



Judge Executive's Report

By George Sparks

November 2025 County Judge Executive Monthly Report

The Thanksgiving holiday has given us all time to truly think about the blessings we have been given. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve as your County Judge Executive. We have built so many great relationships, partnerships, and teams over the past few years. I am thankful for the grants Lewis County has been awarded, the honor of earning our Recovery Ready Community certification, and the day-to-day progress we are making. Let's continue building momentum as we move closer to our bright future.

I attended the Buffalo Trace Housing Corporation Board of Directors meeting. Judge Tina Teegarden called the meeting to order. The past meeting minutes were approved. Steven Culp presented and explained the financial report. Emergency repairs for the Fisher House were discussed. The meeting was then adjourned.

Next up was the Camp Dix Fire Department progress meeting. Things are coming along very well with the Fire Department/Community Center. Big progress has been made on plumbing and concrete. We viewed the progress and discussed a few small change orders. The outside is now completed and we are looking forward to the next progress meeting in a couple of weeks.

I attended the Lewis County Ambulance District Board of Directors monthly meeting held at Lewis County EMS on Clarksburg Rd. Chairman Danny Palmer called the meeting to order and presented the meeting minutes. Treasurer Brenda Cunningham presented the financial report. Both were approved. Director Michael Byble presented his monthly activity report and updated the board on several things. The service is now approved as an Advanced Life Support (ALS) service. A big thank you to Michael, his EMS crews, and the Board of Directors for their determination and perseverance in continuing to move the ambulance service forward. Treasurer Brenda Cunningham was presented with her commission as a Kentucky Colonel for her work with Lewis County EMS. Thank you, Brenda!

We hosted the Buffalo Trace Lewis County Water Sewer projects ranking at the Lewis County Courthouse. These meetings are held in each of the BTADD counties. Then, a regional meeting is held at BTADD where all the projects are put together and ranked. The regional ranking will take place at BTADD in December.

Met with BTADD's Kristie Dodge along with Executive Vice President Richard Taylor and Scott Surber, both from The Center for Rural Development. We discussed the ARC grant Lewis County received in 2022 for \$800,000 to expand broadband in Lewis County. There are many guidelines that must be followed in using the funds. We have tried a few different options that have not worked, so we are looking at another potential route that we hope will be successful. Richard and Scott shared their thoughts and gave examples about how other counties have been successful using the funds. We also discussed partnering with internet service providers (ISPs) and using the funds to help the ISPs extend to hard-to-reach areas.

I signed up to run for another term as Lewis County Judge Executive. It has been an honor to serve these past two years and 11 months. I am excited about continuing to work together and move towards the bright future I am confident Lewis County has. I would be honored to have your support and your vote in May of 2026.

I presided over the November Fiscal Court Meeting. The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Kent Moore of Cornerstone Church in Tollesboro, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Sheriff Johnny Bivens. Kessley Baker of the Department of Forestry who is the Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program Coordinator along with CWDG Specialist Jeff Wagers, Leigh Nedlo,

and BTADD's Kristie Dodge attended to present the CWDG check to the court. Danny Palmer was presented with a commission for Kentucky Colonel by the court and Governor Andy Beshear for his incredible leadership, partnership and teamwork in helping start the Lewis County Ambulance Service. Thank you, Danny! The court approved the advertisement for the 80/20 bridge work project at Wildwood Trails. The court discussed a partial closure of Red Brush Hill Road in Garrison. The court approved Resolution #25-17: KYEM Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement. Joe LeMaster was reappointed to the LC Extension District Board, and David Reis was appointed to the Extension District Board. Both terms expire 12-31-2028. Waylon Salvia was approved to go from PT to FT and was given a pay increase after earning a class A CDL. Doug Kraft was hired full time at the road department. The court went into closed session KRS 61.810 Subsection C: Potential Litigation. Reports from all departments were presented as well as claims and transfers. All were approved and the court adjourned. Our next regular meeting is December 8, at 3:00 p.m.

