

## ESC / Directors' Update

February 18, 2026

9 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Ryan Barrett, Becky Butler, Mindy Brooks, Wes Anderson, Nate Kunishige, Assessor Ross Nielson, Anders Pollman, David Bailey, Treasurer Arny Davis, Coroner Warren McLeod, Graham Gowing, Matt Patana, Angie Hodge, Amanda Price, Alex Murray, Fionna Velazquez, Grace Jimenez, Marni Larson, Natalie Kamieniecki, Clerk Scott Tinney, Shelly Stewart, Sherri Dokken, Tom Stanton, Meja Handlen

Guest(s):

Recorder: Rieva Lester

**Public comment:** None.

**Commissioner Swope made a motion to amend the agenda to include an executive session discussion regarding Restorical Research / Centralia landfill mediation. Commissioner Brummer seconded. Motion passed 3-0.**

### ESC ITEMS

Year-end update from LC Coroner's Office: Coroner Warren McLeod provided the following statistics from 2025:

- 905 total calls (compared to 885 the previous year), which included the following:
  - Three homicides
  - 16 suicides
  - 52 accidental deaths
  - Seven deaths of undetermined causes
  - Four pending toxicology reports
  - 54 overdoses (the county's highest total ever)
- Warren said his office performed 83 full autopsies, 70 external autopsies and seven limited autopsies in 2025.
- Warren said his office saved more than \$84,000 in 2025 by providing its own decedent removals.

Warren said his office has seen 13 overdoses, with 13 more pending toxicology reports, so far in 2026.

**Checklist for working remotely:** Nate Kunishige walked participants through steps to take before taking a laptop home for remote use.

**Updated Risk policy:** Becky Butler said the Risk policy will be updated March 17.

**2026-27 budget planning:** Becky Butler year-end review March 2.

**2026 Legislative Session:** Commissioner Swope discussed concerns regarding proposed HB

**Electeds' roundtable:**

- **Treasurer Army Davis:** First-half property tax bills have been sent.
- **Assessor Ross Nielson:** software implementation remains on schedule.

### **DIRECTORS' UPDATE ITEMS**

**Executive session:** At 9:22 a.m., Commissioner Brummer announced that the Board would be going into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) until 9:32 a.m. to discuss three topics: Vader Water, Chehalis annexation litigation – mediation and Restorical Research / Centralia landfill mediation.

- At 9:32 a.m., Commissioner Brummer extended executive session until 9:37 a.m.
- At 9:37 a.m., Commissioner Brummer extended executive session until 9:45 a.m.
- At 9:45 a.m., Commissioner Brummer extended executive session until 9:48 a.m.

Executive session ended at 9:45 a.m. Commissioner Brummer noted that no decisions had been made.

**Commissioner Swope made a motion to authorize the mediation and fees regarding the Chehalis annexation litigation as discussed in executive session. Commissioner Brummer seconded. Motion passed 3-0.**

**Legislative update:** The commissioners declined to sign onto the Risk Pool's proposed letter to the editor regarding SB 6239.

**Resolution 26-063: Commissioner Swope made a motion to approve Resolution 26-063: Contract with Fuller Designs for Engineering and Design Services for SWWF Friendlyville Project. Commissioner Brummer seconded. Motion passed 2-0-1, with Commissioner Swope and Commissioner Brummer voting in favor and Commissioner Pollock abstaining.**

**USGS flood gauges:** County Manager Ryan Barrett delayed discussion on the topic.

**FEMA timelines for approvals / reimbursements:** Wes Anderson discussed risks associated with completing projects because funding for all projects now must go to U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem for approval. He said approvals are backlogged and not guaranteed. Commissioner Swope directed staff to develop a one sheet that outlines those delays so he can reach out to Noem's office.

### **Announcements**

Commissioner Brummer left at 9:59 a.m.

Becky Butler said Natalie Mauermann has accepted the Risk Manager position, and Angie Hodge said Sam Allen has started in her new position in HR.

Public Health and Social Service's new Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Joel Wheeler introduced himself.

Fionna Velazquez invited participants to a volunteer thank you dinner planned for Feb. 19.

### **Calendars**

The commissioners approved the proposed dates for all-day Budget meetings:

- Wednesday, Sept. 23.
- Tuesday, Sept. 29.
- Wednesday, Oct. 7.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.