville has been and is currently using funds that would have gone toward infrastructure, parks and other town services to support basic public safety needs.
- 47 other counties have implemented a public safety Local Option Income Tax (LOIT). Currently Boone County ranks 71st of 92 counties with our income tax. If the new public safety LIT of .5% passes, it would move Boone County's income tax rate into a tie with ten other counties (44-51 position).
- Public meetings took place across the county to educate the public in all aspects of this public safety LIT, including presentations at every city/town council in Boone County. The Zionsville Town Council discussed the public safety LIT at seven meetings which included comments from the public at each.
- **Zionsville Police Department**
 - Calls for service have increased 51% in the last six years.
 - New construction will bring in nearly 1,000 new homes and numerous new businesses that will require town services.



- Currently staffed at 29 full-time officers – well below what is recommended for a community Zionsville’s size.
- The plan is to hire seven police officers and one additional office staff person of the next three years just to get to the recommended staffing levels.

• **Zionsville Fire Department**

- Seen a 23% increase in incident responses over the past four years.
- Minimum standards (according to NFPA 1710) call for a crew of four firefighters on each engine, four firefighters on each ladder truck and two on each ambulance. Zionsville is unable to comply with NFPA 1710 while other neighboring agencies have (Pike Township, Carmel, Lebanon).
- There is a need for three more paramedics and six more full-time firefighters to reach minimum standards, with six additional firefighters to address the fastest growing county in the state.

• **More resources**

- Boone County Sheriff website: www.boonecountyindianasheriff.com/Default.aspx?tabid=935
- Town of Zionsville website: www.zionsville-in.gov
- Recent *IBJ* article:
www.ibj.com/articles/60779-boone-county-officials-vote-to-increase-local-income-tax
- Recent *Zionsville Times Sentinel* articles:
www.timessentinel.com/council-unanimously-oks-public-safety-income-tax-increase/article_97c6e0ea-9026-11e6-8309-4f597cd79541.html
www.timessentinel.com/news/local_news/safety-tax-increase-passes-first-test/article_c0dc0b0e-7a87-11e6-9f83-77b533cbe0b7.html
www.timessentinel.com/news/local_news/police-fire-officials-make-case-for-tax/article_96c5fcbe-52fa-515f-80a3-fe17db722427.html
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