

**GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**April 18, 2023**

Present: Ian Gilbert, Chair; Richard Chartrand, Vice-Chair; Phil Hathway; Josh Leviker; and Andrea Moroughan.

Others present: Legislators Larry Dolhof, Thomas Osborne, Lisa Virkler, and Jeffrey Nellenback; County Manager, Ryan Piche; County Treasurer, Eric Virkler; County Attorney, Joan McNichol; and Human Resources Director, Caitlyn Smith.

Committee Chair, Ian Gilbert, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Legislator Chartrand moved to approve the March 21, 2023 committee meeting minutes, seconded by Legislator Moroughan, and carried.

**Final Design of PSB Parking Lot project – GYMO Engineers**

Kevin Bayman, from GYMO introduced himself to the committee members. He showed a drawing of the existing Public Safety Building and the parking lot areas that surround it. There is visitor parking out front and the employees park along the side of the building in front of the EMS Garage. The areas that will be freshly paved will be the visitor parking out front, the employee parking area along the side, the current gravel parking area for trailers, the impound yard and access lane to it, and new seal coating on the recreation yard for the jail inmates.

The plan is to increase the parking spots for visitors and employees while decreasing the amount of area that is paved, which will be accomplished by reducing the two driving lanes to one in the visitor parking area. There will be a new security gate in front of the employee parking area, which will only allow employees through. Drainage areas are being addressed and fixed with different drains to the exchange pond. There will be access to the solar array area through the employee gated parking lot. In response to Joan McNichol, Kevin explained that there will be a speaker system to buzz into the PSB to allow delivery drivers or contractors to park in the side employee parking lot if necessary.

Ryan Piche, County Manager reported the history of why this capital project is needed. The parking lot is original to the building from 1991. At that point there wasn't a strong effort made to consider the storm drainage necessary for the area. One reason could be because there is bedrock near the surface which makes storm drainage expensive. Due to the issues of water not draining properly it needs to be fixed, which was the opinion of former Legislator King.

Eric Virkler, Treasurer questioned who parks in front of the building currently, Undersheriff McIntosh answered that it was correction officers, dispatch and visitors. Eric pointed out that he didn't think the additional parking spots out front

were necessary. Kevin stated that out front, the parking spaces increased from 24 to 28 and the employee parking area went from 25 to 30 spaces.

The preliminary cost estimate is \$1,165,000.00 and the schedule is to finish up the drawing which are 95% set, advertise the bid in the beginning of May, have bid opening towards the end of May so the award can be made at the June 6<sup>th</sup> Board meeting with a tentative start date of July 5<sup>th</sup> after the contract has been executed, and a finish deadline of October. The following spring, the contractor will handle the final restoration of the grass.

### **Current & Future Projects – Ian Gilbert, District 4 Legislator**

Legislator Ian Gilbert began with some history from 2010 through 2012. In 2010, there was a news article that the Board was looking into building a new 3-story building next to the Public Safety Building. Then, in 2012, the legislators began further discussions on a new building or renovations and trying to consolidate. At the end of 2012, the discussion picked up again on a new building. In 2013, the legislators had approved to go out to bid on a new building on Outer Stowe Street and received an estimated price of \$10 million, however they didn't manage to move anything forward. In November of 2013, the board rescinded the purchase of Lewis Lanes as the new location for a county office building.

In September of 2019, there was more articles on the lack of decisions from the board on this issue. Some thought if the board couldn't decide now it would be another six years before something would be decided, they thought this wasn't what good governance looked like.

If you look at a rough timeline it will show that in 2018 BCA did a facilities study which then began discussions in 2018 and 2019 on renovating versus building new. In September 2019, there were planning sessions at the JCC Education Center, which created a large Ad Hoc Committee that met in February 2020, right before the pandemic hit. The next meeting wasn't until December of 2020 which paved the way for hiring C&S for conceptual development and budget in March 2021. In July 2021, C&S was hired for project design and bidding for the Highway/DSS projects. In November 2021, the county hired KT for project management. In February 2022, C&S was hired for project design and bidding of the DMV/BOE project, and the bids were awarded for the Highway/DSS projects. In October 2022, bids were awarded for the DMV/BOE project and that brings us to the current year in which the construction is coming to completion.

In the first Ad Hoc Committee meeting, there were some questions that needed to be considered, they were: Do we renovate or replace the DSS building; Do we renovate or replace the Highway Garage; Which projects are priorities and which projects can wait; and how are we going to pay for these projects. The idea to move this forward required establishing a vision, a timeline for decision making, and a

financial plan. The BCA study from 2018 was reviewed by the Ad Hoc committee. Most all of the recommendations by BCA on observations of things that needed to be addressed have been. The Old Courthouse had the sidewalks between the adjacent church and county parking lot replaced; the lighting was upgraded to LED; elevator controls have been upgraded; and the moisture coming through the walls on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor has been addressed. The HVAC replacement is planned for 2024.

