



# County of Lackawanna

Lackawanna County  
Government Center  
123 Wyoming Ave  
Scranton, Pennsylvania  
18503

## Meeting Minutes

### Salary Board

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Wednesday, December 17, 2025

2:00 PM

Commissioners' Conference Room

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#### Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:02pm.

**Present** 5 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, Department Head, and Gary DiBileo

#### Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Thom Welby, seconded by Commissioner Bill Gaughan, to Dispense with the Reading and Approve as Prepared. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**No response:** 1 - Department Head

#### Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board (Agenda Items Only)

No comments

#### Motions

##### [25-4000](#)

Motion to appoint a Chairman and a Vice Chairman of the Salary Board.

**Solicitor Don Frederickson:** We're going to wave those, Commissioner, because underneath the county code, the chairman of the Board of Commissioners is automatically the chairman of the pension board. So, we do not need to appoint a chairman.

##### [25-4002](#)

Motion to follow Robert's Rules of Order for conducting the Salary Board meetings.

A motion was made by Commissioner Thom Welby, seconded by Commissioner Bill Gaughan, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**No response:** 1 - Department Head

**Clerk of Judicial Records**[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by Clerk of Judicial Records Lauren Mailen, seconded by Controller Gary DiBileo, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 5 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, Department Head, and Gary DiBileo

**Courts**[25-4003](#)

Motion to redistribute the funds for staff in the Honorable Mark Powell's office, retroactive to February 12, 2025:

To reduce the salary of two (2) Senior Law Clerk, from \$49,287 to \$44,830.

To increase the salary of Junior Law Clerk/Tipstaff, from \$31,312 to \$36,000.

To increase the salary of Secretary, from \$48,170 to \$52,395.

**A motion was made by Court Administrator Frank Castellano, seconded by Commissioner Bill Gaughan, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 5 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, Department Head, and Gary DiBileo

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by Court Administrator Frank Castellano, seconded by Commissioner Bill Gaughan, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 5 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, Department Head, and Gary DiBileo

**Commissioners**[25-4005](#)

Motion to change the title of Landscape Coordinator to Maintenance, at a salary of \$33,030.40.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Chris Chermak, seconded by Commissioner Bill Gaughan, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**No response:** 1 - Department Head

[25-4006](#)

Motion to change the title of Accountant to Accountant I, in the Department of Revenue & Finance, with the SEIU starting salary of \$44,541.

**A motion was made by CFO Dave Bulzoni, seconded by Controller Gary**

**DiBileo, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**No response:** 1 - Department Head

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by Chief of Staff Brian Jeffers, seconded by Commissioner Thom Welby, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**No response:** 1 - Department Head

**Solicitor's Office**

[25-4004](#)

Motion to create a position of Solicitor for the Office of Domestic Relations, at a salary of \$10,000.00, plus benefits.

**A motion was made by Solicitor Paul Walker, seconded by Commissioner Thom Welby, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Commissioner Bill Gaughan:** On the question, I'm going to be voting no on this just because I don't think we need it. I think it's not a position that's necessary. Thank you.

**Aye:** 3 - Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**Nay:** 1 - Bill Gaughan

**No response:** 1 - Department Head

**Controller**

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by Controller Gary DiBileo, seconded by Commissioner Thom Welby, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**Excused:** 1 - Department Head

**Coroner**

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by Coroner Tim Rowland, seconded by Controller Gary DiBileo, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 5 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, Department Head, and Gary DiBileo

#### District Attorney

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by District Attorney Brian Gallagher, seconded by Commissioner Thom Welby, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 5 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, Department Head, and Gary DiBileo

#### Recorder of Deeds

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by Chief of Staff Brian Jeffers, seconded by Controller Gary DiBileo, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**No response:** 1 - Department Head

#### Register of Wills

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by Register of Wills Fran Kovalesski, seconded by Commissioner Thom Welby, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**No response:** 1 - Department Head

#### Sheriff

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

**A motion was made by Sheriff Mark McAndrew, seconded by Commissioner Thom Welby, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.**

**Aye:** 5 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, Department Head, and Gary DiBileo

#### Treasurer

[25-4001](#)

Motion to accept the salaries as presented in the 2026 Budget.

A motion was made by Treasurer Angela Rempe Jones, seconded by Controller Gary DiBileo, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.

