

**GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**May 17, 2022**

Present: Ian Gilbert, Chair; Andrea Moroughan; Phil Hathway; and Josh Leviker. Legislator Richard Chartrand had been excused.

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

Committee Chair, Legislator Gilbert, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Legislator Hathway made a motion to approve the April 19, 2022 committee meeting minutes, seconded by Legislator Leviker and carried.

**Central Lewis Water Study – Miller Engineers PLLC**

Doug Miller from Miller Engineers PLLC stated that they have made good progress but still have a ways to go. Phase 1 is completed and that was water assessments for some of the Northern towns. Now they have begun Phase 2 which consists of well field evaluation, identifying potential wholesale customers, mapping aquifers; and identifying low and high yield wells, developing an implementation plan, preparing an addendum report, and attending meetings and providing presentations to Lewis County stakeholders.

The preliminary hydrogeology findings that were done used several resources such as USEPA Safe Drinking Water Information System; Regional Agency Communication with NYSDOH; NYSDEC Freedom of Information Act; NYSDEC Water Withdrawal Annual Reports; Regional Geologist/Hydrogeologist Communication; Geologic/Hydrogeologic Reference Research; NYSDEC Well Database Review; and Lewis County Reconnaissance.

The preliminary hydrogeology findings show that there could be potential wholesale capabilities with a Northern, Central and Southern zones. This conclusion was due to utilizing water supply site mappings which showed existing favorable zones, Northern site reconnaissance, low, medium, and high yielding wells, mapped aquifers, and high yield well confirming mapping. There were several maps that showed different aspects of the groundwater review for Lewis County, like wells that have low, medium and high yield.

The Regional Water Cooperative mission statement is a Countywide potable water treatment and distribution cooperative which focuses on improving potable water quality and quantity, establishes long-term system(s) resiliency, and supports economic stability and growth for the residents of Lewis County. The objectives are

to establish a representative collaborative group tasked to review and discuss Lewis County water resource issues including water wholesaling, shared services, system upgrades to support quality of life, County businesses and industries, and the use of water resources to maintain economic stability.

Some of the preliminary issues are wholesale water availability; regulatory compliance coordination; operator training coordination; environmental laboratory assistance; best practice/needs assessment roundtable; interconnection coordination; consolidated funding approach and purchasing power.

County Manager, Ryan Piche summarized that the county would dig the wells, treat the water, and get it to the municipalities. It would mean hiring a few more employees and quite a bit of infrastructure but then the municipalities would not have to worry about the quality of water or managing wells. The county would just wholesale the water to each municipality, and they would take care of the maintenance on their lines and billing their residents.

The next steps would be to finish the Phase 2 scope of work, then drill two or three wells to see what kind of water flow is in the high yield areas, then talk more about a cooperative to handle the wholesale of water and how that would be set up. Then funding can be discussed as to the infrastructure needs and setting up agreements with each municipality. Doug Miller thought the timeline would be at least a couple more months to finish Phase 2 before the Board would need to move forward with anything more. The information that has been gathered over the years continues to build on itself proving that this is a good direction to head in.

### **Motorized Recreation Road Fund – Jackie Mahoney, Recreation Forestry & Parks Director**

Jackie Mahoney introduced the proposal of creating a \$200,000.00 Motorized Recreational Road Fund from sales tax revenue that can be used to reimburse Towns and Villages that adopt an Inter-Municipal Agreement to help cover the material costs when there is damage to their roads from recreational vehicles. Motorized recreation is a large part of Lewis County's sales tax revenue. Snowmobiling on Tug Hill generates roughly \$6,526,027 in sales tax and Off Highway Vehicles in Lewis County generates roughly \$662,228 in sales tax.

The popularity of motorized recreation has increased, and the county is seeing an increase in volume of recreational vehicles out riding and participating in local events. New market trends have brought bigger, and faster machines that combined varying weather conditions can have a huge impact on the roads of Lewis County. Road damage on Village, Town and County roads have been documented through the years due to the motorized recreation with multiple discussions on how to address the issues.

The Motorized Recreational Road Fund will establish a \$200,000.00 fund that can be used for materials to repair damage to Town and Village roads. Then the fund will be maintained annually at the \$200,000.00 level with the use of revenue from Lewis County sales tax revenue. Towns and Villages with an Inter-Municipal agreement would be eligible to submit for reimbursement for materials needed to repair damage caused by motorized recreation.

Towns and Villages would have to document the damage to the road, report it with the GPS location to a Lewis County Road Fund Committee. Once damage is determined to be caused by motorized recreation, the Town or Village will complete the repairs and invoices for all materials would have to be submitted for final review to receive reimbursement. The Lewis County Road Fund Committee would be made up of the County Highway Superintendent, Director of Recreation, Forestry & Parks, County Attorney, and County Manager.

The Motorized Recreational Road Fund creates a working relationship with the Towns and Villages regarding motorized recreation. It reduces the burden off Towns and Villages for any motorized recreational damage. It makes it easier to promote and grow the Outdoor Recreation in Lewis County while maintaining those vital road connections.

Legislator Hathway questioned how private property damage would be handled, Jackie responded that it is not addressed in this proposal as this was put together based on complaints from Towns and Villages. County Attorney, Joan McNichol stated that the ATV Fund covers the damages to private property each year for the damages that they know about. The question was brought up if snowmobile damage should also be addressed or added to this fund. This fund would be a way of using sales tax to give back to the Towns and Villages.