The Public Safety Building has had some exterior doors replaced; roof drain and leaking flashing has been repaired; cracking in exterior wall near gym has been repaired; parking lot will be done in 2023; and an impound yard has been installed. The current HVAC and Boiler project will be completed in 2023.

The Department of Social Services building was completely gutted and re-built in 2023, all the building systems were replaced. There is a completely new Highway campus, with a new Cold Storage Building, Wash Building, and new Highway Garage. The old Highway Garage will be renovated to house a few departments by early 2024. Solid Waste Transfer Station was changed to an open top system, a new building was built for better traffic flow, and a new scale house and break room.

The original cost estimate total was \$21,997,000 which is almost exactly what the new estimates were in 2022/2023. The goals that were accomplished by these many projects were that everyone has a home with appropriate space; there is more efficiency/synergy of departments and public; these new spaces will build employee success; being environmentally friendly; will minimize operational costs; took advantage of State funding; and was within budget for bond calculations.

Legislator Gilbert pointed out that Lewis County can afford these projects because we have a two-bucket financial approach. The county keeps operational costs in one bucket which is funded by property taxes, other taxes and fees, and sales tax. This bucket should cover all the operational expenses of government and is conservative, efficient, sustainable and requires only Board oversight. The Capital & Community Projects bucket is funded by PILOTS, Stimulus funds, Excess fund balance, and Excess sales tax. This bucket should grow without affecting property tax rates and requires Board leadership. This is what allows Lewis County to be able to handle large projects. The anticipated annual revenue from “Green Energy” PILOTS is roughly \$2,169,000 which covers our annual debt service payment of \$1,840,000.

Historically Lewis County tax rates have stayed steady over the past 5 years with hardly any change. In the past, there was no 5-year capital plan, the budget contained less than 0.5% for capital investments, there was no plan for preventative maintenance, and some of the most expensive spending decisions were made in the moment without long-range planning. This old way of doing business yielded failing HVAC systems, large amounts of rent paid for housing

county offices, equipment stored off site, Recreation, Forestry & Parks working out of a shipping container, no long-range plan, and buildings that were slowly deteriorating, creating and inefficient work environment.

The new way of doing business is having a five-year capital and preventative maintenance plan for all physical assets, modern and efficient working space for all employees, and spending 3% of the budget on capital expenditures. These investments matter because we are securing our physical plan and assets for the future. By using PILOT and excess sales tax to pay for long-term assets we stabilize the tax rate for the future. Going forward, we need to maintain these assets appropriately, so we don't find ourselves in a similar situation again.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Authorizing a fuel storage rental agreement between the New York State Department of Transportation and the Lewis County Highway Department, pursuant to which the NYS DOT will pay the sum of the weighted monthly average cost per gallon plus \$.10 per gallon to the County not to exceed a total of \$905,000.00 for the period commencing July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2028.  
AYE   5              NAY   0
2. Transferring \$2.9 million from Fund Balance and appropriating \$1.2 million into Capital Reserve Project accounts HEC Box Culverts and \$1.7 million in Capital Reserve Project accounts HED PSB Parking Lot.  
AYE   5              NAY   0
3. Authorizing agreement between the County of Lewis and Squad 9 LLC to implement a domestic terrorism and targeted violence prevention plan required by NYS at a cost of \$23,600.00 plus \$120.00/hour for consultation services commencing May 2, 2023 through December 31, 2023.  
AYE   5              NAY   0
4. Approval to submit application and project plans for FY2023 SHSP – SLETPP allocation grant and appropriating the funds in the amount of \$46,946.00.  
AYE   5              NAY   0
5. Appropriating funds in the amount of \$89,000.00 in Highway Department accounts for additional revenue received from the sale of surplus equipment.  
AYE   5              NAY   0
6. Awarding bid and authorizing an agreement with Climate Control Mechanical of NY for purchase of walk-in freezer for Jail kitchen at an amount not to exceed \$31,647.00.  
AYE   5              NAY   0
7. Authorizing a transfer of \$107,000.00 from regular contingency to Coroner Department accounts for morgue equipment and installation costs for the renovated LCHS morgue.  
AYE   5              NAY   0

Ryan Piche, County Manager discussed with the committee that District Attorney Leanne Moser wanted to hire another law intern due to the vacancy for an ADA position that hasn't been filled. The vacancy has created enough funding for this position for the remainder of the year. Legislator Dolhof questioned if the state does change the regulations on bail reform and discovery will this affect the need of this position, Joan McNichol responded that the changes are minor, so it likely won't decrease the workload.

Legislator Hathway moved to have a resolution created for the full board on June 6<sup>th</sup> creating this position for the District Attorney's office utilizing funds from the vacancy of the ADA position, seconded by Legislator Chartrand and carried.

There being no other business to come before the committee, Legislator Chartrand moved to adjourn at 2:14 p.m., seconded by Legislator Hathway, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board