



## Board of County Commissioners

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### Press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Questions and answers on night-by-night shelter location selection

### Q. Why do we need a night-by-night shelter?

A. At a public forum, the community identified a night-by-night shelter as a moral imperative to care for our most vulnerable. Providing this option, especially to individuals experiencing homelessness, will offer people a more appropriate place to sleep, rather than a public park or business front. Law enforcement will also be able to enforce current laws and assist individuals in accessing the shelter.

### Q. What is a night-by-night shelter?

A. This indoor emergency shelter will open each afternoon to provide a place to sleep, eat, and shower, among other necessities. It will close each morning, meaning the occupants from the previous evening will have to go elsewhere. The shelter will reopen that afternoon, restarting the process. No spots will be guaranteed from one day to the next, so any given person has a chance to find shelter there each night.

### Q. Why this location?

A. The chosen Kresky location is in a non-residential area between the Chehalis and Centralia downtowns, but in neither downtown core, which allows for proximity to services without changing either city's character. This site is on existing public transportation routes, is easily accessible by emergency services, and sits outside of the floodplain.

### Q. Why now?

A. The public has communicated its goals and concerns for the selection of a night-by-night shelter location. The implications of *Martin v. Boise*, a federal court ruling, and HB 1220, a state law, makes this type of shelter necessary. Since these facilities are required by the state, if a location is not selected locally, in time the state will provide its own input into the location selection process. By acting now, Lewis County helps to avoid state directives on the matter.

### Q. What is next?

A. Lewis County intends to issue a Request for Proposals for the service of running the shelter facilities. Within each proposal, applicants will have to provide specific details about the shelter's operations and propose strategies for how it will respond to the community's goals and concerns highlighted from the public forum. The shelter would likely not begin operating at this location until 2023.

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