I met with Lewis County Attorney Ben Harrison and Vanceburg Mayor Joe Billman. We discussed the City of Vanceburg/ Lewis County Planning Commission. The update of the Comprehensive Plan is being done by BTADD and a few other topics. We look forward to working with Mayor Joe Billman and moving forward together.

I participated in an online training with the KY Department of Public Health's Eastern KY Health Care Provider Coalition. The training is related to an upcoming exercise on Track Safe. This is a new software that helps track patients in the health care system during large scale emergencies or disasters.

I had a Zoom meeting with Hospice of Hope's Assessment Committee. Executive Director introduced new board members Kevin Barnard and Greg Stout. The 2026 slate of officers was approved and listed. Past Chair Barb Campbell, Chair John Hutchings, Vice Chair Eugene O'Cull, Treasurer George Sparks, and Secretary Latressa Graham. We discussed many different topics related to hospice. The meeting was then adjourned. I appreciate the great work Hospice of Hope is doing in Lewis County and the Buffalo Trace Region.

Magistrate Mark Horsley, Treasurer Penny Lee and I attended the KACo Conference in Louisville. This was a very educational conference. We were able to attend many training sessions and heard from a host of knowledgeable speakers. It was a great opportunity to connect with state and local elected officials from across the Commonwealth. While at the conference, I attended the KY County Judge Executives Association (KCJEA) General Membership Meeting. We discussed several topics and heard an update from Executive Director Todd Ruckel. I also attended the KY Coal and Mineral Coalition General Membership meeting. Chairman Judge Mike Mitchell led the meeting and we heard from Representative John Blanton along with several DLG representatives.

BTADD's Executive Committee meeting was held at Double S Bowling Alley in Flemingsburg this month. Previous minutes, time, and travel sheets were approved. Executive Director Kevin Cornette covered extending the trace, building on progress, reaching for more, the year in review, and the year ahead. The meeting was wrapped up with the annual compensation review.

Hospice of Hope held their full board of directors meeting. Chairperson Barb Campbell called the meeting to order. Sarah Shepherd gave a presentation on program overview and the new budget was approved. The FYE 2025 audit was approved. September financials, loan securities, and fundraising

were all discussed. New board members, slate of officers, and board meeting calendar were all discussed before adjourning.

BTADD held their full monthly Board of Directors meeting. The meeting was opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. The past minutes and the financial report were approved. New board member Dwayne Sharp, Mayor of Germantown, was welcomed to the board. Steve Miller was approved as a new Fleming County citizen member.

I met with BTADD's Kaleigh Zeigler, KY Division of Water's Brian Storz, Amy Rhorer, and Mike Reed to discuss the Kinniconick 319 Watershed Management Plan grant. We discussed all the details of the grant, including the required reports and how funding will be dispersed. We then drove the Garrison boat ramp to look at part of Kinniconick Creek where part of the studies and work will be done.

We were blessed to hold a Thanksgiving potluck for all

county employees on November 18. I am proud of all our employees. They go above and beyond and help each other any way they can. They are an awesome team. We appreciate and are thankful for them!

I was honored to attend and take part in the annual Star-Spangled Celebration at MCTC to honor veterans. The ceremony was led by Ronnie French and his daughter Heather French Henry, Miss America 2000. There was a 90-minute patriotic music salute. A few other singers performed including Hunter Jordan, Cathy Insko, and Cedric Alexandria. Steve Pederson was recognized not only for 23 plus years of service to our country, but also for the great work he has continued to do in our community and our state through the Tollesboro Lions Club and Tollesboro Christian Church. Thank you for your service, Steve!

The construction of the shelter at the Black Oak Recreational Park has now been completed. Next on the priorities list is finishing the concrete

floor and securing picnic tables inside. Thank you to Orus Weaver Construction, THSD Architects, and several of our county employees who took part in this project.

The Kentucky Association of Area Development Districts held their quarterly meeting which I attended via Zoom.

