

# Townships hear about health district issues

## *LCHD levy committee wants association's support*

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Examiner Staff Writer

Members of the Logan County Township Association are concerned about the future funding of the Logan County Health District, as was evident at the association's quarterly meeting Thursday at an Ohio Caverns shelter house. Township trustees and fiscal officers asked many questions of the health district levy committee, whose members attended at the invitation of Township Association President Don Bradley. The Friends of the Logan County Health District levy committee is working to promote the agency's 10-year, 1-mill replacement levy that will appear on the November ballot, and is interested in gaining support from the township association members.

"I think with your support, it will go a long way with voters," Bellefontaine Mayor and Committee Chairman Adam Brannon said to the group. "For this to work, we need a concerted effort from around the county," County Commissioner John Bayliss said. Mr. Brannon explained if the levy does not meet voter approval, then the health district's operations will be funded by the inside millage, which would result in less overall funding for the townships and municipalities.

Some of the possible annual contribution amounts from various townships could include \$129,000 from Stokes Township, \$67,000 from Perry Township, \$27,000 from Monroe Township and \$14,000 from Lake Township, as determined by the county auditor based on current property values.

Several association members asked why the townships have to help fund the health district in this situation. In response, Mr. Bayliss said

it is an Ohio Revised Code requirement. Health Commissioner Dr. Boyd Hoddinott further explained: "We are one of the few health districts in the state that is not funded by inside millage. We have been funded by tax dollars for the past 30 years, prior to which we were funded by inside millage." Stokes Township Trustee Dustin Wickersham wanted to know what will happen to health district programs and staff in the event that the levy fails.

"What should we tell our constituents about the effects of the levy?" he asked. Dr. Hoddinott responded, "There will be a backup of service for sure. Those who want to obtain birth or death certificates will have to wait a longer period. "We also would cancel the nuisance abatement program. We performed about 400 investigations last year." He said the school nursing program, where a school nurse was provided free of charge to each of the county schools, has already been cut starting in September. The nursing division faces further program cuts, such as in immunizations, if the levy does not pass. Former health commissioner Dr. William Verbsky said staff layoffs would be likely in the event of levy failure. "We have no authority over who stays or who goes — that is determined by how much funding we have for their program and position."

The township association did not take a count of how many members wanted to support the levy committee. Instead, Mr. Bradley encouraged members to attend the next levy committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 31, in the Bellefontaine City Council Chambers.