

COUNTY COMMISSION OF LEWIS COUNTY

110 Center Avenue
Weston WV 26452
Phone:(304)269-8200
FAX: (304)269-2416
Email:lewiscountycommission@lewiscountywv.org
Website: lewiscountywv.org



COMMISSIONERS:
Rod Wyman, President
Agnes Queen, Commissioner
Bobby Stewart, Commissioner

**LEWIS COUNTY COMMISSION
110 CENTER AVENUE, 2ND FLOOR
WESTON, WV 26452
MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026**

SILENT MEDITATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- 1. 10:00 AM** **Call Meeting to Order** (*action required*)
- 2. 10:00 AM** **John Breen, Lewis County Assessor**
RE: Exonerations, Consolidations, Apportionments
Draft copies will be available for review two business days prior to the meeting date. (*action required*)

APPOINTMENTS

- 3. 10:05 AM** **County Clerk Rebecca Carder, "I Voted!" Sticker Contest Participants:**
The Clerk will recognize 8th grade student participants and winners from St. Patrick's Catholic School. (*information only*)

CORRESPONDENCE

- 4. Upshur County Commission Meeting Agenda:** The March 19, 2026 Upshur County Commission meeting agenda is presented for review. (*information only*)
- 5. Valley Link North:** An updated fact sheet on the Valley Link North transmission project is presented for review. (*information only*)
- 6. West Virginia Legislature Guidance:** Guidance for County Fire Protection Fund (WV Code §7-5B-1) and All County Fire Protection Fund (WV Code §7-5B-1) was received and is presented for review. (*information only*)
- 7. Board(s) and Committee(s) Reports:** Commissioners will give reports on any board(s) or committee(s) meeting attended including: PVC meeting, Lewis County Park meeting, etc. (*information only*)

BUSINESS

- 8. Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget:** The Lewis County fiscal year 2026-2027 budget is presented to the Lewis County Commission for consideration. (*action required*)

9. **Lewis County Assessor New Hire:** Assessor John Breen provided verbal notice of a new hire, Dalton Wright, in his office. This position will be funded from the Assessors Val Fund. Mr. Breen requests further consent per West Virginia Code §7-7-7 for this new hire. He also requests to waive the probationary period for insurance. *(action required)*
10. **Letter of Resignation:** Daniel Cooley, Lewis County Sheriff Deputy, presents a notice of resignation. *(action required)*
11. **Request for Bids Approval:** Tina Helmick, Lewis County Administrator requests to advertise for bids for park playground equipment, park upgrades and a splash pad at the Jane Lew Park. *(action required)*
12. **Time Sheets, Leave Requests and Annual Leave Transfers:** None *(action required)*

ACTIONS, ESTATE SETTLEMENTS, ORDERS AND PAYMENT OF EXPENDITURES:

13. **Actions of the Clerk:** County Clerk Becky Carder presents actions of the clerk in recess of the county commission for approval. Draft copies will be available for review upon request two business days prior to the meeting date. *(action required)*
14. **Approval of Estates:** County Clerk Becky Carder presents the estates ready for settlement to the Lewis County Commission for approval. Draft copies will be available for review upon request two business days prior to the meeting date. *(action required)*
15. **Presentation by the County Clerk of the Orders of Prior Meeting(s):** The Lewis County Clerk presents the Orders (minutes) of previous Lewis County Commission meeting(s) for approval. Draft copies will be available for review upon request two business days prior to the meeting date. *(action required)*
16. **Expenses for the Current Period Presented for Consideration of Payment:** Draft copies will be available for review upon request two business days prior to the meeting date. *(action required)*

ADJOURNMENT:

17. **With no further action being required by the Lewis County Commission the meeting will be adjourned.** *(action required)*

