

## Lewisport advances countywide water project

**By Jennifer Wimmer**  
 The Lewisport City Council met Thursday, Jan. 15, to review preliminary drawings for the regionalized water plant that will serve all of Hancock County.

City Administrator Jason Roberts and staff had already reviewed the plans prepared by Bluegrass Engineering, and members looked over the drawings during the meeting while engineer and co-owner Matt Curtis described each page.

The administrative portion of the building will include offices, a control room that will house the computers that run the plant, a lab for testing and a break room. Two pages of renderings showed what the exterior is expected to look like once the water treatment plant is constructed.

At some point, city officials will need to decide on the building colors. The intent is to choose a color scheme that is aesthetically pleasing and also one that blends with the surrounding neighborhood, including the Lewisport Library and the Lewisport Community Center.

Curtis said the plans were submitted to the state Division of Water on Dec. 31, 2026, for approval, noting that started the clock on the regulatory review.

Council members then discussed the list of easements associated with the project. The originally compiled list covered both sides of Highway 60 and included about 80 easements for Lewisport. The list has since been cut to about 30 by limiting it to one side of the highway, where the water main will actually be installed. The goal is to stay within the right-of-way as much as possible.

Earlier that afternoon, project representatives visited the Hendricks Road site being considered for the elevated water tank. They shot elevations and found the site has a good elevation that is essentially the same as the previous property the city had examined. That earlier site was dropped when the owner declined to sell or otherwise work with the city, so the team moved about 1,000 feet down the road and were fortunate to find a location with nearly the same elevation, allowing the tank to be built at the same height that was planned before.

The next step is to secure an option with the property owner, Carlos Newton, so testing and geotechnical drilling can be done to make sure the soil can support the elevated tank.

Gregory said that pursuing the option would need to be listed as a line item on the February agenda, and asked about the length of the testing phase for the option.

The drilling itself is expected to take about a week, but the option period would likely run 90 to 120 days, with a desire to get the drilling started within 90 days if possible. Considering this timeline, the decision was then made to approve the option sooner than next month's meeting in order to keep the project on schedule.

Roberts said the main concern is that if the soil does not support the tank, the city will need enough time to identify another feasible site.

Gregory said the city will move toward a special council meeting during the daytime to speed up the option process. He said he would leave work to attend a

brief meeting in which the council would open the session, approve the option and adjourn. Roberts will coordinate the timing in the next couple of weeks.

The option on the land for the water tower will involve a \$2,000 payment to the landowner.

The city has already secured the full funding for the project — about \$20 million. With provisions under the Clean Water Act, the city's obligation was reduced to roughly \$6 million, and the plan is to pay that off quickly.

The City of Lewisport, in collaboration with the City of Hawesville and Mayor Rob McCormick, will form an oversight committee soon, made up of representatives from both cities to ensure transparency throughout the project. Construction is expected to begin this spring.

The easements under discussion relate to the water lines that will connect the system. A printout of the list of easements was passed around for council members to review.

Gregory asked why additional easements would be needed if the city already has an easement for a gas line along Highway 60. Curtis explained that if an easement is designated strictly for a gas line, it cannot be used for another utility because the easement is dedicated to that single use. He added that if an easement is for a sanitary sewer line, water lines must be at least 10 feet away.

Roberts noted that if an easement document specifically says "gas easement," it can be used only for gas, but if it is worded as a "utility easement," then multiple types of utilities may be placed there. Even with a utility easement, the right-of-way still must be wide enough to accommodate more than one line.

Gregory clarified that the existing easement along that stretch is just for gas and is labeled "gas," not "utility."

Roberts explained that the sewer main runs to North Hancock Elementary School. The gas line runs through Frank Luttrell Road and then from there to Fred Hodges Road. There is an easement all the way to Adair Road, which would connect to Hawesville, but the ability to use that corridor for the new water line still depends on the specific type and wording of the easement.

Curtis said using existing corridors would be helpful if possible, but in many cases the easements may not allow that. He also clarified that the option being discussed on Hendricks Road is for the elevated tank that will serve both Lewisport and Hawesville. The project team wants to bid the project this spring and has already received a proposal from the geotechnical firm that will handle the drilling. They hope to have the option exercised soon so drilling can be scheduled.

