

LEWIS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (BOCC)

Business Meeting minutes

March 17, 2026

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Swope

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Commissioner Pollock called the meeting to order at 10 a.m., determined a quorum and then proceeded with the flag salute.

CASCADE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS RELIEF CENTER

Cascade Mental Health Chief of Inpatient Services Mindy Greenwood provided an overview of Cascade's new Crisis Relief Center. She and Great Rivers Behavioral Health Chief Executive Officer / Director Trinidad Medina discussed the need for additional funding.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive session: At 10:18 a.m., Commissioner Pollock announced that the Board would be going into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) until 10:25 a.m. to discuss the Timberland Regional Library.

Executive session ended at 10:25 a.m. Commissioner Pollock noted that no decisions had been made.

CONSENT ITEMS

Commissioner Swope made a motion to approve minutes from the March 10, 2026, Business Meeting as well as Resolution 26-087. Commissioner Brummer seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

DELIBERATION ITEMS

Commissioner Swope made a motion to approve Resolutions 26-088 through 26-091. Commissioner Brummer seconded.

Resolution 26-088: Adopt the updated Lewis County Risk & Safety Handbook.

Budget Administrator / Risk Director Becky Butler discussed the resolution. Becky said the Risk & Safety Handbook has been updated to incorporate current best practices, regulatory changes and enhanced protocols for accident prevention, risk management, incident reporting, workers' compensation, personal protective equipment and environmental hazards, such as those associated with heat-related illnesses and wildfire smoke.

Resolution 26-089: Update parameters and anticipated uses of \$10.2 million in funding for the North Lewis County Industrial Access.

Public Works Director Geoff Soderquist discussed the resolution. Geoff said the resolution establishes updated guidelines for the North Lewis County Industrial Access (NLCIA) funding being provided by the Washington State Transportation Budget.

Resolution 26-090: Appoint Maree Lerchen to the Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area Agency on Aging (LMTAAA) Advisory Council.

Clerk of the Board Rieva Lester discussed the resolution. Rieva said the resolution appoints Maree Lerchen to fill the remainder of Greg Rohr's unexpired term.

Resolution 26-091: Rescind and replace Resolution 25-355 to Disband the Boundary Review Board.

Community Development Director Mindy Brooks discussed the resolution. Mindy said the resolution disbands the Boundary Review Board at the conclusion of its review of the City of Chehalis Notice of Intent to annex and also stipulates that the Boundary Review Board will review no other new matters, aside from the pending City of Chehalis annexation, prior to disbanding.

Motion passed 3-0.

HEARING

Traffic Ordinance 225: An ordinance fixing the maximum speed at which vehicles may be operated over certain roads in Lewis County, Washington: defining offenses, and providing penalties for the violation thereof.

Commissioner Pollock introduced the hearing.

County Engineer Wes Anderson read a staff report (attached) for the record. Among the highlights:

- Pursuant to RCW 46.61.415, local authorities are authorized to determine the maximum speed limits permitted on roadways based on an engineering and traffic investigation.
- The Lewis County Sherriff's Office requested Public Works investigate the stretch of Bunker Creek Road, indicating that the current 20 mph speed limit appears to be unreasonably low and possibly unenforceable because when speed limits are set lower than an engineering study justifies, it's possible enforcement citations may not be upheld in court.
- To set speed limits, Lewis County uses a nationally accepted engineering approach called the Operating Speed Method, which establishes speed limits primarily based on the 85th percentile of speed – the speed at which or below 85 percent of the free-flowing traffic is travelling – as well as other factors, such as accident history, roadway characteristics and environment and history.
- Based on the traffic investigation, accepted engineering practices and all roadway factors considered, including recent crash history, Public Works determined the recommended speed limit for the segment of Bunker Creek Road is 30 mph.

Wes suggested the commissioners amend the traffic ordinance to extend the proposed speed limit to include the areas between milepost 0 to milepost 1.1, which would reduce the speed limit at the Willapa Trail while also increasing the speed limit along the other stretch of roadway.

