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Chandana Vavilala, M.D.
Health Officer

Meeting of the Lake County Board of Health

Date: February 4, 2026

Time: 7:30am

Location: Lake County Government Center Auditorium Room B103 or B-109

Call to Order - Meeting called to order by Dr. Nchekwube.

Roll Call

Members Present:

Cynthia Hoess, Chiedu Nchekwube, Deborah McCullough, Philip Golden, Leona Chandler -Felton, Dorian Patel, Dean Button,

Members Absent:

Marla Hoyer-Lareau, Michael Foreit;

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes 11/5/25

Phillip Golden motion to approve, Deborah McCullough 2nd - Motion Passes

Opening Remarks

Welcome and introduction of new board members, Dean Button and Dorian Patel. Ms. Patel has been in the healthcare field currently working at Powers Health. Mr. Button is the City Engineer in Hammond. Dr. Vavilala spoke of Lake County Health Departments' accomplishments in the last year. She spoke of the department's partners, outreach, staff expansion in scope of work, and the updated fee ordinance. She also reminded the board the State legislatures future votes regarding Health First Indiana, encouraging all members to advocate for sustained public health funding.

Health Department leadership presented on 2025 accomplishments in Food Safety, Environmental, Vital Records, Nursing, Shared Services (communications, education, billing) and Health First Indiana.

Old Business – Salary Adjustments

Discussion:

The board revisited the remaining salary requests for 5 positions; Deputy Administrator, Administrative Assistant, Billing Specialist, Lead Medical Assistant, and Immunizations Medical Assistant. Sheila Paul, Administrator, described how the scope of work has changed for each of these positions since the previous vote. Phillip Golden spoke about his previous hesitation, but stated he is confident the salaries are maintainable after review of our 10-year budget plan and leaderships understanding roles may need to change if Health First Indiana funding decreases. Dr. Hoess spoke of her



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new support for the salaries after reviewing the 10-year budget plan. There was also discussion for the need to attract and retain qualified staff.

ROLL CALL

Board Member Philip Golden Motion
Board Member Dr. Hoess Second
Board Member Dorian Patel
Board Member Dean Button
Board Member Dr. Nchekwube
Board Member Leona Chandler-Felton
Board Member Dr. McCullough

Motion passes 7 to 0

New Business

a. HFI Contract Updates – Attorney Sanghvi

Attorney Sanghvi discussed update to HFI contracts to address sections: 3.4.1 Conditional Payments based on contractor compliance; 4.3.1 Audit Requirements for Renewals; and 5.2 Scalability and Performance Review allowing Lake County Health Department to review contractor performance.

b. 2026 Health First Indiana Contracts Renewals for Approval

Denice Truly, HFI Manager, presented on each contract for renewal. The presentation included each agencies data, service metrics, and deliverable completion. A vote for renewals was held until the end of the presentation/question portion of the meeting.



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RESOLUTION 1 OF 6

Faith CDC: Food is Medicine

Chronic Health Disease Prevention: Preventing and reducing chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.

2025 (1yr) Grant Amount: \$200,000.00

2026 (9m) Renewal Amount Requested: \$150,000.00

Item Description	Price	Quantity	Total
PT Program Director	\$50	42 hours per month	\$18,900
PT Program Assistant	\$20	100 hours per month	\$18,000
Fringe Benefits		7.65% FICA/MED and 3% Unemployment	\$3,690
Medically Tailored Meals	\$8.50	11,765 meals	\$75,002
Delivery	\$500	12 months	\$4,500
Contracted Dietician/Nutritionist	\$1,000	12 months	\$9,000
Exercise Coordinator	\$500	12 months	\$4,500
Financials and Reporting	\$1,000	12 months	\$9,000
Indirect Cost Rate	\$10,100	Overhead @ 8%	\$7,408
		Total Amount	\$150,000



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RESOLUTION 2 OF 6

Aliveness Project NWI: Bridge to Hope

Access and Linkage to Clinical Care: Facilitating access to essential healthcare services for all members of the community.

