

**LOCAL LAW (INTRODUCTORY NO. 7- 2026)
COUNTY OF LEWIS**

Introduced by Legislator Joshua Leviker, Chair of the General Services Committee.

**A LOCAL LAW AMENDING AND REPLACING LOCAL LAW NO. 6-2025: -
THE AMENDED LOCAL LAW REGULATING AND PERMITTING SPECIAL EVENTS
ON COUNTY ROADS, TRAILS OR OTHER COUNTY PROPERTY AND ON ANY
TOWN ROADS AND PROPERTY WHERE THE TOWN HAS OPTED IN**

BE IT ENACTED by the Board of Legislators of the County of Lewis, as follows:

SECTION 1. TITLE

This Local Law shall be known as “**THE 2026 AMENDED LOCAL LAW REGULATING AND PERMITTING SPECIAL EVENTS ON COUNTY ROADS, TRAILS OR OTHER COUNTY PROPERTY AND ON ANY TOWN ROADS AND PROPERTY WHERE THE TOWN HAS OPTED IN**”.

SECTION 2. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

This local law is enacted pursuant to Municipal Home Rule Law (“MHL”) § 10(1)(i), which provides that a county may adopt local laws relating to its property, affairs or government provided it is not inconsistent with the provisions of the constitution or any general law.

SECTION 3. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS

The Board of Legislators makes the following findings in support of this Local Law:

A. Planned special events include but are not limited to sporting events, concerts, parades, walking and running events, bicycle races, and motorized vehicle rallies. These types of events can have direct and indirect impacts on county/town properties, roads, trails. There are several events organized and held in Lewis County where county/town roads, county/town public rights-of-way, trails, parks, and lands are used for the event, or are adversely affected by the event activities because of road closure, traffic congestion, parking concerns, damage to town and county roads, etc.

B. The occurrence of such events as described and defined herein may place an unwarranted burden on the County/Town resources related to the provision of emergency services, law enforcement, health and sanitary services, road and property repairs, and similar items, depending upon the special event, its size, and the conduct of participants.

C. The purpose of this law and the requirement for a permit and fee for same, is to enable the county and town to be able to anticipate the impacts posed by the event and to coordinate efforts of various departments and other municipalities which may be affected by the special event; to take appropriate steps and measures to provide for the safety of event participants and residents; and to provide for the least impact on the county and town roads, trails, and lands.

D. When a person(s), corporation(s), organization(s), landowner(s), lessee(s) and others seek to conduct a special event on county roads and/or county property, town roads and/or town property of any town who opts into this law, provision must be made for adequate financial assurance to protect persons and property (both public and private) within the County. The Board of Legislators of Lewis County therefore finds and declares that it is necessary for government protection, order, conduct, safety, health and well-being of persons and county/town property, that certain rules and regulations be established for special events involving county roads, trails, parks and other lands, as well as town roads and other town property of any town who opts into this law and, further, that it is necessary to adopt under the police power of the County, a local law to regulate and license by permit the holding of such special events on or effecting access and use of County or Town roads, trails, parks and other lands.

SECTION 4. DEFINITIONS

FOR PURPOSES OF THIS LOCAL LAW:

A. The word “person” shall be deemed to include any person, persons, firm, company, corporation, partnership, association, club, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, joint venture, owner or lessee of real property, promoter, sponsor, or any other group or organization whether formalized or not.

B. The term “any Town who opts in” or “opted-in Town” shall mean a Lewis County town who executes an Inter Municipal Agreement (IMA) with the County in which the town agrees, *inter alia*, to adopt this Local Law for special events held on its town roads or other town property.

C. “Special motorized event” shall mean any outdoor gathering of TWO THOUSAND or more participants involving vehicles, motorcycles, ATV/OHVs, UTVs, snowmobiles, or other motorized equipment, or any combination thereof which involve:

1. Any gathering or organized event taking place on County roads, trails or other property which may interfere, impede or obstruct the flow of traffic or which does not comply with normal traffic regulations or controls; or

2. Any event intended to include and/or to take place on the Lewis County Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Trail System.

3. Any gathering or organized event taking place on an opted-in Town road, trail or other property which may interfere, impede or obstruct the flow of traffic or which does not comply with normal traffic regulations or controls. Any ATV/OHV event on Town roads SHALL require users/participants to obtain a Lewis County OHV permit.