Curtis said he is hopeful that the landowner will agree to the option and sign it so drilling can begin as soon as the following week.

Gregory then raised a question about Hawesville's easements and legal representation. He said Hawesville's attorney, Jamie Stephens, does not handle easements, and asked whether, if Hawesville agrees to use Lewisport's attorney, it would be prudent to have an interlocal agreement for

using the same attorney.

Bevill said Hawesville now only has three or four easements related to the project and that those were also cut down significantly from the original list of about 50. Gregory said he had not realized the Hawesville list had been reduced that much in the revised plans.

Curtis will provide an exhibit for the option so officials can review it during the special meeting. The exhibit will show the exact area on Newton's property where the city wants to drill.

For further context, with a countywide plant located in Lewisport and serving Hawesville and the rest of the county, permanent utility easements are needed along the route of the transmission mains. Temporary construction and access easements are used when crews must cross private property to reach facilities that are not directly on public roads. Interlocal agreements typically spell out which city or entity will hold and maintain those easements for the shared system.

**Resolution No. 01-15-26**  
 Resolution No. 01-15-26, authorizing execution of a Kentucky Infrastructure Authority (KIA) assistance agreement to provide the primary funding necessary to advance the regionalized water treatment plant project, was unanimously approved by the council.

**Public Works update**  
 Superintendent R.J. Simpson reported, "Everything is going well. We have had a few small water leaks that we have repaired. We put in a couple of small gas services too, as people were expanding some generators and similar equipment."

Gregory asked how the crew is doing without longtime employee Pam Hubbard, who officially retired in December 2026. Simpson said she has gone back and forth about whether she wants to continue working and remains unsure. Gregory noted that she still has the option to return in the summer and work with the crew if she chooses.

**Police Department update**  
 Lewisport Police Chief Greg Linn reported, "We have been staying pretty busy this month. Since the last council meeting, we've had 99 CAD response calls."

He said Officer Nick Jarboe's in-service training is scheduled for the end of the month and that everything else in the department is going well.

**Fire Department update**  
 The Lewisport Volunteer Fire Department financial statement was approved by the council. Fire Chief Troy Roberts reported that operations at the department are going well.

The fire department is recruiting new members. Applications are available at the station or can also be downloaded from the pinned post on the Lewisport Volunteer Fire Department Facebook page.

Completed applications may be emailed to lewisportfirerecruitment@gmail.com or mailed to P.O. Box 22, Lewisport, KY 42351. Volunteer firefighters must complete at least 20 hours of training each year.

**Junior Firefighter Program**  
 The Junior Firefighter Program is open to youths ages 15 to 17. Program details and an application link are posted on the department's Facebook page.

### 2026 Primary Election

The 2026 Primary Election is Tuesday, May 19. The filing deadline for candidates running in the primary election was Friday, Jan. 9. The voter registration deadline for the primary election is April 20 by 4 p.m.

### How to vote in the 2026 primary

Kentucky has a closed primary system. Voters must be registered in a party by Dec. 31, 2025, to vote in that party's primary in 2026.

Voters can register or update their registration online at GoVoteKY.com or through the Hancock County Clerk's Office by the April 20 deadline.

Polls are open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Central Time (local time) on Election Day. Anyone in line by 6 p.m. will be allowed to vote.

The online absentee ballot portal opens April 4, and the deadline to request a mail-in absentee ballot is May 5 at 11:59 p.m. local time.

### Local offices

- Sheriff**  
 B.J. Burton (R)  
 Aaron J. Emmick (D)  
 Roger Estes (D)  
 Robert J. Rice (D)  
 Billy Bozarth (R)  
 Joshua Travis Vandgrift (R)
- Jailer**  
 Steve "Stevie" Jackson (R)  
 Jonathan Rice (D)  
 Tracie Powers (R)
- Magistrate/Justice of the Peace-District 4**  
 Incumbent Gary Baker (R)  
 L.T. Newton (R)  
 Mike Blan (R)
- County Clerk**  
 Austin Gray (R)  
 Jake Powers (D)
- Constable-District 2**  
 Incumbent Josh L. Estes (D)  
 Brandon Boone (R)