2025 (1yr) Grant Amount: \$200,000.00

2026 (9m) Renewal Amount Requested: \$150,000.00

Item Description	Price	Quantity	Total
Program Director	\$11,700.00	1	\$11,700.00
Testing and Education Counselor	\$39,520.00	1	\$10,920.00
Nurse Practitioner	19,965.14	1	\$19,965.14
DIS Testing Counselor	\$13,125.00	1	\$13,125.00
Employee Benefits	\$6,128.11	1	\$6,128.11
General Office Supplies (Pens/Paper/Folders/Sanitization Supplies)	\$6,245.01	1	\$6,245.01
Condoms Supplies	\$6,037.98	1098	\$6,037.97
HIV Test Kits	\$28,000.00	1000	\$28,000.00
STI Test Kits	\$15,000.00	750	\$15,000.00
Linkage <u>To</u> Care Coordinator - Travel (Mileage)	\$.49	500	\$245.00
Uber Health Connect	\$80.00	125	\$10,000.00
Educational Flyers	\$3.50	300	\$1,050.00
Occupancy	\$700.00	Month	\$6,300.00
Utilities	\$196.85	Month	\$1,771.66
Supportive Client Services	\$2,078.78	6.5	\$13,512.11
Total Amount			\$150,000



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RESOLUTION 3 OF 6

Love of Arts: SHINE Café Youth and Family

Tobacco and Vaping Prevention and Cessation: Preventing and eliminating the risk of disease due to tobacco use and vaping.

Trauma and Injury Prevention: Preventing harm due to injury and substance use and facilitating access to trauma care.

Fatality Review: Analysis of data and potential causes of child deaths, fetal and infant mortality, and suicide/overdose fatality

2025 (1yr) Grant Amount: \$18,500.00

2026 (9m) Renewal Amount Requested: \$15,632.00

Item Description	Price	Quantity	Total
Program Manager	\$18.00 Per hr	.25TE	\$4,493
Peer Support Specialist	\$16.00 Per hr	.25FTE	\$3,994
Community Workshops	\$50	50 participants	\$2,500
Program Participant Workbook & Materials	\$40	50 participants	\$2,000
Indirect Cost Rate	\$1,800	1 time only	\$1,372
Fringe Benefits	\$1,592	0.15 of wages	\$1,273
Total Amount			\$15,632



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RESOLUTION 4 OF 6

Love of Arts: SHINE Café Transportation

Trauma and Injury Prevention: Preventing harm due to injury and substance use and facilitating access to trauma care.
Access and Linkage to Clinical Care: Facilitating access to essential healthcare services for all members of the community.

2025 (1yr) Grant Amount: \$37,500.00

2026 (9m) Renewal Amount Request: \$6,000.00

Item Description	Price	Quantity	Total
Certified Peer Recovery Coach	\$18.00	.125 FTE	\$4,680
Fringe Benefits	\$748	.15 x wages	\$702
Outreach and Demonstration Materials	\$1,000.00	1 time only	\$618
Total Amount			\$6,000



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RESOLUTION 5 OF 6

SAFE Coalition: A Better Way

Trauma and Injury Prevention: Preventing harm due to injury and substance use, and facilitating access to trauma care.

Maternal and Child Health: Services focused on the health and well-being of mothers, children, and families, including prenatal care.

2025 (1yr) Grant Amount: \$200,000.00

2026 (9m) Renewal Amount Requested: \$154,300.00

Item Description	Price	Quantity	Total
Program Participant Materials	\$75	60 participants	\$4500
Classes for moms in positive parenting finances, nourishment, child development, etc. plus Six weeks Certification Program held hybrid, LC Lib Merrillville by mental health professionals	\$100	Per week (multi- sessions)	\$4,000
One-on-one therapy (40 weeks/10 months)	\$40.00	15 participants/ twice a week	\$48,000
Group sessions for moms	\$65.00	Per session Twice weekly	\$5,200
Substance abuse/suicide prevention/ counseling/Referral management and mental health assessment	\$40	20 participants/ week	\$32,000
Toys for children	\$60.00	60 children	\$3,600
Training for Lake County, IN medical and allied professions personnel in identifying signs of sexual abuse, assault, trafficking	\$4000.00	Monthly training in three locations for 10 months	\$40,000.00
Monitoring progress and evaluation tools and Reporting metrics (see Appendix A)	\$1700	Monthly (and weekly) scales of progress and surveys measured on all participants	\$17,000.00
Total Amount			\$154,300

Discussion: It was noted the SAFE Coalition has not met their goals. They sill have trainings scheduled through March, therefor, not all goals will have been met. They also had scheduling issues with physicals preventing them from reaching their goals.