4. Any snowmobile event(s) held on private property will require a permit where the event may interfere, impede or obstruct the flow of traffic or which does not comply with normal traffic regulations or controls on County roads or opted-in town roads; or where the snowmobile activity or event on private property may result in damage to County roads or lands or roads and lands of opted-in towns; or where the snowmobile activity or event requires placement of signage or pavement markings on County roads or town roads for towns who have opted into this law.

D. "Special non-motorized event" shall mean gatherings of TWO HUNDRED FIFTY (250) or more persons and their activities on county-owned or opted-in Town-owned roads, trails or other properties.

SECTION 5. PERMITS

A. No person may organize, operate, promote, or conduct a special event as defined above on a County or opted-in Town road, trail, park or other land in Lewis County, without first obtaining a permit to do so from the Lewis County Director of Recreation, Forestry and Parks (DRFP).

B. All ATV/OHV motorized events requiring a permit under this Local Law shall also require all riders in the event to have or to purchase an appropriate ATV/OHV permit in order to participate. The sponsor/organizer/promoter shall be required to inform all registrants of the requirement for a Lewis County ATV/OHV permit in order to participate.

C. The Director of Recreation, Forestry and Parks will consult with the County Superintendent of Highways, the Emergency Management Director, the Lewis County Sheriff, the Town Superintendent of Highways and Supervisor of the opted-in Town(s) that are the sites of the proposed event, and any other relevant County or Town Department(s), as the event may warrant in processing the permit application.

SECTION 6. PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS AND FEE

A. All applications shall be made to the Lewis County Director of Recreation, Forestry and Parks, by submission of three (3) copies to the DRFP, or by online application, by the person(s) sponsoring or running the event involving County and/or opted-in Town roads, trails, park or other lands, or by the duly authorized agent or attorney thereof. The appropriate application fee, if required, as set forth in the fee schedule in effect for said event permit, must be submitted with the application

along with all the other documentation required therein. No action will be taken upon any application until it is deemed complete by the Director of Recreation, Forestry & Parks, in consultation with the appropriate County and opted-in Town Departments.

B. 1. The non-refundable application fee charged for a special event permit shall be in accordance with the fee schedule set forth under Section 10 of this Local Law. The fee schedule may be amended from time to time, by Resolution adopted by the Lewis County Board of Legislators.

2. A permit application fee shall not be required for any special event that is otherwise licensed, sponsored or organized in whole or in part by the County or opted-in Town, or any other municipal government located within the County; but said municipality shall submit an application for the event.

3. The County Director of Recreation, Forestry & Parks will have the discretion to waive the requirement of a permit fee depending upon the nature of the event (parade, wedding, etc.), consistent with the purpose of this local law and permit process to have County and local towns know when there are events which can cause disruption, safety concerns, and potential damage to life and property, with the need for emergency services.

C. The application for a permit hereunder shall be made in writing or submitted online upon such form or forms as may be crafted by the Director of Recreation, Forestry & Parks (DRFP), and shall be submitted to the DRFP at least sixty (60) or more days prior to the first day such special event is anticipated to be held. Such application shall include the following information:

1. The applicant's name, age, and residence address; if the applicant is a corporation, partnership or association, the name of the entity, address for its principal office, together with the names and addresses of its directors, partners or associates. If the applicant is not a resident or have a place of business within Lewis County, the name of a natural person, over the age of eighteen (18) years of age who resides within Lewis County and who is authorized by the applicant and who shall agree by acknowledged statement to accept service of notices and summons on behalf of the applicant with respect to this application, the conduct of the outdoor public assembly or any other matter relating to the enforcement of this Local Law;

2. The proposed dates and hours of operation for the proposed special event, and a description of the event;

3. The expected minimum and maximum number of persons and vehicles/other equipment, if any, per day of the event to use the roads and/or property(s), if any, per day and collectively;

4. A description of the purpose for the special event and the activities to take place thereat, including without limitation, concessions, entertainment, vehicles, equipment, etc.;

5. The admission/participation fee to be charged, if any.

D. 1. After careful review and consultation with other County and/or Town Departments as may be required, the DRFP shall determine whether the permit application will be approved or denied. The DRFP shall communicate her decision on the application in writing, by issuing a permit with any and all conditions to which the applicant may be required to meet prior to and during the event. If denied, the DRFP shall indicate the reason for such denial.