I collaborated with Emergency Management Director Dennis Brown, Finance Officer Morgan Cooper, Treasurer Penny Lee, and Local Emergency Planning Committee members in planning a tabletop exercise for all Lewis County emergency responders, along with local, regional and state partners. The exercise took place at the Lewis County Extension Office. Thank you, Dennis, for putting the scenario together and leading the exercise. I believe that it is very important to be prepared for disasters, both as individual families and at the county level. If you have questions or need assistance with a preparedness kit/plan, please reach out to Dennis Brown, Lewis County Emergency Manager, at 606-

796-3464.

I am proud to say that Lewis County is now a Certified Recovery Ready Community (RRC). This is another example of how partnerships and working together can help us achieve great things. After hearing Governor Andy Beshear announce that only 21 out of 120 counties in Kentucky were Recovery Ready, we decided to build a team to work towards the goal of earning the RRC certification. Tammy Brown with Fresh Start Health stepped up to take the lead. She spent many long hours doing research, making phone calls and planning our meetings. Thanks to Fresh Start Health and staff, LC Health Department and staff, LC Sheriff's Dept., LC Attorney's office, LC EMA, Office of Drug Control Policy, KY Education and Labor Cabinet Reentry Program, the LC Justice Center, and several other individuals who took part. Lewis County is now one of 35 certified counties. Thank you, Tammy and our team!

Best wishes for a safe and joy filled Christmas season.

ABSOLUTE REAL ESTATE AUCTION

Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Located at 151 Third Street, Vanceburg, KY 41179



Auctions by Cooper will proudly be selling at absolute auction at the 1883 George Morgan Thomas home.

Originally in 1883 George Morgan Thomas built the Victorian showplace for his family home. Mr. Thomas was a very prominent member of Kentucky society. Having a most impressive career that helped shape Kentucky to this day and leaving an impression that will not be soon forgotten in his hometown of Vanceburg. Just a brief list of some of the positions Mr. Thomas held, Solicitor of Internal Revenue appointed by President McKinley, appointed US Attorney by President Garfield, elected US congressman, elected Circuit Judge, elected twice and reelected twice to KY legislature, elected Lewis County Judge, elected Commonwealth's Attorney, elected school commissioner, and school teacher.

This I believe to be the premier example of Victorian homes in Vanceburg having many of the original features and outstanding modern improvements. The home has served as private residence, hotel and lastly the Visitors Center for the City of Vanceburg. The beautiful Victorian home features the original oak entry door with double frosted glass side-lights and leaded and beveled transom window, on 1st floor a large entry/greeting space w/orig. frosted transom window w/initials GMT and orig. gas light fixture (has been converted to electric), large music/courting room with pocket doors and one of the finest examples of a fireplace mantle w/rope twist columns, floral drape carvings and original beveled mirror, (the mantle was professionally refinished in the early 2000s), also in the music room a large piece of stick and ball fret work with a carved harp note in the center and rope twist columns from the floor to the fret work (columns match fireplace mantle). Large living/sitting room w/beautiful fireplace mantle. Pleasantly spacious formal dining room w/linen closet and access to the roomy kitchen with newer cabinets, nice sized mudroom, large pantry/storage room access to the partial basement from mud room, where the recent furnace is located, the home does have central heat and air. The basement is a piece of architecture in itself with quarried and hewn stone walls and brick floor, 2 very large restrooms, hardwood floors throughout with tile in the restrooms, decorative hardwood staircase in the entry and servants staircase in the rear of the home. Upstairs features 6 bedrooms, 3 very large bedrooms and 3 small bedrooms, 3 with orig. fireplace mantles, south and east side widow's walk with 2 access doors, original ornamental iron rail, restroom with tile floor, small sitting area, and hardwood flooring throughout. The exterior showcases Victorian architectural design such as columns, cutouts, arches, fish scale and dimensional siding, cast iron widow's walk railing, porches and many more Victorian architectural designs. The house has porches on 3 sides with access to the home with a handicap poured ramp on the north side. The grounds have been professionally landscaped and very well-maintained poured sidewalks, on street parking in the front and private asphalt parking area in the rear. Updates include separate climate control on each floor with 2 split system heat pumps. The potential with a variety of options is limitless with this beautiful historic building. The lot is with an easement in the back, historical markers, and industrial flagpole stay, the home was completely restored in 2006; while keeping most of the original materials and replacing some with period correct materials (we have copied timeline pictures of the restoration).

