

BOCC Wrap-Up / County Manager Update

October 20, 2025

9:01 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Ryan Barrett, David Bailey, Geoff Soderquist, Becky Butler, Mindy Brooks, Alex Murray, Fiona Valezquez, Amanda Price, Preston Pinkston, Doyle Sanford, Sarah Hensley, Sherri Dokken, Vanessa Ruelas, Angie Hodge, Michelle Sauter, Natalie Kamieniecki, Meja Handlen, Tom Stanton, Grace Jimenez, Larry Grove, Matt Patana, Rudy Rodriguez, Graham Gowing

Guest(s): Several unnamed guests

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Public comment: None.

Executive session: At 9:01 a.m., Commissioner Brummer announced that the Board would be going into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) until 9:21 a.m. to discuss the following four topics:

- Gather Church
- Public defender contracts
- Potential restitution regarding Ceres Hill
- Centralia landfill mediation

At 9:21 a.m., Commissioner Brummer extended executive session until 9:31 a.m.

Executive session ended at 9:31 a.m. Commissioner Brummer noted that no decisions had been made.

Commissioner Pollock made a motion to approve the direction to outside counsel in the Gather Church matter as discussed in executive session. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Commissioner Pollock made a motion to proceed with litigation regarding Emma Mendez as discussed in executive session. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Commissioner Pollock made a motion to authorize the letter to insurance counsel regarding the Centralia landfill matter as discussed in executive session. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Preliminary approval to proceed with lodging tax agreements: Rudy Rodriguez discussed the previous week's lodging tax presentations and deliberations. The commissioners directed staff to proceed with grant agreements as proposed, with final approval to come via resolution.

National Flood Insurance Program / government shutdown: Doyle Sanford urged residents to look into flood insurance options. The commissioners directed Doyle to work on a press release.

Fairgrounds drain project update: Matt Patana suggested the drain work take place beginning June 8, noting that the replacement is expected to take four to five weeks. The commissioners directed Matt to move forward with a request for proposals.

Summerfest: Fiona Velazquez said the Sports Hub plans 4th of July fireworks and the city of Chehalis plans an event at Stan Hedwall. She outlined the estimated costs of also hosting an event at the fairgrounds. The commissioners directed staff to forgo July 4 fireworks and spectator events at the fairgrounds in 2026 to allow time to get the Midway work completed. The commissioners said they'd like to partner with Chehalis and Centralia on their efforts.

Historic Courthouse fire alarm panel: Alex Murray said the fire alarm panel is obsolete, with parts now available only via eBay. Alex said the Capital Facilities Plan Committee is recommending funding of up to \$300,000 for the project, with funding coming from the Real Estate Excise Tax (REET). **Commissioner Pollock made a motion to move forward with the fire alarm panel replacement as proposed. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion passed 3-0.**

County insurance: Angie Hodge requested the commissioners consider ending the county's contract with PEBB for medical, dental and vision coverage for Lewis County's AFSCME-represented and non-represented employees and to instead move forward with HUB for 2026. **Commissioner Pollock made a motion to approve the insurance change for 2026 as proposed. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion passed 3-0.**

Legislative priorities: The commissioners approved the draft legislative priorities for 2026.

Vacancy on Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association (VEBA) Trust for Public Employees: Graham Gowing noted that the appointee likely would need to come from the Sheriff's Office.

Boundary Review Board (BRB): Commissioner Swope said the topic will be discussed Oct. 27.

Meeting ended at 10:07 a.m.