2. Simultaneously with notification of approval/denial of a permit to the applicant, the DRFP shall notify the County Manager, Board of Legislators, any appropriate County Departments, and any appropriate Town Supervisor and Highway Superintendent of the special event permit issued/denied, including any conditions and information on the type of event, date, location, estimated size, and any other relevant information.

E. 1. If the applicant has insurance for the event, the applicant shall provide all information pertaining to the type and amount of insurance coverage. The applicant may be required to have the County and any opted-in town be named as an additional insured.

2. For any motorized event expecting 2,000 or more attendees/participants, the applicant shall verify insurance as set forth in Section 7. In addition, such events shall be required to comply with any and all other applicable State and Local Laws, including but not limited to NYS Department of Health rules and regulations pertaining to mass gatherings (assembly of 5,000 people or more), Public Health Law §225, and Lewis County Local Law No. 2- 1970 (mass assembly of 10,000 people or more), with the application reviewed and approved by the Public Health Director, Emergency Management Director, Lewis County Sheriff, Superintendent of Highways, and any other relevant County and/or Town Department(s) requested by the DRFP.

3. In such cases, the DRFP will notify the applicant of the additional review before the application will be deemed fully submitted. The preliminary application may then be reviewed and commented upon by those appropriate Department to determine from the information supplied, the potential effect or impact the proposed special event and assembly will have upon the public health, safety, and welfare of the people and property of Lewis County.

F. The County, through the DRFP, shall have the right, in its sole discretion, at any time to terminate the permit, or any portion thereof, should it be necessary due to County and/or Town operations, conditions, or other circumstances which may arise. Any termination of the permit shall not constitute a breach of the permit, and no liability shall be incurred by or arise against the County and/or any opted-in Town, its agents and employees for loss of profits or any other damages.

SECTION 7. CONDITIONS OF USE AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

A. Neither the County nor any opted-in Town affirms that the County-owned or Town-owned road/trail/site/property affected by or used for the special event has

been designed, constructed, or maintained for the purpose of the activity/conduct of the event. The application shall state that the applicant and all its participants assume full risk and responsibility for the event, and shall hold the County/ opted-in Town harmless with respect to any claim by the event applicants and its participants. The applicant and its participants assume full risk and responsibility for planning and conducting a safe and orderly event that does not expose participants or the public to any unreasonable hazards, with minimal disruption to normal uses of the roads, trail system and municipal properties. The applicant bears responsibility for properly determining whether the County and/or Town site(s) is/are suitable for the purpose of safely conducting the event. The County makes no representations about the suitability of County roads or trails for the proposed use by the applicant/permittee and event participants.

B. The applicant shall exercise due care in its use of the municipal property and shall upon the expiration, termination or cancellation of the issued permit, surrender the municipal property/site in as good a condition as on the effective date of the permit. Depending upon the nature of the event and the anticipated number of participants, the issuance of a permit may be conditioned upon an undertaking, bond or guaranteed deposit, to guarantee restoration of the municipal property(s) to its previous condition.

C. The applicant/permittee agrees to notify the DRFP or any other municipal official designated to receive notification about any hazardous or unsafe conditions, and about any accidents that occur during the event immediately upon the discovery of such condition or accident.

D. At the time a permit is issued, the DRFP shall provide the applicant/permittee with a statement of responsibilities and obligations of the Applicant/Permittee. Said statement shall be signed by the applicant/permittee and returned to the DRFP forthwith. The statement of responsibilities and obligations shall include any insurance requirements specifically required under this local law, together with such other itemized non-insurance related responsibilities the DRFP may deem appropriate for the event. To the extent this local law requires insurance, the applicant/permittee shall provide the DRFP with proof of insurance prior to the commencement of the event, i.e., a certificate of insurance in full force and effect prior to and during the event which shall include but not be limited to the following coverage, if applicable:

1. Workers' Compensation and Disability Insurance as required by New York State for any and all employees.

2. Automobile and/or other motorized vehicle insurance. The applicant shall maintain automobile, other vehicle and equipment policy(s) insurance against liability for bodily injury, death, damage to property and other coverages relating to the use, operation, loading or unloading of any automobiles, motorized vehicles and other equipment on and around the event site, in an amount not less than \$1,000,000.00. If the event involves participants' use of motorized vehicles (autos,

ATVs, UTVs, motorcycles, motorbikes, snowmobiles, etc.) it is the applicant/permittees' responsibility to ensure that all participants' motorized vehicles are properly licensed, registered and insured, as may be required under state law. Motorized vehicles that are not required to be licensed or insured under state law shall nevertheless be insured, carrying minimum limits of \$25,000 (per person)/\$50,000 (per accident) for injuries, \$50,000 (per person)/\$50,000 (per accident) for death and \$10,000 for property damage. Participants must carry proof of insurance with them at all times while riding. The DRFP may accept a written and signed acknowledgment from the applicant that all participants are insured as proof of automobile and/or motorized vehicle insurance.

