



Judge Executive's Report

By George Sparks

February 2026

Due to the extreme temperatures and the winter storm at the end of January, several of the normal monthly meetings were rescheduled. Going into February, I had no doubt that the month would be even busier than normal with this in mind.

The road crew and maintenance crew continued cleaning up roads and making repairs to their equipment.

Despite the weather, I made it a priority to attend the Buffalo Trace Agency for Substance Abuse Policy Board of Directors meeting held at the Regional Prevention Center in Maysville. Lewis County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Matt Ross attended the meeting with me to give the board an update on using the new Drug Terminator that was bought with Harm Reduction funding. Last year, the RPC agreed to purchase the Terminator and make Lewis County its home. The machine burns unused medicine or drugs and reduces them to ashes. The Terminator is to be shared with the entire BT region. Our Sheriff's Department and the Maysville Police Department have already used the Terminator. Deputy Ross gave the board a presentation on how the Terminator works and thanked the board for purchasing it.

The ASAP meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Ellen Cartmell. Minutes were approved, and the financial report was moved to the next meeting for approval. Lewis County High School student Lucas Lykins, who is a school representative on the board, gave a presentation on his plans to hold a fun Drug-Free Day in Lewis County where people can come and be encouraged to stay away from drugs. I am impressed with the hard work and effort Lucas is putting into this event. To wrap up, we were updated on the Supporting Awareness Campaign, followed by updates on upcoming events and trainings.

I traveled to the Frankfort Capitol Annex with Emergency Management Director Dennis Brown and Emergency Medical Services Director Michael Byble. I was honored to speak on behalf of HB 447 which, if passed, would do three things:

1. ensure coverage for emergency ground ambu-

lance services, even when providers are out of network;

2. protect patients from excessive cost-sharing and surprise balance billing; and

3. establish reasonable minimum reimbursement standards tied to local rates or Medicare benchmarks.

We visited Representative Patrick Flannery and Senator Robin Webb and encouraged them to support HB 447 and HB 500, the EMS Block Grant, which has been a \$10,000 grant since 1980. The Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services has requested that this bill increase the grant to \$100,000.00 for each of the 120 counties. Along with us was Assistant EMS Director Colton McCann with Fleming County EMS and staff from MCA EMS Billing in Huntington, WV, which bills for LCEMS and many other EMS services throughout Kentucky.

The Vanceburg Lewis County Industrial Development Authority Board of Directors held a meeting at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kenny Clark. The past meeting minutes were approved, followed by the April through December 2025 and January 2026 financial reports. The board went into closed session. No other business was discussed before the meeting was adjourned.

I attended the Kentucky County Judge Executive Association winter conference in Lexington. As usual, there were some great training sessions. Thanks to Executive Director Todd Ruckel and his staff for always putting together a great conference and an impressive lineup of speakers. Some of the guest speakers included Rocky Adkins, Mark Metcalf, Russell Coleman, Lexington Mayor Linda Gorton, and Michael Adams.

There were sessions about cybersecurity, data centers, the Department for Local Government (DLG), KBEMS, KYTC Roads, smart infrastructure, and legislative session updates from Dan Mosley, Speaker David Osborne, and Senate President Stivers. Allison Ball and Jonathan Shell also spoke. One of the most important sessions was new jail legislation, House Bill 557, written by District 19 Representative Michael Meredith. This bill would be very helpful for all

120 counties with or without a jail.

I presided over the February 2026 Fiscal Court meeting. The meeting was opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. The minutes of the regular and special meetings in January were both approved. There was no old business.

In new business, the court approved Resolution #26-06 for the LC Kinniconick Recreation project. The court approved the local match for the project as well. The court tabled a change order for the CDFD Community Center project due to a lack of information. The court acknowledged the receipts on the Sheriff's Budget Amendment for 2026 and approved the Sheriff's 2025 fee settlement.

The court approved the reappointment of Terry LeMaster to the Vanceburg Lewis County Industrial Authority for a term ending 6-30-2029. The court approved the appointments of Dwayne Stone and Shannon Carver to the Garrison Fire Department Tax Board, with terms ending 6-30-2030. Reports were presented and approved from all departments. Lastly, claims and transfers for all county funds presented to the Fiscal Court were approved.

I met with Robin Conley from State Auditor Allison Ball's office and completed a survey related to Kentucky Wired.

The South Shore water project in Lewis County on Scaffold Lick and Indian Run Road has made great progress. There will be more to come on this project soon.

I attended the KACo Legislative Reception at the KACo headquarters in Frankfort. Several of our Lewis County officials attended the reception. It was a great opportunity to meet county and state officials from all around Kentucky. I attended with BTADD Executive Director Kevin Cornette and several members of the BTADD staff.

I am thankful for the dedication, support, and partnerships Buffalo Trace has with our counties. They help counties move forward into the future through grants, economic, community, and industrial development projects, and much more.

