

# I N V E N T T O M O R R O W

Our community's *action* project

## Local Government 101 Report

1. **Five Presentations** of Government 101 were presented in Town Hall Type Meeting throughout Allen County, November 15<sup>th</sup> (Homestead), November 18<sup>th</sup> (New Haven), November 22<sup>nd</sup> (Carroll), December 6<sup>th</sup> (Grabill Park Pavilion), December 8<sup>th</sup> (South Side).

2. The **total number of attendees was 98**. This includes anyone who signed in at the registration table available at each meeting.

Homestead = 26 (November 15<sup>th</sup>)    New Haven = 28 (November 18<sup>th</sup>)

Carroll = 23 (November 22<sup>nd</sup>)    Grabill = 12 (December 6<sup>th</sup>)

South Side = 21 (December 8<sup>th</sup>)

3. A total of **32 Comment Cards** were collected at the five meetings.

Homestead = 4

New Haven = 12

Carroll = 9

Grabill = 3

South Side = 6

4. **Comments** (Not all attendees answered all five questions on the comment cards)

**1. What suggestions do you have for improving government in Allen County?**

“Eliminate duplicate office work.”

“Continue give/take seminars and involve citizen and officials”

“Reach out & bring in good jobs.”

“As with Plan IT! Allen- take this discussion- widely publicized- to get public input.”

“No change.”

“Look at what services can be combined.”

“I have to digest the info I received tonight.”  
“Integrate some if not all City and County services.”  
“More media coverage, inform citizens how to participate.”  
“City Manager with 12 Council members.”  
“Consolidation of Government where economically feasible.”

“Long-term planning by having Commissioners 6 year terms staggered by 2 years each. Create executive office, separate legislative office, etc.”

“Can any similar functions be consolidated under one level of Government versus eliminating a level? Where are there duplications?”

“School Districts spend way too much, Library expansion was too expensive, Allen County & Fort Wayne should combine.”

“Efficiency Effective”

**2. What, if any, concerns do you have with regard to local government structure in Allen County?**

“Fort Wayne taking over the County, local Government (Townships) being eliminated.”

“Fort Wayne take over?”

“Election of office holders makes for accountability to the public.”

“It is too cumbersome. Example: Rush to remodel the Memorial Coliseum rather than honestly investigating a downtown site.”

“I am concerned by the amount of \$ the Special Districts” contrast with the “watch dog” of having to be elected. They have taxing ability w/o accountabilities of having public opinion concerns.”

“With 20 Township Assessors-do they assess property equally from Township to Township? Does the number of employees in Sheriff Department reflect the population when it decreases in the rural area while Cities annex? Why have at-large districts for City Councils when changing to all districts so constitutions get better representation needless to have at-large when the Mayor is elected to represent ALL in city. Why is the Airport Authority so self-sufficient?”

“Why do I feel like I am not being represented? I do not live in an incorporated town and I feel decisions are being made about infrastructure/services without any citizen input.”

“Need combined.”

“Elected Officials are career employees for special interest groups far removed from the collective citizenry.”

“Most of this has been out of the public eye. Few citizens/customers involved, top-down.”

“Any change would take away the voice from the rural areas.”

“Maintaining accessibility and accountability of local depts. and services.”

“Would prefer fewer elected officials, i.e. merge some services.”

“Poor Planning-Planning Commission reacts. They are not proactive. We lack good infrastructure for expansion, i.e. 37 Stellhorn what a disaster! Explosive expansion without roads to support expansion!”

“Too politically controlled and managed, often to the detriment of residents.”

“Concerned with restructuring & loss of services, loss of representation at the local level & centralization of power.”

“Too governed by State=need more flexibility locally. Why two 911 systems?”

“Would not like to see a consolidation of County/City Government/ the rural areas get lost yet pay significant taxes.”

“Small towns/farms being swamped by political strength of larger cities.”

“Maintaining local input & open door contact close to the citizens being served. Not getting the cart in front of the horse.”

**3. As a result of this presentation do you have a better understanding of our local government and how our tax dollars are allocated?**

Yes: 24 – (1) “Nice job!”

NO: 1 - “ If only 2% is spent on Township-why not focus on the larger expenditure of public education of 55%?”

No Answer- 8

**4. Additional Comments and or Questions.**

“This is a good education for any citizen, in review of the State, Municipality & Town- could there be “a booklet” that any Resident can have in any household of official functions? Intro for Good Reference for Good Public Involvement & Awareness.

“Talk more about Taxes.”

“The complexity is a bit mind blowing. No wonder one can’t always find the answer to a problem quickly.”

“Will there be a Government 201?”

“I would like to know how to be more involved without running for office.”

“Open process. Law maker open forum, open Chamber sessions, Citizen Customer Outreach critical, Planned Publicity, Minority Community Outreach, Empower.”

“To know more. To keep “Big Cities and Rural Environs separate. Example: burning trash okay in country, not in City. EMS gets much Lower out in country than Fort Wayne.”

“I have six rental houses in Fort Wayne 7 180 acre farm in the County, so have a different perspective- the current Government works-why change?”

“Great discussion, especially good at handling questions. Problem sewer/ water service in annexed areas, esp. areas served by private utility.”

“Please inform me of future meetings.”

“Very informative. Thank you!”

“Very Informative.”

“Very good basic explanation of local government.”

“I appreciate the discussion regarding the information between officials/ departments. Issues emanating from these relationships are what should drive the debate over restructuring of Local Government.

“Metro Government from Fort Wayne would give Hoagland NO Government. Rural areas need separate vote FOR or AGAINST Metro. Gov. from City of Fort Wayne.”

“Many Thanks to those responsible for the program.”

“Privatize child support collection. City and County needs to own its accountability for its failure to meet the need of the constituents.”

“Nice job! Thank you-“