

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING AGENDA



City of Lake Stevens Vision Statement

By 2030, we are a sustainable community around the lake with a vibrant economy, unsurpassed infrastructure and exceptional quality of life.

January 20, 2026 - 6:00 PM

City Council Workshop Meeting

In person: The Mill, Sawyers Room, 1808 Main Street, Lake Stevens

or Join Zoom Meeting: [Link](#)

or call in at (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 87068755927 Passcode: 051416

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Joint Meeting**
 - A. Joint Meeting with Parks and Recreation Planning Board Jill Meis
- 3. Council Training**
 - A. Council Do's and Dont's Training Ann Bennett,
WCIA
- 4. Adjourn**

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND

The City of Lake Stevens strives to provide accessible opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Please contact Human Resources, City of Lake Stevens ADA Coordinator, (425) 622-9400, at least five business days prior to any City meeting or event if any accommodations are needed. For TDD users, please use the state's toll-free relay service, (800) 833-6384, and ask the operator to dial the City of Lake Stevens City Hall number.

NOTICE: All proceedings of this meeting are audio recorded, except Executive Sessions.

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



Agenda Date: 1/20/2026

Subject: Joint Meeting with Parks and Recreation Planning Board

Contact Person/Department: Jill Meis, Parks Department

Budget Impact: N/A

Legal Review: No

RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION REQUESTED:

Review and discuss the 2026 Work Program, which will need to be approved, with or without modifications, at a future meeting.

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

The Parks and Recreation Planning Board reviewed the 2026 Park Board Work Program at their January 12th meeting and has forwarded it for City Council consideration and feedback.

Some accomplishments for 2025 are:

- Reviewed and made recommendations for Cavalero Park Acquisition.
- Reviewed Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan project.
- Held an engagement workshop for the PROS plan.
- The board visited park sites independently to make recommendations for future needs.

APPLICABLE CITY POLICIES:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2026 Parks Board Work Program Proposed

Parks and Recreation Planning Board 2026 Work Program

Action Item	Description	Status
Increase Community Awareness and Support	1. Attend meetings for organizations, service clubs, groups, etc. to raise awareness of park related initiatives or projects. Help recruit volunteers for events and park beautification projects.	
Capital Project Review and Feedback	Review project planning/design milestones brought forth by the Department and provide feedback for direction. Anticipated projects include: 1. Cedarwood Recreation Project 2. Eagle Ridge – Phase II 3. North Cove Motorized Boat Launch Dock 4. Westlake Recreational Amenities 2. Bayview Trail – Phase 1	
City Park Visits and Discussions	1. New members will visit all City owned parks and provide feedback on a survey form provided by the department. Current members will also do this for parks they have never visited. 5. The board members will put together a schedule of parks they would like to discuss in detail at future meetings; all members will visit these parks between meetings and bring their feedback to the meeting to discuss.	
PROS Plan Development	2. Review milestones and provide input on the draft and final Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan (PROS).	Continued from 2025
Rules of Procedures	Review the Rules of Procedures. Discuss and implement any desired updates.	

City of Lake Stevens Council Do's and Don'ts Training

Presented by
Ann Bennett
Executive Director
Washington Cities Insurance Authority

1

Washington Cities Insurance Authority

- A municipal non-profit organization of Washington public entities joined to share risk
 - Over 165 members and \$222 million in assets
- Advantages of WCIA Membership
 - Run by a board of directors composed entirely of members
 - Assist members in avoiding and reducing losses through risk management, training, and claim handling
 - Stability and transparency in rates
 - Coverage decisions made by the Executive Director with appealable rights to the Executive Committee

2

Washington Cities Insurance Authority

- Provides Self-Insurance Liability Coverage
 - Auto Liability, General Liability, Employment Practices, Errors & Omission
 - \$20,000,000 per Occurrence
 - Look for coverage not exclusions
- Additional Insurance Coverage
 - Member Property, Auto & Boiler Machinery
 - Crime Fidelity purchased by members
 - Cyber and Pollution Premises Liability purchased for all members