I also attended the KCADD Legislative Day at the Capitol Annex along with BTADD's Kevin Cornette,

Kristie Dodge, and Justin Suttles. We met with and spoke with Robin Webb, Patrick Flannery, and other legislators to discuss infrastructure, economic development, community development, and industrial development. We encouraged them to support bills that will help move our county forward and improve the quality of life in Lewis County.

Next, I led the BTADD Executive and Regular Board of Directors meeting. The meeting was called to order. New Mason County board member Mr. Ron Rice was welcomed to the board. Mr. Kenny was welcomed back after several months away following a serious injury. We are thankful to have Kenny back. Judge John Simms offered a prayer, followed by Mr. Ron Rice leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes were approved for both the executive and regular board meetings. The Executive Director's time and travel sheets were also approved. Kaleigh Zeigler gave a presentation on the regional debris management plan. Director Cornette presented the financial report. Caroline Ullery presented the Aging Area Plan. Two IRPs were presented and approved. Jack Couch with KYTC Rural and Municipal Aid was welcomed, and he spoke to the board. Craig Shockley with Congressman Andy Barr's office gave an update.

We heard staff reports, and Executive Director Kevin Cornette gave a legislative update along with an overall update for BTADD. I thank the staff for doing great work in the region. Thank you to the board as well for their time and commitment.

The Lewis County Opioid Abatement Committee met for the first time on February 18, 2026, in the Fiscal Court Room. County Attorney Ben Harrison gave an overview of the responsibility of the committee and what our mission should focus on. Officers were elected, with Tammy Brown serving as chairperson.

Meeting dates were set for the second month of each quarter on the third Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting will be on May 20. We discussed the opioid litigation fund balance and opioid solutions network training before the meeting was adjourned.

I attended the Trinity Fish and Game monthly meeting. The meeting was called to order by President Marty Wright. There was an election of officers, and the club voted to keep the same officers. Secretary Marie Applegate presented the financial report, and it was approved. A few other topics were discussed before adjourning.

The Black Oak Recreational Park Committee meeting was held in the Fiscal Court Room. Penny Lee called the meeting to order. The past meeting minutes were approved. We discussed the progress of the park, grants, and the capital campaign.

I attended a Zoom meeting with Jenni Hampton, a Team Kentucky Apprenticeship Workforce Consultant; Lewis County EMA Director Dennis Brown; and Steven Peed of Buffalo Trace Workforce Development. We discussed a job training program including on-the-job training, related technical instruction, wage progression, and a national certification. The state is working to develop a program that would help with job retention at E-911 centers.

I attended Comprehend Inc.'s Board of Directors meeting in Maysville. Chairperson Rebecca Cartmell called the meeting to order, and the roll was called by Ms. Sweeney. The past meeting minutes were reviewed and approved. Steve Roberson with Kelly, Galloway, Smith, and Goolsby CPAs and Advisors presented two audit reports—one on Comprehend Inc. Properties and the second on Comprehend Inc. Regional Mental Health—Mental Retardation Board Inc. and Affiliates.

We also discussed financial reports with Ms. Hicks, and CEO Ms. Williams gave the board an overview of operations. I am proud of the great progress that is being made under the leadership of Ms. Williams.

I led the Licking Valley Community Action Board of Directors meeting held at the new Senior Center in Flemingsburg. The meeting was called to order, followed by prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. The board approved the finance committee's recommendation of the November and December financials. The January financials were presented and approved. Pro-

gram reports were covered by the Executive Director, as well as other business. The meeting was then adjourned.

Cassie Hill, Peer Support Specialist with the First Day Forward program at Comprehend Inc., stopped by to speak about this program. We also discussed some of the other services that are offered by Comprehend Inc.

County Attorney Ben Harrison and I attended a Public Service Commission meeting at Morehead State University regarding nuclear generation. Six of these meetings will be held across Kentucky over the next few months.

"As our nation struggles to keep up with the rising demand for electricity, nuclear energy is increasingly seen as a reliable, dispatchable, clean energy source and, as such, is experiencing a resurgence in the U.S.," said PSC Chair Angie Hatton.

Lewis County Treasurer Penny Lee and I attended a Budget Workshop held at the FIVCO Area Development District in Grayson, KY. The Department for Local Government presented the training. Our county budget is one of the most important things we put together each year, and we work closely with DLG to make sure it is completed correctly every year.

I attended an America 250 Zoom meeting presented by Ashley Spennenburg-Perkins and Chris Wiedaman of the Kentucky Department of Forestry. During the training, they spoke about the Liberty Tree program. This year, the program will provide yellow poplar trees to each county that participates. We learned where to pick up our trees, where and how to plant them, and how to take care of them.

I took the Health and Safety Institute 2025 Guidelines Update Course for Basic Life Support CPR Instructor requirements.

