☞ FISCAL COURT

Cont. from page 1

He said future energy development could create jobs, generate tax revenue, and provide additional business for local contractors, trucking companies, restaurants, and other businesses.

Wallingford also suggested that increased local revenue could eventually benefit county government, schools, law enforcement, and road maintenance.

His remarks reflected his expectations for future development rather than any announced nuclear project or documented financial commitment in Lewis County.

Court approves opioid abatement funding

In other business, magistrates unanimously approved three proposals totaling $256,156.10 from the county's opioid settlement funds.

Tammy Brown, chair of the Lewis County Opioid Abatement Committee, presented the recommendations, which included $165,156.10 for a joint Lewis County Health Department and Sheriff's Office program assisting children affected by drug-related law enforcement interventions; $50,000 for Fresh Start Health to expand transportation services for patients receiving treatment; and $41,000 for Lewis County Hope House to establish a community recovery center in a leased building.

Brown said the recipients will be required to submit quarterly progress reports. The allocations leave $157,926.24 in the county's opioid settlement fund for future projects.

A complete story detailing the three proposals and Fiscal Court's discussion appears elsewhere in this edition.

Tourism commission established

The court also unanimously approved Ordinance 26-04, establishing the Lewis County Tourist and Convention Commission.

County Attorney Benjamin Harrison explained that the ordinance follows Kentucky law governing the establishment and operation of local tourism commissions.

The new commission will consist of seven members appointed by the county judge/executive under the statutory membership requirements.

Initial appointments will be staggered, with two members serving three-year terms, two serving two-year terms, and three serving one-year terms. Subsequent appointments will be for three-year terms.

Ben Collier, who has been working with the county's Tourism Advisory Board, told magistrates the commission will provide a formal structure for tourism promotion and improve opportunities to pursue state and federal funding.

Collier discussed Lewis County's participation in the Commonwealth of Kentucky Ohio River Regional Recreational Authority and the Kentucky Mountain Regional Recreation Authority, saying the county is positioned to benefit from both Ohio River and outdoor recreation initiatives.

He said establishing a formal commission could provide access to tourism marketing funds and grant opportunities not currently available through the advisory board.

Potential uses include promoting local attractions, developing visitor information, and supporting projects intended to attract tourists and strengthen the local economy.

Collier emphasized that outdoor recreation and quality-of-life improvements can also contribute to broader economic development efforts.

The ordinance was approved on a motion by Underwood, seconded by McCann.

The Lewis County Herald

Morgan Cooper and Ben Collier present Mr. Will Maynard with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the Lewis County Tourism Advisory Board for his dedication to sharing Lewis County history.

The Lewis County Herald

Dennis Brown receives his CKEM (Certified Kentucky Emergency Manager) designation from Judge Sparks and KYEM Area 7 Manager Jason York.

Emergency management recognitions presented

Kentucky Emergency Management Area 7 Regional Response Manager Jason York attended the meeting to present two professional recognitions.

York presented Judge Executive George Sparks with the Kentucky Emergency Management Association's 2026 Judge Executive of the Year Award.

Sparks previously served as Lewis County Emergency Management Director before becoming judge executive in January 2023.

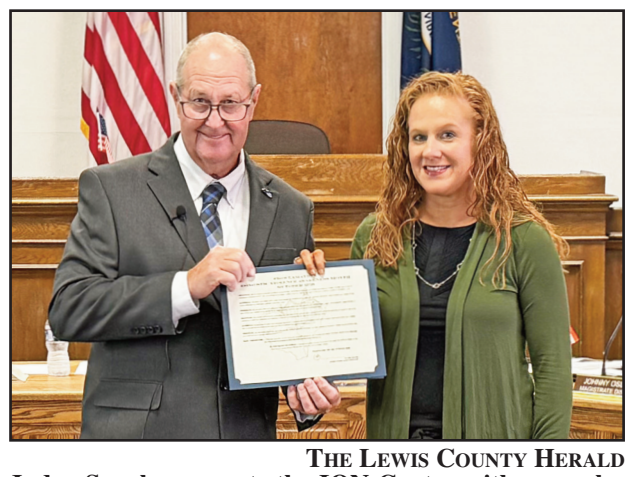
York recognized Sparks for his leadership, experience, and support of emergency preparedness efforts. A video presentation highlighted his background in firefighting, emergency medical services, and emergency management, along with his commitment to training, planning, and community partnerships.