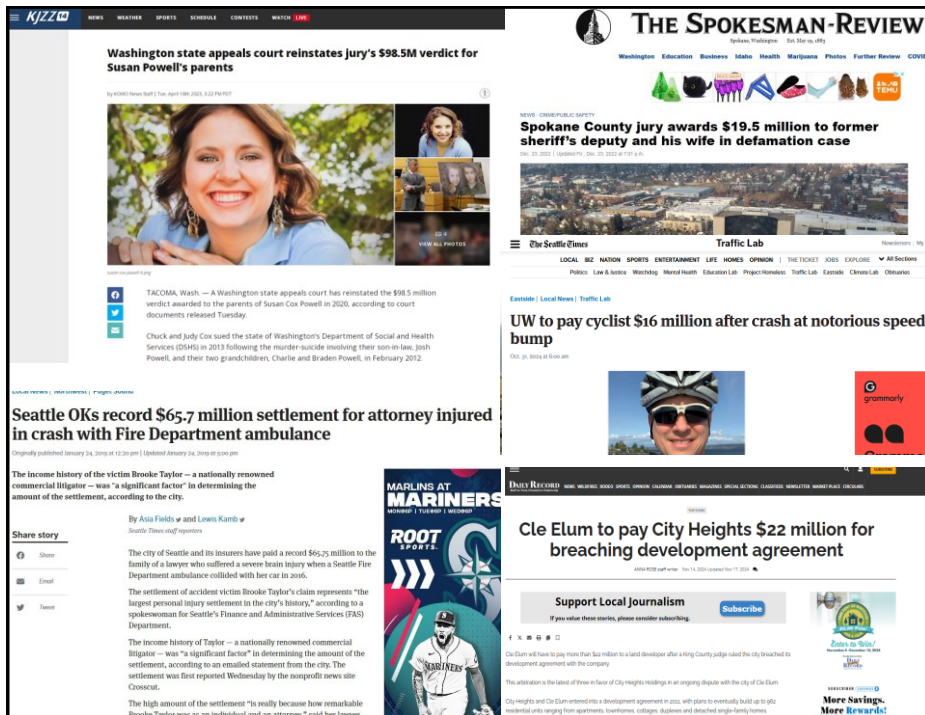
3

Insurance Market Update

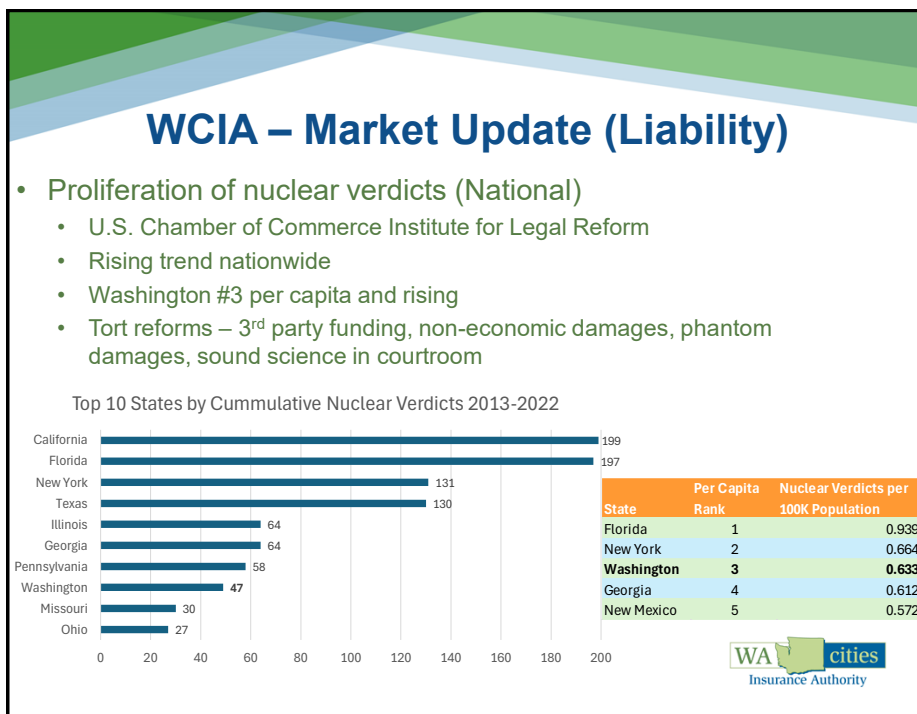
- Insurance is a cyclical industry prone to large pricing deviations from year to year
 - WCIA's overall reinsurance rate has increased 700% from 2015 – 2025
 - WCIA's 2026 renewal mixed results
 - Liability reinsurers requiring WCIA to increase our SIR from \$4M to \$5M while reducing their available capacity and charging more for less coverage = hard market
 - Property rate decreased while also increasing Members earthquake coverage; pay less for more = soft market
 - 2026 WCIA's overall liability rate increased by 3%



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Avoiding Liability

Individuals can receive absolute immunity for legislative activities

- Adoption of budgets, ordinances, and resolutions

Only within context of council meeting as a whole and not acting as an individual



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Avoiding Liability

Land Use

- Use of Hearing Examiners
 - Less issues with appearance of fairness doctrine
 - Eliminates many arbitrary and capricious decision allegations
- Do not insert yourself in the process
 - Westmark v. Burien, Mission Springs v. Spokane
- Development Agreements
 - Held to contractual law and remedies which may not be covered by WCIA
 - You thought you had an expiration date...



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Avoiding Liability

Personnel

- Stay in legislative role
 - Set policies, budgets, municipal codes
 - Do not to stray into Executive role
 - Management of employees, hiring/firing, discipline
- Harassment and Discrimination
 - Held to same standard as City employees
 - Can be sued individually
 - Know the law and your policies
 - Report to Executive
 - If you witness behavior or are made aware of problem by employee



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Avoiding Liability

Negligent Misrepresentation

- Do not make specific promises or assurances
- Refer specific questions to staff
- Do not take matters into your own hands



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Avoiding Liability

Defamation

- If the statement/opinion is regarding a legislative concern you have immunity
- Careful discussing or naming individuals
 - Are they a public official, staff or private individual?
 - Any untruth gives rise to liability



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Avoiding Liability

Public Works

- Do not “politically engineer”
 - Crosswalks, Signs, Speed Limits, Traffic Control Devices
 - Ask for staff input off the record
 - Have staff respond to public requests
 - Joint and Several Liability
- Avoid promises, assurances and inflammatory statements



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Avoiding Liability

Do not leak Executive Session information

- Resist the temptation to share
- Disclose conflicts prior to session and recuse yourself
- Claims and Litigation
 - Can jeopardize defense
 - Possible sanctions imposed



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Avoiding Liability

Be mindful of written communications

- Email/Social Media
 - Always use City email address, not personal
 - Public record and discoverable in litigation
 - Is your social media account personal? For election activity? To discuss City business?
 - Do you allow comments and discussions?
 - » Possible Public Forum creation with First Amendment Protections



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