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RESOLUTION 6 of 6

Sounds of Sarah: Prevention Pathway Initiative: Youth and Community Prevention & Awareness Initiative

Trauma and Injury Prevention: Preventing harm due to injury and substance use and facilitating access to trauma care.

Fatality Review: Analysis of data and potential causes of child deaths, fetal and infant mortality, and suicide/overdose fatality.

2025 (1yr) Grant Amount: \$ 163,950.00

2026 (9m) Renewal Amount Requested: \$129,240.00

Table with 4 columns: Item Description, Price, Quantity, Total. Rows include Staff Salary & Fringe, Staff Travel, Ongoing Training, Community Education, Youth Program Participant Materials, Equipment printer, Education and Prevention, marketing, awareness outreach campaigns and Youth program materials, Resource Materials (Printing), General administrative expenses, and Total Amount.

All RENEWALS voted as one

ROLL CALL

- Board Member Philip Golden
Board Member Dr. Hoess
Board Member Dorian Patel
Board Member Dean Button
Board Member Dr. Nchekwube
Board Member Leona Chandler-Felton Second
Board Member Dr. McCullough Motion

Motion passes 7 to 0 – All in favor

Discussion: Dr. Hoess mentioned she likes the new reports, goal tracking and graphs to help the board better track grantee progress.



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Election of Officers

President:

Dr. Nchekwube nominated Phillip Golden. Phillip Golden respectfully declined.

Dr. McCullough nominated Dr. Nchekwube. Dean Button seconded Dr. Nchekwube's nomination.

ROLL CALL

Board Member Philip Golden

Board Member Dr. Hoess

Board Member Dorian Patel

Board Member Dean Button

Board Member Dr. Nchekwube

Board Member Leona Chandler-Felton

Board Member Dr. McCullough

Motion Passes: All in Favor

Vice President:

Dr. Nchekwube nominates Phillip Golden. Dean Button seconds the nomination. Dr. Hoess nominates herself.

Vote for Phillip Golden Nomination:

ROLL CALL

Board Member Philip Golden No

Board Member Dr. Hoess No

Board Member Dorian Patel No

Board Member Dean Button Yes

Board Member Dr. Nchekwube Yes

Board Member Leona Chandler-Felton No

Board Member Dr. McCullough No

Motion Fails

Dr. Hoess nominates herself for Vice President. Dr. McCullough seconded the motion.

Vote for Dr. Hoess Nomination:



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ROLL CALL

Board Member Philip Golden	Yes
Board Member Dr. Hoess	Yes
Board Member Dorian Patel	Yes
Board Member Dean Button	Yes
Board Member Dr. Nchekwube	Yes
Board Member Leona Chandler-Felton	Yes
Board Member Dr. McCullough	Yes

Motion Passes: All in Favor

Comments from the Board

Dr. Nchekwube make note of the number of Lake County Births vs Lake County Deaths, with the deaths at a much higher number. Sheila Paul state the numbers are of the number certificates issued by the department, not the actual number of births and deaths. Dr. McCullough stated she would like to see the actual number of births vs deaths going forward.

Dorian Patel asked if we are competing with hospitals, labs and pharmacies for services. Dr. Vavilala stated we are not in direct competition. The health departments goal is to provide patients timely services. Ms. Patel asked how long patients wait for lab results from the health department, Director of Nursing, Marianne Kundich, stated the typical turnaround time for blood draw is 48 hours, but we have several instant test results available in office. It was mentioned we could partner with local labs if needed in the future.

Comment from the Floor

Executive Director of For the Love of Arts: Shine Recovery thanked the board for their continued support and impact in Lake County, they are looking forward to another great year.

Upcoming Board of Health Meeting Dates:

2026 Proposed – 1st Wednesday February, June, September and November
June 3, 2026
Sept. 2, 2026
Nov. 4, 2026

Adjournment: Dr. Nchekwube

Next Meeting: June 3, 2026 at 7:30am at Lake County Government Center Auditorium Room B103 or B-109
Supporting documents available upon request.