Sparks accepted the recognition on behalf of county employees, emergency responders, and others involved in public safety and emergency preparedness.

York also presented Lewis County Emergency Management Director Dennis Brown with his Certified Kentucky Emergency Manager certification.

York explained that the CKEM designation recognizes emergency management professionals who complete extensive training, professional development, and documented contributions to the field.

He said fewer than 40 active CKEMs hold the designation statewide.



The Lewis County Herald

Judge Sparks presents the ION Center with a proclamation naming October 2026 Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Lewis County.

The Lewis County Herald

Judge Sparks receives the KEMA Judge Executive of the Year Award from KYEM Area 7 Manager Jason York.

Other business

The court recognized William Maynard for his work sharing historical diary entries from 1876 through regular social media posts. The Lewis County Tourism Advisory Board presented Maynard with a certificate of appreciation for helping preserve and share local history.

Sparks also issued a proclamation recognizing October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, with Chelle McElfresh of the ION Center participating in the presentation.

Magistrates approved the reappointment of Tim Douglas to the Lewis County Sanitation District No. 1 Board for a term expiring June 30, 2029.

The court also approved a $500 contribution to the Buffalo Trace Area Firefighters Association in support of regional firefighter training.

Trick-or-treat hours for unincorporated Lewis County were established for Saturday, October 31, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Magistrates additionally approved spending up to $2,000 for a larger television display and related presentation equipment in the Fiscal Court meeting room. Horsley said improved visibility of meeting materials would help members of the public follow presentations and court proceedings.

The court entered closed session to discuss proposed or pending litigation and took no action after returning to open session.

☞ OPIOID

Cont. from page 1

posal, a certified community health worker would work with students in the Lewis County school system to identify needs, provide support, and connect families with available services.

The initiative would also involve the Sheriff's Office and a school resource officer to help identify qualifying situations and coordinate referrals.

Rather than waiting until children begin experiencing behavioral or emotional difficulties, the program is designed to intervene soon after a potentially traumatic event.

The proposal identifies adverse childhood experiences, commonly referred to as ACEs, as a significant concern.

Children exposed to parental substance abuse, incarceration, family separation, and other traumatic events can face increased risks of behavioral problems, mental health difficulties, and substance abuse later in life.

The Health Department estimates approximately 234 students in the Lewis County school system may be affected by parental drug-related arrests, based on the assumptions used in its proposal.

Under the proposed arrangement, students could receive assistance with coping skills, referrals to counseling or other services, and help connecting with community resources. Participation would be voluntary.

The first-year allocation includes $66,486.10 for the Health Department's portion of the program, including salary and benefits for a community health worker, equipment, supplies, travel, and administrative expenses.

The Sheriff's Office portion totals $98,670, including $62,400 in salary costs for a school resource officer, $23,400 in benefits, and $12,870 in indirect expenses.

Although the proposal outlines a two-year program with a total projected cost of $332,247.36, Fiscal Court approved funding for the first year only.

The program includes provisions for tracking referrals, response times, assessments, and outcomes to help evaluate its effectiveness.

Fresh Start transportation expansion

Fresh Start Health received $50,000 to improve transportation access for patients receiving opioid use disorder treatment and related services.

The organization operates a clinic at 207 Plummer Lane in Vanceburg, offering medication-assisted treatment, behavioral health counseling, psychiatric services, primary care, and other support.

According to its proposal, transportation currently is available to Lewis County patients only two days per week because a vehicle is shared with Fresh Start's Ashland location.

The funding will help provide a dedicated vehicle and driver to increase transportation availability to every day the Vanceburg office is open.

The service will help patients travel to treatment appointments and obtain medications from pharmacies, addressing a significant obstacle for individuals who lack reliable transportation.

Fresh Start reported providing 1,374 patient rides to 150 individuals across its service area from July through December 2025.

The organization also reported that visits to its Vanceburg clinic increased from 1,057 in 2024 to 2,705 in 2025.

Fresh Start originally submitted a broader $100,000 proposal that included additional counseling, peer support, and case management positions, along with transportation.

The approved $50,000 allocation was designated for transportation services.

Hope House plans recovery resource center

Lewis County Hope House received $41,000 toward establishing a recovery center and community resource hub in the former dental office of Dr. John O'Cull at 570 Clarksburg Road in Vanceburg.