LEWIS COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING MANAGEMENT

- Regular meeting agendas will be posted and available to the public before closure two (2) business days prior to the meeting date.
- Agenda matters to be reviewed and/or considered during the meeting are at the discretion of the Lewis County Commission.
- Appointments to speak with the county commission must be scheduled before 10 AM three (3) business days prior to the meeting. Appointments will be given a ten (10) minute time allowance.
- Agenda Items may require an executive session.
- Open discussion by Commission unless executive session is motioned per WV Code §6-9A-4.
- Input or recommendation from constitutional officers, staff or public that is not listed by name on the agenda will only be allowed if requested by the commission or required by statute.
- Those not scheduled on the agenda may sign up for public comment at a minimum fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of the meeting. Public comment is limited to five (5) minutes per speaker.
- Motion required for consideration of vote.
- All votes unanimous unless otherwise stated.
- Roberts Rules of Order is utilized as a guide only. The Commission controls meeting management, discussion and input.
- Commissioners may participate and vote via conference call if two (2) commissioners are in attendance.

Additional Notices

March 24, 2026 at 1:00pm Groundbreaking- Corridor H Water Project:
45 Abbott's Run Road Horner, WV 26372

Upshur County Commission Meeting Agenda

Agenda packets are available electronically at http://www.upshurcounty.org/agenda_and_minutes/index.php or by request to the Upshur County Commission Office at 304-472-0535.

Location:	Upshur County Courthouse Annex If you prefer to participate by telephone, please dial 1-408-650-3123 Access Code: <u>272 564 045</u> to enter the conference call.
Date of Meeting:	March 19, 2026
9:00 a.m.	Moment of Silent Meditation --- Pledge of Allegiance Approval of Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• March 12, 2026
9:15 a.m.	Bid opening, review, and potential award of Groundskeeping Services for multiple Commission owned properties. *
9:45 a.m.	Jason Keeling, Executive Director of the American Red Cross of Allegheny Highlands, providing a program update and presentation of an American Red Cross Month Proclamation. *
1:00 p.m.	Court Security Advisory Board Meeting

Items for Discussion / Action / Approval:

1. Approval and signature of the Upshur County Commission 2026 – 2027 fiscal year budget. * [Under separate cover](#)
2. Appoint Election Officials and Alternates for the May 12, 2026 Primary Election. *
3. Consider approving an advertisement for a Request for Bids for a Demolition Project at 88 Jack Lane Buckhannon, WV. All sealed bids must be received no later than 4 p.m. on Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at the Office of the Upshur County Commission. Sealed bids will be opened, reviewed and read aloud by the Upshur County Commission at 9:15 a.m. on Thursday, April 23, 2026. This project is being made possible by the generous support of the WVDEP REAP Dilapidated Properties Program. *
4. Authorize signature of the West Virginia Community Corrections Grant Program Application, pending approval by the 18th Judicial Circuit Community Corrections Board, requesting state funds for personnel and equipment expenses. *
5. Review the new proposed Six Remnant Defendants National Opioid Settlement Overview and consider participating in the settlement. Upon approval, authorize the County Administrator to electronically sign the Combined Subdivision Participation Form and Release Form for the Settlement. *
Item may lead to Executive Session per WV Code §6-9A-4 (A) [Under Separate Cover](#)
6. Approval of a Lewis Upshur Animal Control Facility Volunteer, Cam Workman. * [Under Separate Cover](#)
7. Consider Family Medical Leave Act request from an employee. *
Item may lead to Executive Session per WV Code §6-9A-4 (A) [Under Separate Cover](#)
8. Approve Invoices for Payment, Purchase Card Invoices for Payment, Budget Revisions / Financial Reports or Information, Correction of Erroneous Assessments, Exonerations/Refunds, Grant Updates / Requests for Reimbursements, Final Settlements, Vacation Orders, Consolidation of Land Tracts, Facility Maintenance Concerns or Updates, Road Name Requests, Project Reports / Updates, Request to Attend Meetings, Request for Day(s) Off.

