



CLALLAM COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2025

MEETING OF THE CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION (CRC)

1st Vice Chair Noble called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., Monday, September 22, 2025. Also present were Commissioners Jim Stoffer, Jeff Tozzer, Alex Fane, Patti Morris, Ron Richards, Rod Fleck, Mark Hodgson, Ron Cameron, Paul Pickett, Christy Holy and Nina Sarmiento. Cathy Walde, Bill Benedict and Susan Fisch was excused.

REQUEST FOR MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Richards requested to remove the presentation from Administrator Mielke regarding federal, state, tribal lands

ACTION TAKEN: Richards moved to remove the presentation by Administrator Mielke, no second, motion failed

Richards requested to add a discussion regarding security to the agenda. There was no objection to add a security discussion after the committee reports section.

ACTION TAKEN: Adopted as modified

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- Minutes – CRC Regular Meeting - September 8, 2025

ACTION TAKEN: Adopted as presented

- Minutes – Townhall Committee Meetings – July 30 and August 27, 2025

ACTION TAKEN: Richards moved to approve the July 30, 2025 minutes as presented, Sarmiento seconded, mc (Committee members only voted)

ACTION TAKEN: Sarmiento moved to approve the August 27, 2025 minutes as presented, Cameron seconded, mc (Committee members only voted)

- Minutes – Land Acquisition Committee Meetings – July 28, August 13 and August 26, 2025

July 28 and August 26 were postponed due to lack of quorum for those meetings at the current meeting.

ACTION TAKEN: Cameron moved to approve the August 13, 2025 minutes as presented, Richards seconded, mc (Committee members only voted)

PUBLIC COMMENT – Please limit comments to three minutes

- Marolee Smith, Port Angeles, commented on security, Elected Official fear
- Ed Bowen, Clallam Bay, commented on Water Resources Specialist recommendation, ethics
- John Worthington, Sequim, commented on Zoom backgrounds, ethics committee

CORRESPONDENCES

Gores noted receipt of correspondences from Nikki Botnen, Commissioner Richards, and Clerk Gores (see attached).

BUSINESS ITEMS

- **BOCC Townhall proposed amendment (Step 2): Commissioner Sarmiento**

Sarmiento read the following into the record:

Proposed amendment:

Each member of the Board of County Commissioners shall conduct at least one town hall meeting in their Commissioner District each year, and all members of the Board of County Commissioners shall conduct at least one town hall meeting in each commissioner's district each year, said meetings to occur outside of normal working hours. Notice of such meetings must be posted at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

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Sarmiento provided a briefing on the proposed amendment regarding BOCC Townhall meetings. CRC Members held discussion. Noble reminded the Commission the amendment is on step 2. The amendment moves to step 3 and 4 at the next meeting for recommended approval for the 2026 ballot.

ACTION TAKEN: Sarmiento moved to adopt the Resolution as a final draft, Holy seconded, motion passed

(11 voted in favor and 1 voted opposed)

- **Ethics Review Board proposed amendment (Step 2): Commissioner Cameron**

Proposed amendment:

An Ethics Review Board shall be established to receive and review complaints of violations of the Clallam County Code of Ethics by elected county officials. The Board shall consist of one citizen from District 1, appointed by the Mayor of Sequim; District 2 appointed by the Mayor of Port Angeles; and District 3, appointed by the Mayor of Forks. Members shall serve without compensation. Findings of the Ethics Review Board shall be made public.

Cameron provided a briefing on the proposed amendment regarding Ethics Review Board. CRC Members held discussion.

Original motion:

ACTION TAKEN: Cameron moved to advance the language as written and move to step 3 and 4, Morris seconded

Amended motion:

ACTION TAKEN: Noble moved to amend to add as follows: The Board shall consist of one citizen from District 1, appointed by the Mayor of Sequim; one citizen from District 2, appointed by the Mayor of Port Angeles; and one citizen from District 3, appointed by the Mayor of Forks.

Sarmiento seconded, motion passed

(12 voted in favor)

Richards questioned if the City of Forks, Port Angeles and Sequim were contacted about their involvement. CRC Members held discussion.

Amended motion:

ACTION TAKEN: Sarmiento moved to amend to add as follows: An Ethics Review Board hereby established to receive and review complaints of violations of the Clallam County Code of Ethics by elected county officials. Richards seconded

Sarmiento withdrew her motion

Motion to table:

ACTION TAKEN: Morris moved to send back to Committee, Fleck seconded, motion passed

(12 voted in favor)

- **County Clerk proposed amendment (Step 2): Commissioner Richards**

ACTION TAKEN: Richards moved to pull the amendment off the table, Sarmiento seconded, motion passed

(3 voted in favor and 9 voted opposed)

- **Presentation regarding federal, state, tribal lands – Administrator Mielke**

Administrator Mielke provided a presentation regarding federal, state, tribal lands. CRC Members held discussion.

