

Area Partnership 2010 Primary Election Candidate Forum

HOSTED BY THE NORTHSIDE
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

APRIL 12, 2010

Open versus closed primary

- Open primary: primary elections in which eligible voters do not need to be registered party members
- Closed primary: primary elections in which only registered party members may vote

What the Indiana Code says

IC 3-10-1-6

A voter may vote at a primary election:

1. If the voter, at the last general election, voted for a majority of the regular nominees of the political party holding the primary election; or
2. If the voter did not vote at the last general election, but intends to vote at the next general election for a majority of the regular nominees of the political party holding the primary election

What's On the Ballot: Federal and State

- Federal
 - Senate (contested Republican)
 - Representatives to the House (contested Republican and Democrat)
- State
 - ½ of the state senators (district 15)
 - All of the state representatives (contested Republican district 81)
 - Delegates to the convention
 - Secretary of State
 - Treasurer
 - Auditor

What's On the Ballot: County

- County
 - Prosecuting attorney
 - Clerk of the Courts
 - Auditor
 - Recorder
 - Sheriff
 - Assessor
 - County commissioner, district 2 and 3 (contested Republican)
 - Council (1st and 3rd contested Republican)

What's On the Ballot: School Boards

- Schools
 - East Allen County School Board
 - Northwest Allen County School Board
 - Southwest Allen County School Board

County Government Offices

County Office	Required by Constitution	Required by Statute	Term Limits
Sheriff	X		8 / 12 Years
Clerk of the Courts	X		8 / 12 Years
Coroner	X		8 / 12 Years
Surveyor	X		No
Auditor	X		8 / 12 Years
Recorder	X		8 / 12 Years
Treasurer	X		8 / 12 Years
Commissioners		X	No
County Council		X	No
Assessor		X	No

County Government

“The structure of county government in Indiana does not allow for a focal point of executive and administrative authority in the county. Instead there is a dispersion of executive and administrative power, mainly due to the number of elected county administrative officers, each with statutorily vested powers and duties. Because the chain of command is vaguely defined, the need for developing cooperative attitudes and a spirit of genuine teamwork among all elected officials is extremely important.”

—from the Indiana County Government Handbook prepared by the Association of Indiana Counties

Allen County Organization Chart



Board of Commissioners

- Three commissioners elected to staggered four year terms
- Serve as the “county executive” and as the “county legislative body”
- Indiana legislation enables county commissioners to appoint a “county administrator”, who serves at the pleasure of and under the supervision of the board of commissioners. Allen County does not have a county administrator.

Board of Commissioners (continued)

- Makes appointments to boards, commissions, and other agencies
- Receives bids and authorizes contracts
- Issues bonds
- Prepares the annual budget for the part of the budget under the direct control of the commissioners
- Recommends to the council a package of salaries and benefits for the county
- Audits and authorizes claims against the County
- Controls and maintains all county property including the courthouse, jail, and other properties
- Serves as the County Drainage Board with the assistance of the county surveyor
- Serves on the Solid Waste District

Board of Commissioners (continued)

- Contracts with private people or corporations for emergency services
- Exercises the county's power of eminent domain
- Establishes, maintains, and improves streets, roads, and highways in unincorporated areas of the county
- Hears appeals of township assistance claims that were denied by the township trustee
- Provides veteran relation services
- Establishes and enforces minimum building standards
- Maintains a county correction program for non-violent offenders
- Provides for the organized planning of development in unincorporated areas of the county through a planning commission

County Council

- Elected to serve four year terms without term limits
- Three at-large members are elected during presidential elections
- Four district council members are elected during mid-term elections
- In 89 of the 91 counties, the county council is strictly a fiscal body

County Council (continued)

- Performs several fiscal functions
 - Fixes the tax rate for the county
 - Imposes the tax levy
 - Makes appropriations to be paid out of the county treasury
 - Adopts the annual budget for the county
 - Incurs debt for the county
 - Appropriates funds after the budget is set
 - Transfers balance in dormant funds to the general fund
 - Fixes salaries for employees paid by the county funds
 - Approves tax abatements

Township Officials

- There are 20 townships in Allen County with the largest in land area being Wayne Township (42.3 sq. mi.) and the smallest being Scipio Township (13.3 sq. mi.).
- There are 4 types of township officials.
 - Trustees
 - Assessors
 - Board of Advisors

Township Trustee

- Elected to 4 year terms without term limits
- There are 1,008 townships in Indiana.

Township Trustee (continued)

- Administer township assistance
- Provide fire and emergency medical services in unincorporated areas of the township
- Eradicate weeds
- Keep records of the official proceedings of the township office
- Receive and disburse all funds for the township
- Care for township properties and abandoned cemeteries within the township
- Build and monitor fence lines when necessary
- Issue buggy plates
- Collect the township's dog tax

Township Advisory Board

- Elected to 4 year terms without term limits
- Three members on each advisory board

Township Advisory Board (continued)

- Serve as the fiscal body of the township
- Adopt the annual budget
- Fix the tax rate
- Impose property tax levies
- Fix salaries
- Authorize the incurring of debt
- Approve contracts
- Oversee bonds and warrants
- Serve as the township Board of Finance

Allen County and Townships