**Aye:** 5 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, Department Head, and Gary DiBileo

### Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board

Joan Hodowanitz: I came here today because I need to be educated. It's my understanding that the salary board deals with salaries of nonunion personnel in that the unions handle their own wages and salaries. Is that correct?

General Counsel Don Frederickson: No, that is not correct. The salaries for the union still has to be approved by the salary board. All county employees salaries, whether they're union or not, have to be approved by the salary board.

Joan Hodowanitz: Is that woven into the negotiation for their contracts?

General Counsel Don Frederickson: Well, no. The contracts are negotiated separately. The raises have to be approved by the salary board before they go into effect. So, like if the union contract calls for a 2% increase for 26, the salary board today has to approve that increase.

Joan Hodowanitz: Okay. Were any of the unionized salaries in today's agenda?

General Counsel Don Frederickson: Yes.

Joan Hodowanitz: All right. Now, do all county employees get performance evaluations to assess their performance? They do not. They do not. Do they all have job descriptions, written job descriptions? Ues. But there's no requirement for them to have periodic performance evaluations.

Chief of Staff Brian Jeffers: Joan, I'll be honest with you. They used we used to directors under the I'm going to say under the Wansacz, O'Brien administration and prior to that when it was uh when it was wash on O'Brien were required to give performance reviews of our employees and then I would guess the chief of staff back then would give performance reviews of the uh the directors. This doesn't include the row officers. I'm talking about just those that are under the commissioner's administration. And we got away with from that during COVID and 21 with the vaccinations and never really went back to it. But I'm sure that you brought it up here today. We're going to be doing it next year because I'm pretty sure you're putting these guys on the spot.

Joan Hodowanitz: The one reason I brought it up is I remember in prior years you would hear, you know, there'd be a 2% pay raise across the board kind of thing. I you know, I mean that that's not necessarily a bad thing, but knowing human nature, as I have observed for a few years, um there are some people who will meet expectations, some will exceed expectations, and some will not meet expectations. And I would like to see those people who exceed expectations get rewarded accordingly. And that's hard to do if you do not have a system where employees know what's expected of them. They have a two-way conversation with their supervisors. Maybe they need me more resources. Maybe, you know, technologies changed. You know, that should be an ongoing discussion, but if they're not meeting expectations, there should be a conversation with the supervisor. Why? How can you turn that around? But there will be people who won't pull their weight and they also get the same pay raise. And I don't think that's fair to the ones who do their jobs and those who excel in their jobs. And I just like to see some because we do have people who go far beyond what they're expected to do. and rather than giving them

what you give someone who you know is out to lunch. I don't think that's right. Now I know it's not easy having had to do this when I was in the military having to rate people and do this on a regular basis. It's time consuming and it requires a lot of thought but I think I would like to see all governments go back to that because I think that serves the taxpayer well and ensures that you know we're paying the people what they should be paid. I understand that you need you know to recruit people and retain people and so you need to give them you know a certain level of compensation and benefits. I don't have a problem with that. But when it comes to bonuses and salary increases I think performance should be one of the contributing factors. and I'd just like your observations on my comments. Thank you.

Controller Gary DiBileo: Joan. If I may, there may not be a formal evaluation process, but I could tell you that every position within the county is always being evaluated by the department head. For example, my controller's office, everyone's always under evaluation. And I'm sure that's the case with every department row officer and comm everyone working for the commissioners. It's true that salaries for union employees are dictated by the by the union contract but every position is being looked at always.

(inaudible comments from the audience)

#### **Member's Other Business**

Commissioner Thom Welby: No. Joan, thank you for the for the input. I think we'll be talking with the chief and the commissioners and our new HR director about the possibility of doing that and talking to our row officers as well.

Commissioner Chris Chermak: Well, I didn't get to mention it in the other meeting because I got sidetracked, but I just want to thank everybody that works for the county. Everybody does a great job. We have a lot of great people. The department heads do a great job. So, I appreciate all that everyone does. It's not easy some days, but I appreciate it and I know the other commissioners do as well.

#### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Gary DiBileo, seconded by Thom Welby, that this be Adjourned at 2:22pm. The motion carried by the following vote.

**Aye:** 4 - Bill Gaughan, Chris Chermak, Thom Welby, and Gary DiBileo

**No response:** 1 - Department Head