As we head into March, I'm thankful for the continued teamwork of our county employees. I'm honored to serve our community alongside them each and every day. We have a lot of important work ahead, and I look forward to seeing progress on many projects and goals as we move toward the spring and summer months.

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Property Transfers



February 2026

TSM Enterprises LLC to William Lawrence. Parcel KY 57, Tollesboro. \$256,000.

William Douglas Odom and Natalie Nichole Odom to Todd Manley. One acre along Salt Lick Creek. \$28,900.

Rosa Jane Carver to Mark A. Depatie. 26.25 acres Trace/Brushy Creeks. \$190,000.

Damon Graf and Abril Ponce to Johnny Robinson and Iona Robinson. 180 acres Buck Lick. \$150,000.

Phillip Jordan, Charles Jordan Jr., Stephen Rittenhouse, and Charles Jordan Jr. Revocable Trust to Phillip Jordan, Portia McCane, and Joshua Applegate. Three tracts near AA Hwy, Garrison. \$1.00.

Joseph Hays Rigdon and Alden Gay Rigdon Estate to Joseph Hays Rigdon. 0.7 acre Webster Cemetery Rd. \$140,250.

Theresa Jordan, Markel Jordan, Robert Jordan, and

Stephanie Jordan to Edward Lewis. Parcel Trace Fork of Kinniconick. \$240,000.

Larry Neal Applegate and Garnetta Joan Applegate to David Z. Tully. Seven acres, Tollesboro. \$25,000.

Bruner Land Company Inc. to Dustin Toller and Kaylee Toller. Parcel Bruner Land Co. Farms subdivision. \$39,900.

Curtis A. Wadley and Vickie S. Wadley to Robert D. Wadley, Irene Wadley, and Wadley Family Trust. 39.3520 acres, Quincy. To have and to hold.

Cory Stamper and Sarah Stamper to Cory Stamper and Sarah Stamper. 0.359 acres Stamper Ln. To have and to hold.

Frieda J. Underwood to Tammy Alburg. Two lots KY Hwy 8. Love and affection.

Daystar Properties LLC and Darrion S. Clemons to Darrion S. Clemons. Parcel near Lewis/Mason line. No monetary consideration.

Grant R. Liles and Hannah R. Liles to Hunter Lowe and Madison Liles. Four acres, Quincy. \$185,000.

Babbette Bays Estate and Babbette Jarvis to Glenn Smith and Amanda Smith. Lot #31 Meadowbrook subdivision, Black Oak. \$40,000.

Wanda S. Bevins to David Michael Axline. 546 Front Street, City of Vanceburg. \$69,000.

Chris Hicks and Maria Rampolla to Sarah Ann Nickel. 22.87 acres Highfield Ln. \$75,000.

Michael Poynter Jr. and Tonya Poynter to Patricia A. Poynter and Michael Poynter Jr. Parcel near Clay Lick. No monetary consideration.

Mark Conrad and Elizabeth J. Conrad Support Trust to David Conrad. 29.810 acres KY Hwy 344. To have and to hold.

Mark Conrad and Eliza-

beth J. Conrad Support Trust to David Conrad. 48.5 acres KY Hwy 344. To have and to hold.

Julie A. Corlis to Scotty M. Love. Tract #1 and #2 Mast Farm. \$45,000.

Donald J. Anderson and Shannon Anderson to Marsha Anderson. Parcel near Hickory Hollow Rd. Love and affection.

Matthew Story and Stephanie Story to Amanda Dyer. 0.500 acre near KY Hwy 57. \$4,000.

Linda F. Breeze to Dwight W. Malone, Lauren C. Malone, and Andrew W. Malone. Two parcels Hwy 10, Cabin Creek. Love and Affection.

Bruner Land Company Inc. to Tor Chamberlain and Lisbeth Chamberlain. Parcel Pine Grove Church Rd. \$15,800.

Autumn Barber and April Knox to Samuel Corns and Sammy Corns. Parcel Clear

Creek Rd., Tollesboro. \$2,000.

Samuel Corns and Virginia Corns to Julie Gillespie. Parcel near Clear Creek Rd. Love and affection.

Kristina Lockett to Jerry L. Rister and Melissa A. Rister. 80 acres McDowell. \$450,000.

Ronnie Polley and Veranda Polley to Aaron Mack and Mary Beth Mack. Saint Andrews Place Lots 21, 22, and 23, Tollesboro. \$54,000.

Shirley Nolan Roe, Tony

Ray Nolan, and Sandra L. Nolan to Tony Ray Nolan, Sandra L. Nolan, and Haley Jo Nolan. Tracts Kinniconick Creek, deed no tax. Love and affection.

Tony Ray Nolan, Sandra L. Nolan, and Shirley Nolan Roe to Tony Ray Nolan, Sandra L. Nolan, and Haley Jo Nolan. Parcels Kinniconick Creek. Love and affection.

Ohio Valley Veneer Inc. to LT Holdings LLC. 344 acres Black John, Quincy. \$340,000.

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