

**GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**November 15, 2022**

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

Others present: Legislators Larry Dolhof, 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, Legislator Gilbert, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Legislator Chartrand moved to approve the October 18, 2022 committee meeting minutes, seconded by Legislator Leviker and carried.

Legislator Gilbert allowed for a few members of the audience to address the committee. Mr. Larry Pacola addressed the committee with his concern on how much money they are willing to spend on the Rails to Trails project. His research shows that the scrap metal that the county plans on selling might not be worth anything, in fact the county may have to pay someone to take it; the rail ties have to be disposed of in a specific way which could cost as much as \$18 per rail tie; to make the actual trail will require asphalt which can cost up to a million dollars per mile not to mention the fill that will be needed in certain areas to make it wide enough; there will need to be bridges and culverts replaced. To make this a multi-use trail it would have to be at least 12 feet wide and how would that even be possible on the bridges that already exist. There are some deeds not very many that have revisionary rights which would cause an issue. He concluded by stating that this could cost as much as thirty to forty million dollars over time for just a few people to be able to ride their bikes and walk the trails. There are other things besides a trail to attract young people to this area, high speed internet is one thing needed.

Mr. Barry Lyndaker who worked for over twenty years with an environmental company, advised the committee that what they are buying with the railroad tracks could be a nightmare. The last job he ran was 150 million dollars just to clean up a railroad yard and 5 miles of track. There is no way of knowing where the rail line had their pits as they use to treat the ties right along side of the railroad. According to his numbers if the county only had to remove 5 inches of contaminated soil on the rail lines it would be over 20 million dollars. As far as the population declining, it is in part because families aren't that big anymore. It takes \$330,000 to raise a child today, so no one is going to go out and have eleven kids anymore. He voiced his concern that the data used to show public buy in was a survey of only 500 people in Lewis County. He would like to know what 500 people and were they located along the trails.

## Highway Department update – Tim Hunt, Highway Superintendent

Tim Hunt explained that when Ryan had posed the question of how you judge the effectiveness of the highway department, he felt there are certain areas to look at, which are asset improvement; inventory; inspections; conditions; and a well thought out plan. The staff have iPads which are used out in the field to collect data, for example the road signs are rated with a picture of the current condition and location, this also applies to guiderails, culvert pipes, and box culverts. There are a little over 3,000 signs in Lewis County and each one is rated, poor, fair or good condition. There was technology purchased where you mount a smart phone on the dash of a pick-up truck, and it records the condition of the roads by rating the pavement condition. There are 250 miles of roads in Lewis County and right now there are 90 miles that are in poor condition that need to be addressed.

In figuring up the asset value for the county, Tim took 250 miles of road and multiplied it by a very conservative amount of \$300,000 to pave a mile of road which equates to \$75,000,000 of value; 3,159 signs multiplied by \$300 per sign is \$947,700 of value; 89 bridges multiplied by 1.5 million is \$133,500,000 in value; 36 box culverts multiplied by \$600,000 is \$21,600,000 in value; 85,967 feet of guiderail multiplied by \$140 per foot is \$12,035,380 in value; 35 heavy equipment/trucks is valued at \$6,632,624. The overall asset value of highway is \$249,715,704.00. There was discussion on the cyclical need of repairing or replacing these items in a way that doesn't overwhelm the county. To keep up on replacing and repairing the highway department needs \$8,700,000 each year which is roughly 3.5% of the total asset value.

The three keys to asset management are maintenance, repairs, and replacement. The 2022 Report card for highway on Roads shows that sweeping, mowing, striping, and paving are all right around what their goals were. Sealing, shoulders, ditching, tree cutting, and brushing are all areas that need more work. The 2022 Report Card for Bridges shows that washing, inspections, brush removal, drainage, and replacement were all accomplished according to their goals, however sealing, decks and joints will be worked on in 2023. The 2022 Report Card for Signs shows that inventory, inspection, and replacement goals were all hit in 2022 but there are still many more signs that need to be replaced in the upcoming year. The report card for Guiderails showed that all the inventory and inspections were done in 2022 but there are areas of guiderail that need to be replaced in 2023.