Commissioner Pollock asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

Commissioner Pollock then closed the question-and-answer portion of the hearing.

Wes asked that his previous comments be adopted into the record.

Commissioner Pollock asked if anyone wanted to speak for or against the resolution.

Jim Smith, who owns the Adna Grocery, requested that the county create sidewalks to improve safety and add electronic speed-monitoring signs.

Public Works Director Geoff Soderquist reiterated that staff is recommending the commissioners amend the traffic ordinance to decrease the speed near the Willapa Trail.

Geoff asked that his previous comments be adopted into the record.

Carolyn Smith spoke against the ordinance, sharing concerns about increasing the speed limit.

Stephanie Morris spoke against the ordinance, sharing concerns about increasing the speed limit.

Tony Terwilliger spoke against the ordinance, sharing concerns about increasing the speed limit. He said 100 percent of the residents within that stretch of roadway are opposed to the change.

Michelle Pardue spoke against the ordinance, sharing concerns about increasing the speed limit.

Lindsey Watt spoke against the ordinance, sharing concerns about increasing the speed limit.

Clerk of the Board Rieva Lester noted that the commissioners also received written testimony that would be included in the record.

Commissioner Pollock closed the hearing.

Commissioner Brummer asked if 25 mph could be a compromise.

Geoff and Wes noted that the study puts the 85th percentile would be slightly greater than 30 mph. They said state statute sets enforceability at the 85th percentile.

Commissioner Swope shared concerns about moving forward with the proposal when the neighbors who would be affected by the change had expressed opposition. He said approving the proposal would put the commissioners on par with state legislators who approved the contentious so-called "Millionaire's Tax" despite the public's overwhelming opposition. He discussed the need to ensure the affected neighbors are involved in the decision-making process.

Commissioner Pollock said the stretch of Bunker Creek Road under consideration is a county-owned but goes through a residential-like area. She said RCW 46.61.400 sets a maximum speed limit of 25 mph on city and town streets. She also cautioned that not adhering to the standard practices regarding how speed limits are created countywide could have unintended consequences.

Commissioner Brummer said he agrees with his colleagues and would like to further discuss the creation of crosswalks at the Rails to Trails crossing and the grocery store before the board makes a decision.

Commissioner Swope made a motion to deny Traffic Ordinance 225. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion to deny Traffic Ordinance 225 passed 3-0.

Commissioner Brummer directed Rieva Lester to sign the day's resolutions on his behalf if he is unable to sign them remotely.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / NEW BUSINESS

Bid opening for 2026-2027 newspaper of record: Clerk of the Board Rieva Lester said Lewis County issued a call for bids for the 2026-27 newspaper of record on Feb. 3, 2026. She opened the two submissions the county received and read the results aloud:

- **The Chronicle:** Bid of \$3.80 per 1.20 column inch, with the cost for the sample bid totaling \$30.02.
- **DeVaul Publishing:** Bid of \$8.33 per 1.20 column inch, with the cost for the sample bid totaling \$64.56.

Rieva said staff will review the submissions and make a contract recommendation.

Commissioner Pollock noted there will be no Business Meeting on March 31 as it is the fifth Tuesday of the month.

PRESS CONFERENCE

No questions.

ADJOURNMENT

The BOCC Business Meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m., with the next Business Meeting scheduled for 10 a.m. Tuesday, March 24, 2026, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room (Room 223).

Minutes from the BOCC Business Meeting are not verbatim. The weekly Business Meeting streams live on YouTube (search for "LewisCountyWa" on YouTube or go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/LewisCountyWa/featured>). Video footage also is available at no charge at <https://lewiscountywa.gov/offices/commissioners/bocc-meetings/>.



ATTEST:

Rieva Lester, Clerk of the Board

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Lindsey R. Pollock, DVM, Chair

Scott J. Brummer, Vice Chair

Sean D. Swope, Commissioner