For Your Information:

(Certain Items May Require Discussion, Action and/or Approval by the Commission)

1. Notification from the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office regarding the proposed elevator modernization project located within the Courthouse Annex stating that the project will have no effect on the historic character of the Courthouse or Downtown Buckhannon Historic District.
2. Letter from the West Virginia Legislative Auditor's Office regarding guidance for County Fire Protection Fund (*WV Code §7-5B-1*) and All-County Fire Protection Fund (*WV Code §7-5B-2*) distributions.
3. Announcement from the County Commission Association of West Virginia regarding an Essay and Art Contest for middle school students.
4. Statement of Budget, Income and Equity from the Adrian Public Service District for FY27.
5. Freedom of Information request and fulfillment from PropLogix.
6. Upshur County Mileage reports – February, 2026.
 - Addressing and Mapping
 - Dog Pound
 - Emergency Management
 - Maintenance
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Sheriff
 - Upshur 911
7. Public Notices:
 - a) Newsletters and/or Event Notifications:
 - None
 - b) Agendas and/or Notice of Meetings:
 - Upshur County Parks and Recreation March 17, 2026
 - Upshur County Youth Camp Board March 19, 2026
 - Council of the City of Buckhannon March 19, 2026
 - c) Meeting Minutes:
 - Adrian Public Service District February 3, 2026
 - Upshur County Solid Waste Authority February 9, 2026
 - Upshur County Safe Structures and Sites Enforcement Board February 11, 2026

***Dates and times of monthly board meetings are viewable at:**

www.upshurcounty.org -- Upcoming events are listed on the main page.

8. Appointments Needed or Upcoming:

- Mountaineer Trail Network – immediate vacancy through June 30, 2026 to fill an unexpired term.

****If you are interested in serving on an Upshur County board, please submit your letter of interest to the Commission Office at 91 W. Main St., Suite 101, Buckhannon, WV 26201 or chughes@upshurcounty.org. Upcoming term expirations are listed in this section of the agenda; however, letters of interest can be submitted at any time. Letters of interest for boards that do not currently have a vacancy will be held until a vacancy occurs. Please note that submitting a letter of interest does not guarantee appointment. ****

Newsletters and/or Event Notifications, Agendas and/or Notices of Meetings, Meeting Minutes and Scheduled Meetings can all be found by visiting: http://www.upshurcounty.org/agenda_and_minutes/index.php

Tabled Items

(Certain Items May Require Discussion, Action and/or Approval by the Commission)

None

Next Regular Meeting of the Upshur County Commission

April 2, 2026 --- 9:00 a.m.

Upshur County Courthouse Annex

****The meeting scheduled for March 26th has been cancelled.**



A major step toward continued grid reliability and regional growth.

Valley North Project

A 765-kV Valley Link Transmission Project

Meeting Historic Demand and Delivering Reliable Power

PJM Interconnection LLC (PJM), the regional grid operator that manages the flow of wholesale electricity across 13 states, including Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, estimates that the area must double transmission capacity by 2035, necessitating the construction of a new 765-kilovolt (kV) transmission line to deliver reliable and efficient energy.

After considering several alternative projects through a competitive process, PJM selected Valley Link Transmission Company LLC (Valley Link), an innovative collaboration between Dominion Energy, FirstEnergy Transmission LLC and Transource Energy LLC (a partnership between American Electric Power and Evergy), to develop the Valley North Project.

The Valley North Project involves constructing a new 765-kV transmission line capable of efficiently delivering large amounts of power over long distances. A single 765-kV line can deliver enough electricity to power 2 million homes.

The Valley North Project strengthens the backbone of the region's electric transmission grid, ensuring reliability and enabling economic growth.