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SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- Land Acquisition Committee

Richards noted the next meeting will be held on Friday, October 10, 2025 at 10 a.m. in the BOCC small conference room.

SECURITY DISCUSSION

Richards commented that it appears the executive committee made decisions to hire security at the Charter Review Commission meetings. He stated his concerns with the authority of the executive committee. CRC Members held discussion regarding security at the Charter Review Commission Meeting.

Fleck left the meeting at 7 p.m.

REPORTS

- **Chair Report**

No Chair report.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Please limit comments to three minutes

- Eric Fehrmann, Sequim, commented on being the elephant in the room, public comment, carrying a weapon, violence
- Marolee Smith, Port Angeles, commented on security, elected positions, growing up
- Ed Bowen, Clallam Bay, commented on Charter Review work, Vice Chair Noble, Water Committee, Ethics amendment
- John Worthington, Clallam Bay, commented on yelling and screaming at him; security emails
- Rebecca Horst, Sequim, commented on

GOOD OF THE ORDER/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Commissioner Stoffer communicating with other Commissioners

ADJOURNMENT - Meeting concluded at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Loni Gores, MMC

Clerk of the Charter Review Commission

Approved:

10/13/25

CLALLAM COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION 2025 – Roll Call Voting – September 22, 2025
Y – Yes, N- No, A-Absent

	Motion to take the Clerks amendment off the table – Richards
Susan Fisch	A
Bill Benedict	A
Jim Stoffer	N
Jeff Tozzer	N
Alex Fane	N
Ron Cameron	N
Pattie Morris	N
Chris Noble	N
Paul Pickett	N
Ron Richards	Y
Rod Fleck	N
Mark Hodgson	Y
Christy Holy	N
Cathy Walde	A
Nina Sarmiento	Y
Yes	3
No	9
Pass or Fail	Failed

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN-UP SHEET

Public Comment on Agenda Items – 1st Session

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that any testimony that I give is true and accurate. Please print name and address clearly.

Nº	PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS
1	Mimi Smith	[Signature]	PO2498 AL 98362
2	Ed Bowler	[Signature]	POB 111 CB
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CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN-UP SHEET

General Public Comment – 2nd Session

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that any testimony that I give is true and accurate. Please print name and address clearly.

Nº	PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS
1	ERIC Fehrman	Eric Fehrman	Seguin
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CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

CORRESPONDENCES RECEIVED

Gores, Loni

From: Gores, Loni
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 8:24 AM
To: Benedict, Bill; Boughton, Dee; Cameron, Ron; Fane, Alex; Fisch, Susan; Fleck, Rod; Gores, Loni; Hodgson, Mark; Holy, Christy; Morris, Patti; Noble, Chris; Pickett, Paul; Richards, Ron; Sarmiento, Nina; Stoffer, Jim; Tozzer, Jeff; Walde, Cathy
Subject: Ethics Committee Notice 9-16-25
Attachments: 09-16-25 CRC Ethics Committee Agenda Full Copy.pdf

CRC,

Attached is the Ethics Committee meeting notice for September 16:

- 1) Ethics Committee meeting notice on September 16 at 1:30 p.m. at BOCC Small Conference Room 150.

The notices have been posted on the County website at the following links:

CRC page: <https://www.clallamcountywa.gov/210/Charter-Review-Commission-CRC>

County homepage: <https://www.clallamcountywa.gov/>

I've also emailed to the press/media, posted on the BOCC office door and the courthouse public notice board.

Loni

"My email address has changed! The new format is Loni.Gores@clallamcountywa.gov Please update my contact card as your earliest convenience, Thank you!"

*Loni Gores
Clerk of the Board
Commissioners Office
223 East 4th Street, Suite 4
Port Angeles, WA 98362
Phone: 360-417-2256*



COMMITTEE MEETING NOTICE

CLALLAM COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

The Charter Review Commission Ethics Committee has scheduled an Ethics Committee meeting to be held on September 16, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners Small Conference Room 150, 223 East 4th Street, Port Angeles, WA.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss ethics and what actions the CRC should consider regarding ethics in county governance.

Zoom:

If you would like to participate in the meeting via Zoom audio only, call 253-215-8782 and use meeting ID: 836 9266 4344 and passcode: 12345 and use *9 to raise your hand.

