

Lewis County Salary Commission

OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

3 P. M. MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2025

BASEMENT-LEVEL CONF. ROOM
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE

351 NW N. STREET
CHEHALIS, WA

Purpose

The Lewis County Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials ("Salary Commission") is convened in accordance with **RCW 36.17.024** for the sole purpose of setting the salaries of the three elected Lewis County Commissioners, as outlined in Lewis County **Resolution 25-047**. The commission provides an independent, citizen-led process to ensure commissioner compensation is fair, transparent and reflective of the responsibilities of the office.

Authority and Statutory Reference

Authorized under **RCW 36.17.024**, which allows counties to establish an independent salary commission to fix the salaries of elected officials. In this case, the Salary Commission's scope is limited to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) only.

Salary decisions adopted by the commission become effective automatically unless rejected or modified by the BOCC within 30 days, in accordance with the statute.

Composition

The Lewis County Salary Commission consists of three members, appointed by the BOCC in compliance with **RCW 36.17.024** and local guidelines.

Members of the Salary Commission must act impartially and avoid any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Members serve for the duration necessary to complete the salary review process and are subject to any terms outlined in the appointing resolution or ordinance.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Salary Commission's duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- Review and analyze the current salaries of the three county commissioners.
- Research comparable compensation in similar counties, taking into account population, budget size, responsibilities and local economic factors.
- Deliberate and decide on appropriate salary levels using objective, data-informed criteria.
- Document and present the final salary determination to the Lewis County Auditor's Office.

Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) Compliance

All meetings of the Salary Commission are subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (**RCW 42.30**). This includes:

- **Public Notice:** All meetings must be properly noticed in advance, with agendas made available.
- **Public Access:** Meetings must be held in venues open and accessible to the public.
- **Transparency:** All deliberations and votes must be conducted in open session.
- **Records:** Meeting minutes must be taken and retained as public records.
- **Quorum:** Any Salary Commission-related communication – whether written or spoken – between two or more members of the Salary Commission members can constitute a “meeting.” These discussions must be held only during publicized, scheduled meetings of the Salary Commission.

Meeting Procedures

At the first meeting, the members of the Salary Commission will:

- Elect a Chair to lead discussions.
- Elect or appoint a Secretary to take minutes.
- Discuss rules of procedure, including quorum (two members), voting rules and timelines.

Meetings will be scheduled as needed, with sufficient notice provided to the public and county staff.

Expected Outcomes

Following are the Salary Commission's expected outcomes:

- A clear, well-documented decision setting the salaries of the three Lewis County Commissioners.
- Publicly accessible records of commission meetings and salary decisions.
- A transparent, fair, and accountable process that upholds public trust in local governance.

Thank You

Your participation is truly appreciated.

Staff Support

Members of Lewis County's HR team and Prosecuting Attorney's Office are available to help guide the process and serve as information liaisons. Following are their contact details:

HR Director Angie Hodge: angie.hodge@lewiscountywa.gov; 360-740-1408.

Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Scott Gripp: scott.gripp@lewiscountywa.gov; 360-740-1186.

BOCC Clerk of the Board Rieva Lester: rieva.lester@lewiscountywa.gov; 360-740-1419.