Project Overview

- Building 2 substations, one in Hardy County, West Virginia, and one in Frederick County, Maryland.
- Upgrading a substation in Putnam County, West Virginia
- Building approximately 260 miles of new 765-kV transmission line between Putnam County, West Virginia and Frederick County, Maryland, including approximately:
 - 225 miles in West Virginia
 - 30 miles in Virginia
 - 5 miles in Maryland

Key Benefits:



Enhances electric service reliability for customers



Drives regional economic growth



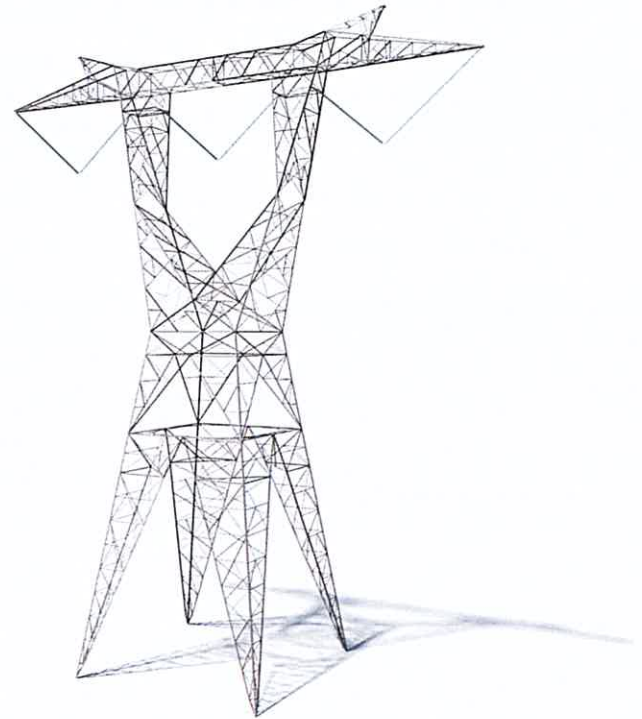
Creates hundreds of local construction jobs

Questions? Contact us.

vltransmission.com | vlnorth@vltransmission.com | (304) 207-0120

Looking Ahead

- Valley Link will be engaging residents, local governments, and other stakeholders to identify transmission route options to submit to regulators in each state.
- The companies, in collaboration with their partners, will also be conducting surveys to identify environmental, cultural, and historic resources as well as any threatened and endangered species.
- Routes will be refined based on public input gathered through stakeholder meetings, public open houses, and landowner engagement.
- Representatives from Valley Link will provide regular updates and transparent communication, ensuring that community members are well-informed throughout the process.
- This project requires local and state permits and approvals including approval from the Public Service Commission of West Virginia, the Maryland Public Service Commission, and Virginia State Corporation Commission.
- Initial stakeholder and community engagement begins in January 2026, with public open houses to follow.



A Typical 765-kV Lattice Structure



A JOINT VENTURE OF

TRANSOURCE

**Dominion
Energy**

FirstEnergy
Transmission

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE
JOINT COMMITTEE on GOVERNMENT and FINANCE
Legislative Auditor's Office

1900 Kanawha Blvd. East, Room W-329
Charleston, WV 25305-0610
(304) 347-4880



Justin Robinson
Legislative Auditor

March 16, 2026

Mr. Robert Stewart III, Commission President
Lewis County Commission
Lewis County Courthouse
110 Center Avenue
Weston , WV 26452

RE: Guidance for County Fire Protection Fund (W.Va. Code §7-5B-1) and All-County Fire Protection Fund (W.Va. Code §7-5B-2) Distributions.

Dear County Commission or Commission President:

This correspondence is provided on behalf of the Legislative Auditor to offer guidance regarding administration of funds distributed to county commissions pursuant to West Virginia Code §7-5B-1 (County Fire Protection Fund) and §7-5B-2 (All-County Fire Protection Fund). There have been many questions directed to the Post Audit Division regarding the disbursement of these funds from the county commission. This letter is to provide uniform guidance to all county commissions on this topic.

Both statutes referenced above establish special revenue funds administered by the Cabinet Secretary of the WV Department of Homeland Security. These special revenue funds are distributed by Homeland Security to the county commissions. County commissions are then to distribute these funds “to the fire departments in those counties for the exclusive benefit of fire protection or emergency services in the county.”