If you would like to participate in the meeting via Zoom video conference, visit <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83692664344> and use meeting ID: 836 9266 4344 and passcode: 12345

Citizens with comments or questions regarding the Charter Review Commission may contact the Clerk of the Charter Review Commission at loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov or 360-417-2256.

Dated 9th day of September 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Loni Gores". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Loni Gores, MMC

Clerk to the Charter Review Commission

Clallam County Charter Review Commission Ethics Committee

September 16, 2025 at 1:30 p.m.

Board of Commissioner Small Conference Room 150, 223 East 4th Street, Port Angeles, WA

Agenda

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Review input from CRC on proposed Charter amendment creating an Ethics Review Board
- Public comment
- Next meeting

Zoom:

If you would like to participate in the meeting via Zoom audio only, call 253-215-8782 and use meeting ID: 836 9266 4344 and passcode: 12345 and use *9 to raise your hand.

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Gores, Loni

From: Botnen, Nikki
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 4:38 PM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: RE: Resolution Proposing County Clerk Charter Amendment - RESPONSE NEEDED

Hello Loni, I couldn't attend the 09/08/2025 Charter Review Meeting but was able to listen to the saved meeting online. Please forward the below comments to the Charter Review Commission on my behalf.

I think it's important to clarify my previous comments: I had spoken with the Civil Prosecutor, Mr. Boughton, and proposed language in response, but not in agreement that it was necessary or needed. If changes were going to be made to the language, it made sense to add language regarding WA State Law. I am not an attorney and cannot give legal advice but understand that Washington State RCW's vest powers in my position as Clerk of the Superior Court and Superior Court Clerk. I have no further comment on the issue.

Thank you,

Nikki Botnen, CCM, CCE
Clallam County Clerk

223 E 4th Street, Suite 9
Port Angeles, WA 98362
Clerk's Office Phone # 360.417.2231

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: The contents of this e-mail and any attachments are intended solely for the addressee(s) and may contain confidential and/or legally privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient of this message or an employee or agent responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, or if this message has been addressed to you in error, please immediately alert the sender by reply e-mail, then delete this message and any attachments. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any use, dissemination, distribution, copying or storage of this message is strictly prohibited. Thank you.

From: Gores, Loni <loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 5:02 PM
To: Ozias, Mark <mark.ozias@clallamcountywa.gov>; Johnson, Randy <randy.johnson@clallamcountywa.gov>; French, Mike <Mike.French@clallamcountywa.gov>; Mielke, Todd <Todd.Mielke@clallamcountywa.gov>; Boughton, Dee <dee.boughton@clallamcountywa.gov>; Nichols, Mark <mark.nichols@clallamcountywa.gov>; Basden, Brent <Brent.Basden@clallamcountywa.gov>; Barnhart, Simon <simon.barnhart@clallamcountywa.gov>; Stanley, Elizabeth A. <elizabeth.a.stanley@clallamcountywa.gov>; Clayton, Kaysey <kaysey.clayton@clallamcountywa.gov>; Halberg, Lacey <lacey.halberg@clallamcountywa.gov>; Parker, Brian <Brian.Parker@clallamcountywa.gov>; Botnen, Nikki <nikki.botnen@clallamcountywa.gov>
Cc: Gores, Loni <loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov>
Subject: FW: Resolution Proposing County Clerk Charter Amendment - RESPONSE NEEDED

Superior Court Judges, Superior Court Clerk, Prosecuting Attorney and Board of Commissioners:

The Charter Review Commission requested that I forward you the attached proposed Charter amendment regarding the Clerk of the Superior Court position. If you have any comments to make regarding the proposed amendment, please send those comments to me **no later than Wednesday, September 3**. The Charter Review

Commission will be discussing the proposed amendment and any comments received at their next meeting on Monday, September 8.

Loni

“My email address has changed! The new format is Loni.Gores@clallamcountywa.gov Please update my contact card as your earliest convenience, Thank you!”

*Loni Gores
Clerk of the Board
Commissioners Office
223 East 4th Street, Suite 4
Port Angeles, WA 98362
Phone: 360-417-2256*

From: Richards, Ron <ron.richards@clallamcountywa.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 24, 2025 11:44 PM
To: Gores, Loni <loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov>
Cc: Fisch, Susan <susan.fisch@clallamcountywa.gov>
Subject: Resolution Proposing County Clerk Charter Amendment

Hi Loni,

Attached is the resolution I told Susan I would draft proposing a charter amendment to vest powers in the Clerk of the Superior Court.