### Unopposed incumbent candidates

- Judge-Executive Johnny "Chic" Roberts (R)  
 County Attorney Paul L. Madden Jr. (D)  
 Circuit Court Clerk Michael Boling (D)  
 Property Valuation Administrator Karen M. Robertson (R)  
 Coroner D.A. Gibson (R)  
 District 1 Magistrate Brent Wigginton (R)  
 District 2 Magistrate Kasey Emmick (D)  
 District 3 Magistrate John Mark Gray (R)  
 District 3 Constable Brandon D. Bozarth (D)  
 District 4 Constable W. Lloyd Basham (D)

### State offices

- State Senator-District 8**  
 Incumbent Gary M. Boswell (R)  
 Vicki Quisenberry (D)
- State Representative-District 14**  
 Wes Pate (R)  
 Marty Shephard (R)  
 Donna Haynes (D)
- District Court Judge-District 38**  
 Incumbent Daniel Boling (Division 1), unopposed  
 Incumbent Gregory R. Vincent (Division 2), unopposed
- Commonwealth's Attorney-38th Judicial Circuit**  
 Incumbent Blake Ross Chambers (R), unopposed
- U.S. Representative-2nd Congressional District**  
 Incumbent S. Brett Guthrie (R)  
 William Dakota Compton (D)  
 David S. Hatfield (D)  
 Hank Linderman (D)  
 Megan Wingfield (D)  
 Joshua M. Ferguson (R)  
 G. "Shay" Perry-Adelmann (R)

### U.S. Senator

- Joshua Blanton Sr. (D)  
 Charles Booker (D)  
 Logan Forsythe (D)  
 Amy McGrath (D)  
 Dale Lewis Romans (D)  
 Pamela Stevenson (D)  
 Vincent Anthony Thompson (D)  
 Andy Barr (R)  
 Daniel Cameron (R)  
 Anissa Catlett (R)  
 James D. Duncan (R)  
 Michael James Faris (R)  
 Valerie "Dr. Val" Fredrick (R)  
 Jonathan M. Holliday (R)  
 Jimmy I. Leon (R)  
 Nate Morris (R)  
 A. Nick Shelley (R)  
 George Washington (R)  
 Other Donald Wenzel (R)

### 2026 General Election

The 2026 General Election is Tuesday, Nov. 3. The filing deadline for the general election is Tuesday, June 2.

**Correction & Apology**  
 In last week's edition of The Hancock Clarion, we incorrectly listed the political parties of two local candidates. Donna Haynes is running as a Democrat, and Marty Shephard is running as a Republican. We regret the error and apologize to the candidates and our readers for the mistake.

## Bella Rearden

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 well enough in the next few years, she could potentially go to nationals later in her life."

The most rewarding part of this experience, she said, has been watching Bella have fun participating and also seeing how happy it has made her feel to succeed.

"Seeing her struggle, but then witnessing her being able to take a deep breath and refocus, and just watching her feel

so much pride has been so amazing. Seeing all of her friends and community so excited for her and proud of her just makes me love this community even more. The support system she has at school, especially her classmates that have grown with her from North Hancock Elementary School, is something you can't get just anywhere. You can feel the love she has for them all, and the love and support they have for her. It's simply amazing," Aleshia said.

Bella and her family live in the Dukes area of

Hancock County.

The local Special Olympics program offers year-round sports training and competition for athletes ages 8 and older, including bowling, softball, flag football, basketball, cheerleading, track and field, aquatics and bocce. A Young Athletes program also serves children ages 2 to 7.

To learn more about participating or volunteering, contact Kim Johnson at kjohnson@soky.org or 270-314-7621. Follow the Daviess County Special Olympics Facebook page for updates.

## Riddle of the Week

**Last Week's Riddle:** A Spanish word and nickname of a character we love to cheer on. A wounded experiment the people of Hawkins lean upon. Less than a dozen and marked by a scar. I open the gate to a world gone too far. Who am I? Stuart Spindel guessed it! **ANSWER:** "El"/Eleven/Jane on "Stranger Things" **This Week's Riddle:** I stand without breath as the freezing nights loom, fearing the touch of spring's warm tune. I have a nose, mouth and eyes to "see," but none were given naturally. What am I? Send guesses by Monday to: jenniferwimmer7@outlook.com.