Real estate sells at ABSOLUTE AUCTION as is with no warranty of any kind. There will be a 10% non-refundable deposit due auction day with the balance due at closing (approximately 30 days), possession at closing, taxes will be prorated to the date of closing, any and all inspections are the responsibility of the prospective buyer at their expense, all closing costs are to be paid by the buyer. There will be a 10% BUYERS PREMIUM added to the final bid price to determine the total purchase price.

Antiques, Collectables and Miscellaneous: 9 pc. 1930s formal Sheraton style mahogany dining set (table, 6 chairs, china cabinet, and sideboard on legs), early tall post Jenny Lind walnut bed, full column oak fireplace mantle, mahogany turn top game tbl., walnut Roman chair, pr. of Queen Anne wingback chairs, fancy oak podium, outstanding set of 3 oak gothic lodge/deacons chairs, pr. of twin size brass beds, ornate wicker rocker (Heywood Wakefield), spinning wheel, fancy oak sewing mach., fainting couch, 2 pc. carved matching settee and chair, wicker baby buggy, iron youth bed, twin size brass bed, pr. mission oak arm chairs, 1st WITNESS CHAIR from the old Lewis Co. Courthouse, dressing screen, oak and walnut rocking chairs, early standing desk, ice box, pntd. corner cabinet, piano bench, pr. wal. Eastlake chairs, deco vanity w/round mirror, modern oak roll top organ, wrought iron flower planter, large pantry shelf, GE refrigerator/freezer, 1 of a kind ORIGINAL sign in register pad for the Commercial Hotel (w/local advertisements), shades of yesterday Mitchell Tolle print of the commercial hotel gifted to GMT house by the Tolle family (signed believe it to be the original print), signed Chandler Cows at Stream Print, sev. local artist P Ruark oil on board Valley School, American flag, Mail Pouch barn and others, 2007 local artist Tally water color of Commercial Hotel, sev. framed pcs. to include 200 yr. railroad history in Lewis County, 2 framed Lewis Co. history pcs., wood burning of Commercial Hotel, many antique pictures and frames, sev. framed mirrors, 5 pc. silver plate tea set, sev. other silver plate and sterling pcs., Hull cornucopia vase, many lamps to include oil bedroom, hard to find Victrola record player w/ large horn, fancy wedding dresses and other vintage clothes, child's mannequin, 1937 flood view book of Vanceburg, old books, sm. appliances, storage room full of holiday decorations (mostly Christmas), and much more. This is a very abbreviated list.

Surplus property sells after the GMT house and antiques are sold. The location for these items will be 90 River Road, Vanceburg, KY, at the city garage (by the boat dock). True survivor 1966 Ford 850 super duty fire truck w/under 10,000 miles. The truck was bought new and been part of the fire dept. since. The truck still has all the orig. firefighting equipment on board; here is a true time capsule ready for parades advertisement or fighting fires. 2017 Ford Explorer w/only 71,000 miles, Subaru Outback, '06 Honda Civic, Chevrolet Silverado, Ford Explorer, 1992 Yamaha motorcycle. The fire truck and former police cruiser will be sold with titles; the other surplus autos will be sold for parts only, NO TITLES. Nine council chairs and other misc. items.

Everything sold as is where is with no warranty of any kind. Everything must be paid for and removed auction day. CASH or GOOD CHECK only. A 10 % BUYERS PREMIUM will be added to purchase price. Auction company is not responsible for accidents, lost or stolen property. There are some heavy pcs. to be sold, so be prepared to bring help loading, it is your RESPONSIBILITY to load your items. For more pictures, check us out on auction zip.com or Facebook.

Stacy Cooper/Auctions by Cooper 606-375-0199

Richard Walje Realtor w/ Story Realty 606-262-0822

Meredith Story Real Estate Broker w/ Story Realty 606 748 7201