The organization, previously known as the Vanceburg Homeless Coalition, proposes creating a central location where individuals and families affected by substance abuse, housing instability, and related difficulties can obtain information, referrals, and support.

Plans include recovery meetings, peer support groups, educational programs, and connections to treatment providers, counseling services, housing assistance, employment resources, and other community organizations.

The proposal also calls for youth prevention programs, mentoring opportunities, family education, and coordination with local organizations.

Hope House originally considered purchasing the building but revised its proposal to pursue a lease.

The revised financial plan identifies a lease option of $3,000 per month, or $36,000 annually, along with operating expenses.

The center would assist individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability, particularly when those circumstances are related to substance abuse and recovery.

The proposal emphasizes providing resources, referrals, and assistance rather than establishing a specific number of residential shelter beds.

Hope House also plans to seek grants, private donations, and partnerships to support operations beyond the initial funding period.

During the Fiscal Court discussion, officials questioned what would happen after the proposed one-year lease.

Brown explained that the organization had submitted a revised proposal reflecting the leasing arrangement.

Accountability and future funding

All three organizations receiving settlement money will be required to submit quarterly progress reports to the Opioid Abatement Committee and Fiscal Court.

Brown said the reporting requirements will allow officials to monitor the programs and evaluate their progress.

Magistrate Mark Horsley noted that the settlement funds are subject to restrictions governing how the money may be spent.

Horsley said the committee had worked through numerous requirements in reviewing the proposals and expressed appreciation for assistance provided through the Kentucky Association of Counties.

He said that although he would prefer greater flexibility in spending the money, the restrictions require the county to direct the funds toward eligible opioid abatement purposes.

Horsley moved to approve the three recommendations, with Judge Executive George Sparks seconding the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Before the vote, Sparks asked the committee to reconsider a possible allocation to Operation UNITE, an eastern Kentucky initiative involved in substance abuse prevention, education, and treatment-related efforts.

Sparks recalled the involvement of former Lewis County Schools Superintendent Dr. Michael Melton with the program and asked the committee to determine whether its services might complement or duplicate those planned through the Health Department and Sheriff's Office.

He suggested that a relatively small allocation might benefit local children if the program could offer services not already being provided.

No funding for Operation UNITE was included in the three approved allocations.

The remaining $157,926.24 in county opioid settlement funds will be available for consideration of additional eligible projects.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Candidate Meet and Greet hosted by Lewis County Republican Party.

Join us for an opportunity to meet with and hear from your Republican candidates that will be on the *General Election Ballot* November 3rd 2026.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 22ND 2026
3rd Floor of Courthouse 6PM - 7:30

LEWIS COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY

ADVERTISEMENT FOR REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

The City of Vanceburg Electric Plant Board will retain a qualified engineering firm to provide planning, design, construction, and other required services for the Hydrant Replacement Project. Funding sources for this project may include, but are not limited to, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Program, the Government Resources Accelerating Needed Transformation (GRANT) Program, and other applicable state and federal funding opportunities.

The Electric Plant Board will accept Statements of Qualifications from engineering firms interested in providing services for this project until **4:30 p.m. E.T. / 3:30 p.m. C.T. on November 9, 2026**. An RFQ packet containing project information and the criteria that will be used to select the engineering firm may be obtained at HYPERLINK "http://www.btadd.com"www.btadd.com or by contacting Kristie Dodge, Community Development Director, Buffalo Trace Area Development District, via email at HYPERLINK "mailto:kdodge@btadd.com"kdodge@btadd.com.

Statements of Qualifications must be submitted to:

Buffalo Trace Area Development District
Attn: Kristie Dodge – City of Vanceburg EPB Hydrant Replacement Project
P.O. Box 460
Maysville, KY 41056

Statements of Qualifications will be ranked based on the written materials submitted, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the RFQ packet. The City of Vanceburg Electric Plant Board reserves the right to reject any and all submissions.

This solicitation for Statements of Qualifications is being conducted to fulfill state and federal funding agency procurement requirements. Respondents are advised that the following requirements may apply: (1) Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968; (2) Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974; (3) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; (4) Executive Order 11246; and (5) Certification of Non-Segregated Facilities. All of these requirements may be incorporated into any contract issued pursuant to this solicitation.

The City of Vanceburg Electric Plant Board is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages responses from all qualified firms.

Gayle Massie, Chair
Vanceburg Electric Plant Board

Public Notice 42-44c