



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION**

**MICHAEL P. SELLARS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

112 Henry Street NE, Suite 300 • Post Office Box 40919 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0919  
(360) 570-7300 • Fax: (360) 570-7334 • E-mail filings: [filing@perc.wa.gov](mailto:filing@perc.wa.gov) • Website: [www.perc.wa.gov](http://www.perc.wa.gov)

**MINUTES**

April 14, 2025

The regular meeting of the Public Employment Relations Commission  
was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

Via Zoom &  
PERC Conference Room  
112 Henry Street NE, Suite 300  
Olympia, Washington 98506

Those present and participating:  
Mark S. Lyon, Chairperson  
Elizabeth Ford, Commissioner  
Henry E. Farber, Commissioner  
Mike Sellars, Executive Director  
Charity Atchison, Appeals Administrator  
Vanessa Smith, Confidential Secretary

Also present:

Alyssa Gerchak, PERC, Legal Assistant  
Shirin Kalam, PERC, Legal Assistant  
Peggy Pulse, Department of Social and Health Services  
Jamie Siegel, PERC, Labor Relations Adjudicator/Mediator  
Katie Sypher, PERC, Labor Relations Adjudicator/Mediator  
Emily Whitney, PERC, Unfair Labor Practice/Representation Administrator

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on March 10, 2025, were adopted as presented.

**Report of the Executive Director**

1. Mike first discussed the March 2025 case and decision report. At the end of 2024, we saw an uptick in contract mediation requests; we are trending behind that so far this year.

Election petitions are still way up—currently 81% over the previous 5 years’ average, which includes the second highest year for election petitions in the agency’s history. Unit clarification petitions are down from last year, while the volume of training cases continues to be high. Mike also briefly touched on how the first quarter of the year compared to the same time frame in previous years.

2. The LERA conference took place on April 10 and 11. PERC previously cohosted this conference with the National Labor Relations Board and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS). Last year, the Alaska Labor Relations Agency was added as a cohost, and this year’s conference was cohosted just by PERC and the Alaska agency. The LERA conference is, and always has been, a heavy lift for our agency. Mike gave a shoutout to Lisa Hartrich, Matt Greer, and Dario de la Rosa, who are on the planning committee and ensured the conference went forward even after the FMCS bowed out. Nine labor relations adjudicators/mediators presented in 12 of the 19 workshops, and other staff members served as workshop room monitors or assisted with registration, IT, and other needs. Mike expressed his thanks to all PERC staff involved. This year’s conference had about 330 people in attendance, which was a bit of a dip compared to pre-pandemic attendance numbers that were usually closer to 500.
3. Since last month’s meeting, the senate and the house have released their budget proposals. The governor’s supplemental budget proposal included 24 furlough days. The senate’s proposal largely follows the governor’s but has less furlough days and would fund at least one of our fiscal notes. The house’s proposal has no cuts to PERC and no furlough days but would not fund our fiscal notes. The budget is now in negotiations between the governor’s office, the senate, and the house.
4. On March 26, all but 15 FMCS staff members were placed on administrative leave and informed that they would be laid off. Of the remaining staff, four are mediators who will continue to conduct mediations for bargaining units of certain sizes. We have begun to have internal conversations and to receive questions about whether PERC can provide services to private-sector parties. PERC does have authority to do so if both parties consent. This has occurred about 500 times in PERC’s history but less than 10 times since Mike has been the executive director. Mike has communicated to clientele, including at LERA and on our website, that we will provide services to private-sector parties on an ad hoc basis and not at the expense of public-sector clientele.
5. A bill that passed on Saturday grants unemployment benefits to striking workers. An amendment attached to that bill also provides that PERC “may charge” private-sector parties a fee for services provided by PERC under the statute. We have concerns over this, as charging a fee runs contrary to the intent of all the statutes PERC administers. We do not know what that fee would be, nor do we know how much private-sector work the FMCS handled in Washington state. However, language is permissive so we are not required to charge. We will need to take the next year to figure out a longer-term plan. In the short term, we will try to find out the need that is out there. Mike will be meeting with some of our counterpart agencies in other states to see how they are addressing the issue.

6. With respect to other legislation, SB 5503, which touches on various PERC processes, is with the House Rules Committee. The cutoff is Wednesday evening. SB 5473, which makes changes to the Law Enforcement Arbitrator roster statute, passed today. HB 1141, which would grant collective bargaining rights to agricultural cannabis workers, is awaiting action with the senate. The regular legislative session ends on April 27.
7. Next month, the Commission will need to conduct its annual review of the fee schedule for the Law Enforcement Arbitrator Roster. We will prepare a memo outlining the history of the roster since 2021 and the current spread of fees.

### **Legislative Update**

In addition to Mike's legislative update, Charity noted that Mark Lyon's and Henry E. Farber's appointments have yet to be voted on. There were no other updates to discuss.

### **Commission & Court Docket**

Charity provided a brief update on the three cases pending in court. Lists of pending cases that have been appealed to court or the Commission are available on the agency website at <https://perc.wa.gov/commission/>.

### **Adjournment**


There being nothing further to come before the Commission, the public meeting was adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

APPROVED at Olympia, Washington, this 12th day of May, 2025.

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION

  
MARK S. LYON, Chairperson

  
ELIZABETH FORD, Commissioner

  
HENRY E. FARBER, Commissioner