Ron

Gores, Loni

From: Richards, Ron
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 8:51 AM
To: Gores, Loni; Benedict, Bill; Boughton, Dee; Cameron, Ron; Fane, Alex; Fisch, Susan; Fleck, Rod; Hodgson, Mark; Holy, Christy; Morris, Patti; Noble, Chris; Pickett, Paul; Sarmiento, Nina; Stoffer, Jim; Tozzer, Jeff; Walde, Cathy; Botnen, Nikki
Subject: Re: Resolution Proposing County Clerk Charter Amendment - RESPONSE NEEDED

Dear Niki,

Please excuse me if I misinterpreted your position on the proposed charter amendment dealing with your powers and duties. but I assumed the deputy prosecutor would have explained the need for this amendment to you. Simply put, with no duties specified in the charter for your office, those duties fall on the County Commissioners under the terms of our state constitution, and any Board of County Commissioners is free to assign your Clerk of the Superior Court "out-of-court" duties and your County Clerk duties to any other officer.

The fact that the RCWs specify certain responsibilities for the County Clerk and the Superior Court Clerk means very little in a charter county. This is because Article 11, Section 4 of our state constitution states that "all the powers, authority and duties granted to and imposed on county officers by general law (with certain exceptions not applicable to you) shall be vested in the legislative authority of the county unless EXPRESSLY vested in specific officers by the charter." Making this even more clear is the second to the last sentence of Article 11, Section 4 that says the provisions of Article 11, Section 5 shall not apply to charter counties. Article 11, Section 5 says the legislature, by general and uniform laws, shall provide for the election in the several counties of boards of county commissioners, sheriffs, county clerks, treasurers, prosecuting attorneys and other county, township or precinct and district officers, as public convenience may require, AND SHALL PRESCRIBE THEIR DUTIES, AND FIX THEIR TERMS OF OFFICE. So, the very state constitutional provision that allows the state legislature to prescribe the duties of county officers (Article 11, Section 5) is not applicable in charter counties.

Article 11, Section 4, also precludes the RCWs from affecting your office in another manner. Even though the first sentence of Article 11, Section 5 and RCW 36.16.030 state that the county clerk's position shall be elected, Article 11, Section 4, overrides those provisions. Therefore, the charter was able to make your position an appointed position.

There are two important reasons for the proposed charter amendment. First, your actions as County Clerk are open to challenge on the basis that no powers have been assigned to you by the charter and therefore fall on the County Commissioners. Second, it is better government I believe to have your duties clearly assigned by the charter rather than to have them open to change by ordinance or resolution of any Board of County Commissioners.

Sincerely,

Ron Richards
2nd District Charter Review Commissioner

Gores, Loni

From: Gores, Loni
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 8:22 AM
To: Benedict, Bill; Boughton, Dee; Cameron, Ron; Fane, Alex; Fisch, Susan; Fleck, Rod; Hodgson, Mark; Holy, Christy; Morris, Patti; Noble, Chris; Pickett, Paul; Richards, Ron; Sarmiento, Nina; Stoffer, Jim; Tozzer, Jeff; Walde, Cathy
Cc: Gores, Loni
Subject: Ethics Committee Notice 10-10-25
Attachments: Committee Notice Ethics 10-10-25 Full Copy.pdf

CRC,

Attached is the Ethics Committee meeting notice for October 10:

- 1) Ethics Committee meeting notice on October 10 at 1 p.m. at BOCC Small Conference Room 150.

The notices have been posted on the County website at the following links:

CRC page: <https://www.clallamcountywa.gov/210/Charter-Review-Commission-CRC>

County homepage: <https://www.clallamcountywa.gov/>

I've also emailed to the press/media, posted on the BOCC office door and the courthouse public notice board.

Loni

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Zoom:

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If you would like to participate in the meeting via Zoom video conference, visit <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87343848004> and use meeting ID: 873 4384 8004 and passcode: 12345

Citizens with comments or questions regarding the Charter Review Commission may contact the Clerk of the Charter Review Commission at loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov or 360-417-2256.

Dated 17th day of September 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Loni Gores".

Loni Gores, MMC
Clerk to the Charter Review Commission

Clallam County Charter Review Commission Ethics Committee

October 10, 2025 at 1 p.m.

Board of Commissioner Small Conference Room 150, 223 East 4th Street, Port Angeles, WA

Agenda

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Review Resolution Drafts
- Public comment
- Next meeting

Zoom:

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CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

Correspondences end page