This fund wouldn't cover the wear and tear but specific damaged areas due to an event or possibly include money for signage that is stolen. Legislator Moroughan question why the insurance coverage isn't used for damages as it is a requirement for events, Jackie responded that if the event insurance is used it is very unlikely to be offered to that event again. There was further discussion on the annual SNIRT event and how Sno Pals uses the money raised from that event to groom many miles of trail on Tug Hill.

Legislator Nellenback questioned why the county couldn't take over SNIRT a raise the money to use for this proposed fund, Ryan Piche stated that it had been discussed in the past for the county to take over the event. Legislator Nellenback felt that SNIRT is an event that is only benefiting one club instead of using the revenue for this fund which benefits all Towns and Villages. Then the taxpayers wouldn't have to foot the \$200,000. It was clarified that this year there was no damage so there will be years when the \$200,000 isn't hardly used. The idea of this

fund was to use a county benefit, like sales tax from SNIRT to help out the Towns and Villages who get held with the expenses from damage repairs.

The Sheriff, Mike Carpinelli felt that the county should put more focus on creating a ride from Town to Town so the Towns get all the benefits similar to the Hatfield and McCoy trail system in West Virginia. The idea of this proposed Motorized Recreational Road Fund was to send an olive branch to Towns and Villages to continue to grow Outdoor Recreation in Lewis County and was asked for by the Towns and Villages.

County Manager, Ryan Piche explained that due to the supply chain issues there is a need to order equipment for Highway and Solid Waste to receive it in the year that it was scheduled for in the 5-year Capital Plan, otherwise the county may not receive the equipment until a year or two after the fact. There would be no funds expensed until the appropriate year in the 5-year Capital Plan so it wouldn't affect the budget it would only be giving permission for items to be ordered now knowing that they are 2 years out on manufacturing things. The General Services Committee discussed and came to the consensus that it would not be an issue to order the equipment now as long as it wouldn't be expensed until it was received and would follow the 5-year Capital Plan.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Introductory Local Law No. 2-2022 "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" and setting the public hearing for July 5, 2022. *County Attorney Joan McNichol briefly went over the changes.*  
AYE   4              NAY   0
  
2. Rescinding Resolution 232-2021 and Authorizing agreement between the County of Lewis and T&D Blacktop & Sealing for parking lot maintenance at the Lewis County-Jefferson Community College Education Center at a cost not to exceed \$10,600.00.  
AYE   4              NAY   0
  
3. Appropriating additional funds in the amount of \$396,000.00 in the County Road accounts for the annual CHIPS program.  
AYE   4              NAY   0
  
4. Approving agreement between County of Lewis OBO Lewis County Highway Department and C&S Companies for Design and Bidding professional services and to send out an RFP for the Box Culvert Replacement Project – CR40 over Tannery Creek at a cost not to exceed \$24,000.00.  
AYE   4              NAY   0

5. Stating Support of efforts to improve Probation and Alternatives to Incarceration.

AYE 4            NAY 0

6. Transferring and Appropriating Trail Maintenance Reserve funds in the amount of \$20,250.00 to be used for equipment expenses.

AYE 4            NAY 0

7. Stating Opposition to NYS Proposed Conservation Subdivision Design Bill S1145/A4074.

AYE 4            NAY 0

8. Transferring and Appropriating E911 Reserve funds in the amount of \$76,000.00 to be used for current year expenses.

AYE 4            NAY 0

9. Authorizing an agreement between the County of Lewis and “TBD” for recreational trail security, safety, and surveillance services at a cost not to exceed “TBD”. *Sheriff Mike Carpinelli questioned on how this was going to be implemented as they would not be part of his agency as they are not law enforcement. He then stated his opposition and felt the money used for this could be used for much better things in his department. Legislator Gilbert explained that there would be interviews done of private security firms that could provide personnel to go up on the hill to monitor activity and to educate people on safety, call in incidents, and act as a deterrent for riders who are not following the rules. Legislator Gilbert asked the Sheriff if an incident is reported what would be his offices response, Sheriff Carpinelli stated that if there was a vehicle and manpower available, they would respond. County manager, Ryan Piche clarified that this trail security would be in addition to what the Sheriff’s Department Recreation Patrol currently offers. They could also be used as a liaison between landowners and recreation department for issues that occur. Sheriff Carpinelli felt that would deter residents from calling his department for assistance or to report incidents. Legislator Nellenback questioned why the county felt they should spend money on buying more law enforcement rather than getting the Sheriff more manpower. He suggested taking people’s machines and impounding them when they don’t comply and raising fines. Legislator Gilbert responded that the part-time law enforcement is incredibly difficult to find, in the past the Sheriff was authorized to hire as many part-time employees for recreational patrol but wasn’t able to find anyone. Ryan Piche explained that this outside agency would be used to set up at certain known hot spots which at a cost of \$120,000 wouldn’t even cover an additional full-time Sheriff’s Deputy position. The Sheriff stated that if things are to change people need to support local law enforcement!! Everyone needs to do this. Legislator Hathway and Nellenback were opposed.*

AYE 2            NAY 2

10. Awarding bid and authorizing agreement between the County of Lewis and “TBD”, for the Scale House Project in the amount of “TBD”.

AYE 4      NAY 0

There being no other business to come before the committee, Legislator Leviker made a motion to adjourn at 2:05 p.m., seconded by Legislator Moroughan and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board