E. The applicant/event permittee agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the County of Lewis, and its agents and any opted-in Town effected by an event from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses, including but not limited to attorneys' fees, road damage, personal injury, property damage or wrongful death arising out of any claim associated in any way with the applicant's or participants' event and use of the permitted site/property, no matter how caused. The County and Town make no representations as to the condition of the property for the use intended by the event participants and organizers.

F. The DRFP, (in consultation with the County Manager, County Attorney, County may adjust the required insurance coverages and amounts, depending upon the nature of the event, including activities, size, and duration.

G. For any motorized event, regardless of its size or requirement for insurance under this Local Law, the applicant and sponsors of a motorized event shall be required to execute a waiver of liability/assumption of risk and have each of their participants execute a similar form for the benefit of the County and any Opted-in Town.

H. If the event involves motorized vehicles (autos, ATVs, UTVs, motorcycles, motorbikes, snowmobiles, etc.) with an estimate of 2000 or more participants, it is the applicant/permittees' responsibility to ensure that all participants' motorized vehicles are properly licensed, registered and insured, as may be required under the law. Any ATV/OHV events require each ATV/OHV vehicle to have a current Lewis County ATV/OHV permit.

SECTION 8. PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

A. If after a permit is issued (but prior to the actual event), the County determines, through its lawful agent(s) and designees, that any of the items required as conditions under the permit are not adhered to or accomplished within the required time limits, then the permit may be immediately terminated by action of the DRFP, after notification to the County Manager, Board of Legislators, and the appropriate Opted-in Town Supervisor. Notice of such termination shall be in writing and

delivered to the applicant at the mail address and e-mail address set forth in the application.

B. 1. Any person (as defined in this Local Law) who shall organize, promote, conduct or cause to be conducted a special event on County roads, trails, or other county property and/or on opted-in Town roads, trails, or other Town property as defined in this Local Law, without having a written permit in accordance with the provisions of this law, shall be deemed to have violated this Local Law.

2. Any person not applying for an event permit shall be subject to a civil penalty, enforceable and collectible by the County of Lewis in any court of competent jurisdiction within the County of Lewis as follows :

a. in the amount of \$50.00 - \$500.00 for holding a non-motorized event (250 or more participants), depending upon the nature, size, location and municipalities involved.

b. in the amount of \$500.00 - \$1,000.00, plus an additional \$5.00 per participant for holding a motorized event (2000 or more), depending upon the nature, size, location and municipalities involved. The \$5.00/per participant fine fee for failure to obtain the permit will be deposited into a special fund for distribution among participating municipalities affected by the event, pursuant to the terms of the IMA.

3. Any person and/or participant in a special motorized event who rides outside of the designated travel areas for the event on a County or Town road/trail/property (*for example*, riding on the road shoulder, drainage ditches, etc.) shall incur a fine of \$1,000.00 plus incur the costs and expenses of repairing any damage to the property.

4. In addition to the above penalty(s), the County of Lewis or a Town who has opted into this local law, who is directly adversely affected by the special event, may maintain an action or proceeding in a Court of competent jurisdiction to compel compliance with or to restrain by injunction, the violation(s) of this local law, and to seek recovery of any and all damages incurred as a result of noncompliance with this local law.

SECTION 9. SEPARABILITY

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part of this local law shall be adjudged by any Court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered.

SECTION 10. FEE SCHEDULE

A permit application fee of \$ 20.00**, made payable to Lewis County, shall apply, unless waived by the Director of Recreation, Forestry & Parks, in her sole

discretion. This permit fee amount will remain in effect until amended by the Lewis County Board of Legislators by an adopted Resolution.

** If the event involves 10,000 or more participants, applicant is subject to permit fees set forth under Local Law No. 2-1970.

SECTION 11. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Local Law shall become effective immediately after filing with the office of the New York Secretary of State.