

GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
May 20, 2025

Present: Andrea Moroughan, Chair; Josh Leviker, Vice-Chair; Herb Frost; Thomas Kalamas; and Jeff Nellenback.

Legislator Moroughan called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

Legislator Moroughan moved to approve the April 15, 2025 committee meeting minutes as recorded, seconded by Legislator Frost, and carried.

Lewis County Bridge Plan – John Reed, Lewis County Highway Superintendent

John Reed outlined a plan for the transfer of ownership of 12 town-owned bridges to the county, aimed at improving maintenance efficiency and alleviating financial burdens on municipalities. He noted the challenges towns face with aging infrastructure and the associated repair costs, emphasizing the need for additional funding to manage these responsibilities. The importance of town resolutions in the ownership transfer process was highlighted, ensuring local input in the decision-making.

Lewis County EMS – Josh Levesque, Director of Lewis County Search & Rescue

Josh Levesque presented alarming statistics regarding the EMS workforce, revealing a significant decline in certified providers and the closure of area ambulance services. He reported that 37% of EMS personnel plan to leave within five years, exacerbating staffing shortages. The discussion included the financial strain on volunteer services due to rising equipment costs and low Medicaid reimbursement rates. It was added that low wages and better job opportunities elsewhere are driving EMTs and paramedics out of the profession. A proposal for a four-crew EMS system to improve coverage and financial sustainability through town contracts and insurance reimbursements was discussed.

Financial challenges within the EMS system were further elaborated upon, with a projected funding gap of \$3.5 million against total expenses of approximately \$5.4 million indicated. The need for financial transparency and accountability was emphasized, with advocacy for elected officials to be included on the board overseeing EMS operations. The discussion also touched on the lack of local paramedics and the potential for a countywide study to assess the EMS system, although skepticism about its necessity was expressed.

Legislator Nellenback moved to authorize an RFP be created and published for a countywide study on Lewis County Emergency Management Services to find out what the best path forward is, seconded by Legislator Frost and carried.

The following draft resolutions were reviewed:

1. Authorizing intermunicipal agreement between the County of Lewis and the Town of Lowville for flood damage prevention administration and enforcement.
AYE 5 NAY 0

2. Pursuant to Local Law No. 2-2007 Finding and determining that an unsafe structure at 1057 Ammon Road, in the Hamlet of West Leyden, shall be demolished and removed and to set the hearing for final order.
AYE 5 NAY 0
3. Authorizing the Lewis County Building & Fire Codes Office to amend its Fee Schedule and to post, once adopted, on the County website.
AYE 5 NAY 0
4. Appropriating \$34,118.00 in NYS grant funds and transferring an additional \$36,312.00 in Board of Election account lines to acquire new poll pads, printers, and cabinets for polling sites.
AYE 5 NAY 0
5. Accepting ownership and responsibility for specific Town of Croghan bridges located at Long Pond over West Branch Oswegatchie River, and South Bridge Street over Beaver River.
AYE 5 NAY 0
6. Accepting ownership and responsibility for specific Town of Diana bridge located at Jerden Falls Road over Middle Branch Oswegatchie River.
AYE 5 NAY 0
7. Accepting ownership and responsibility for specific Town of Leyden bridge located at Brock Road over North Branch Moose Creek.
AYE 5 NAY 0
8. Accepting ownership and responsibility for specific Town of Lowville bridges located at Gordon Road over Mill Creek, Bardo Road over Mill Creek, McCue Road over Mill Creek, and Bickford Road over Mill Creek.
AYE 5 NAY 0
9. Accepting ownership and responsibility for specific Town of Lyonsdale bridge located at River Road over Fall Brook.
AYE 5 NAY 0
10. Accepting ownership and responsibility for specific Town of Martinsburg bridge located at Centerville Road over Roaring Brook.
AYE 5 NAY 0
11. Accepting ownership and responsibility for specific Town of West Turin bridge located at Sweeney Road over East Branch Fish Creek.
AYE 5 NAY 0
12. Accepting ownership and responsibility for specific Village of Lyons Falls bridge located at Fulton Street over Hoskins Creek.
AYE 5 NAY 0
13. Setting a public hearing for the purpose of receiving public comment on the proposed addition of approximately 0.2 miles to the Lewis County OHV Trail System.

AYE 5 NAY 0

14. Introductory Local Law No. 5-2025 “A Local Law Amending and Replacing Local No. 3-2015: A Local Law of the County of Lewis to Provide A Uniform System for Managing the Collection, Transportation and Disposal of Solid Waste and Recyclables” and setting the public hearing.

AYE 5 NAY 0

15. Appropriating \$97,235.00 into the Highway Department account lines to recognize additional revenue from the sale of surplus equipment.

AYE 5 NAY 0

There being no other business to come before the committee, Legislator Frost moved to adjourn at 2:29 p.m., seconded by Legislator Nellenback, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board