Although both statutes set forth the eligibility requirements for county commissions and outline the distribution methodology from the Secretary of Homeland Security to the county commissions, they **do not** define eligibility standards for recipient fire departments nor specify procedures governing distribution from the county commissions to those departments or what expenditures may qualify.

Any determinations regarding whether expenditures comply with the stated purpose for this funding lies with the respective county commission. In exercising that authority, each county commission serves as a steward of public funds and is responsible for ensuring that disbursements align with the purpose stated in statute, “for the exclusive benefit of fire protection or emergency services...”. If a county commission determines that a proposed expenditure satisfies the statutory requirement of exclusive benefit for fire protection or emergency services, it is within its authority to approve the disbursement.

While the WV Department of Homeland Security does have rule making authority concerning this funding, it has not established any rules governing the use of these funds other than the statutory provision that, “funds are for the exclusive benefit of fire protection or emergency services in the county.” Ultimately, the disbursement of this funding to departments in your county and the approval of qualifying expenditure rests with the county commission based on its judgement.

We recommend county commissions develop and implement written policies and procedures governing the administration and distribution of these funds to qualifying departments in their county to ensure that public funds are used for their intended purpose. Establishing clear guidance regarding fund disbursement, approval processes, allowable uses, reporting expectations, required supporting documentation, and record retention promotes consistency, reduces ambiguity, and strengthens the county commission’s ability to demonstrate responsible stewardship of public funds.

While the Post Audit Division of the Legislative Auditor’s Office is providing this guidance, we want to be clear that we have no authority over the distribution of the funding pursuant to West Virginia Code §7-5B-1 (County Fire Protection Fund) and §7-5B-2 (All-County Fire Protection Fund). The establishment of policies and procedures at the county commission for the use and accounting of this funding is recommended to enable the proper accounting for these funds and to support its use for the defined statutory purpose. We hope that this guidance provides a helpful framework to support consistent and responsible administration of these funds.

If you have any questions regarding the information contained in this letter, please feel free to reach out to me at (304)-347-4880 or kenneth.jones@wvlegislature.gov. If you or a department have a general question regarding VFD funding, please feel free to reach out to a member of the VFD audit team at (304)-347-4880 or VFD@wvlegislature.gov.

Links to Additional Information

1. W.Va. Code §12-4-14b- Accountability of state funds for equipment and training; review or audit of expenditures; withholding of state funds for delinquency or misuse; notifications. <https://code.wvlegislature.gov/12-4-14B/>
2. W.Va. Code §8-15-8b- Authorized expenditure of revenues; deductions for unauthorized expenditures; record retention. <https://code.wvlegislature.gov/8-15-8B/>
3. Examples of allowable expenditures.
http://www.wvlegislature.gov/Joint/Postaudit/vfd_example_expenditures.pdf
4. Post Audit Management Guide.
<https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Joint/Postaudit/VFD-Management-Guide.pdf>

5. VFD Audit Reports. https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Joint/Postaudit/vfd_audits.cfm

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "MJ", is positioned above the typed name.

Mike Jones, CIA, CFE, CRMA
Audit Manager

March 16, 2026

Sheriff Mickey E. Metz

Lewis County Sheriff's Office

Dear Sheriff Metz,

Please accept this letter as formal notice of my resignation from my position as Deputy Sheriff with the Lewis County Sheriff's Office. My final day of employment will be Wednesday, April 15, 2026.

I have had the privilege of serving with the Lewis County Sheriff's Office for the past four years. During that time, I have gained valuable experience and am grateful for the opportunities I have been given while working here. It has been an honor to serve the citizens of Lewis County and to work alongside the dedicated members of this office.

I sincerely appreciate the support, training, and professional development I have received during my time with the department. I will do my best to assist with a smooth transition prior to my departure.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve the Lewis County Sheriff's Office and the community.

Respectfully,

Daniel P. Cooley II

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Cooley II', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.