

Jersey Voters To Consider Sales Tax Increase; Public Meeting To Be Held

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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JERSEYVILLE - Jersey County voters will see a question on their ballots on March 19, 2024 asking them to consider a local sales tax increase of 0.5% to help maintain several local government facilities, according to a recent letter from the Jersey County Board. A public meeting will be held on Thursday, Feb. 15 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Jersey County Government Building to answer any questions from the public.

“The Jersey County Board is asking for help from the voters of Jersey County to determine the path in maintaining the courthouse, Sheriff's Department, the government building, and all buildings and grounds owned by Jersey County,” the board wrote. “We have voted to put a public question on the ballot for voter consideration. To pay for public safety purposes, shall Jersey County be authorized to impose an increase on its share of local sales taxes by 0.5%?”

The board added that they’ve been identifying needed repairs for the past six years, and an assessment of the county’s buildings identified \$10 million worth of needed repairs, which has since been reduced to \$3.2 million for the highest-priority projects.

While the board originally intended to work on the additional projects over the next several years, they said “more emergency projects have arisen.” As Jersey County Sheriff Nick Manns mentioned in his [recent letter of support for the sales tax increase](#), the entrance to the Jersey County Courthouse is starting to sink due to a broken floor truss combined with the weight of the marble entrance floor. The courthouse elevator has failed inspection and was [temporarily closed for repairs last month](#).

“When I took office as your Sheriff a year ago, I knew I would oversee the sheriff’s office, jail, and court security. Still, I must admit I was a little surprised to find that according to Illinois statute, I was also responsible for the maintenance of our beloved courthouse which was built in 1893,” Manns wrote in his letter. “Unfortunately, it now stands in dire need of attention in the form of critical maintenance and important security upgrades.”

The 0.5% increase amounts to 50 extra cents per \$100 spent, which will go to the Public Safety Sales Tax fund, according to the county board. Sales of certain items are exempt from this tax increase, including fuel, farm equipment used by farmers, qualifying food, drugs, and medical appliances.

A public meeting will be held in the auditorium of the Jersey County Government Building located at 200 N. Lafayette St. on Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024, from 6 to 8 p.m. to answer questions from the public. For more information about the Public Safety Sales Tax, see the full letter from Manns in this [related story on Riverbender.com](#).