The highway budget for roads shows that equal expenses for materials, labor and equipment is what leads to having safe roads. Currently the highway expenditures show that 61% is spent on materials, 28% on labor, and 11% on equipment. One of the ways to find out if your equipment and labor are balanced is by asking these questions: Do you have people with no equipment; Do you have equipment and no people. You could have 10 people with shovels or just one person with an excavator,

equipment and attachments will help increase productivity as long as the people hired come with the right skill set.

Managing materials is about getting what the county pays for by using better specs and implementing material testing to ensure we are getting the highest quality materials. Managing equipment is about making sure pieces are being utilized and are of a high quality which gives them a better resale value. Focus on uptime and labor efficiency and making sure equipment can utilize attachments to do many jobs. Managing labor is about doing the right tasks, having the right tools, having good working conditions, focusing on safety, and continuing education.

The 2023 Plan includes more maintenance on shoulders, ditches, and right of ways; sealing 100 miles; less paving; more contracting of services; working towards paving High Market and Mackey Roads, striping all roads every three years and doing it earlier in the year; replacing two box culverts on the West Road; and replacing two bridge joints on Laura Street. There was discussion on what signs are used and where they are needed, along with other aspects of highway operations/plans.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Introductory Local Law No. 6-2022 “A Local Law Amending Lewis County Local Law 9-2006: A Local Law Providing For The Administration and Enforcement of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code”, and setting the public hearing for December 6, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.  
AYE   5          NAY   0
2. Authorizing renewal agreements between Lewis County District Attorney’s Office and Coroner and providers for services.  
AYE   5          NAY   0
3. Authorizing purchase of approximately 31 miles of railroad corridor property, inclusive of all tracks, Other Track Equipment (OTM), buildings and improvements thereon from Genesee Valley Transportation Co., Inc. for a payment of \$2,500,000.00, in accordance with the outline set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding reached by the parties at mediation on October 11, 2022. *Legislator Hathway felt strongly that each section of track needs to be looked at and needs to have the input of the public. There was further discussion.*  
AYE   5          NAY   0
4. Appropriating the 2022-2023 Snowmobile Award in the amount of \$129,451.20.  
AYE   5          NAY   0
5. Amending Tip Fee Schedule of Lewis County Solid Waste Department by increasing the direct haul surcharge/tipping fee for Municipal Solid Waste from \$84.00/ton to \$90/ton, effective January 1, 2023.

AYE   5        NAY   0  

6. Authorizing Intermunicipal agreement between the County of Lewis and the Village of Croghan to administer Land Use & Zoning Regulations from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

AYE   5        NAY   0  

7. Authorizing no cost Change Order No's 5 & 6 to the agreement with Bette & Cring for the Highway Garage and DSS Building Renovations under the Facilities Improvement Projects for a revised cost of \$37,531.00 and \$44,285.00 respectively, reducing the allowance amounts set forth in the contract.

AYE   5        NAY   0  

Legislator Chartrand brought up trail enforcement and stated how the county spent \$100,000 on trail security but never got what they expected. It might be better to have two deputies dedicated to trail enforcement instead. It might be a good idea to put together a sub-committee to look at what the numbers would be if two deputies were hired for just trail enforcement. Legislator Dolhof explained that the Sheriff had indicated that three individuals were going to the police academy but two dropped out already. No one is looking for this type of job in today's employment climate. The problem in the past has been that whoever the county hires for trail enforcement ends up not working in trail enforcement. Legislator Gilbert agreed that this is something that needs to be looked at further with data to back up the discussions. Legislator Dolhof stated that if the SRO's are working for the schools 100% of the time, then they won't be available for trail patrol during the winter months. There was talk about having State police, DEC, or NYS Recreation step in to help patrol some of the time, but it would still leave the county in a deficit.

There being no other business to come before the committee, Legislator Chartrand moved to adjourn at 2:21 p.m., seconded by Legislator Hathway and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board