

Washington State Real Estate Appraiser Commission meeting transcript

January 15, 2026

Sandy Baur (00:03):

Okay.

Stan Sidor (00:04):

Okay.

Sandy Baur (00:04):

Recording has begun.

Stan Sidor (00:06):

All right. Let's get going. So, good morning. I am not Denise Stephens, although Denise is here. She's on her cell phone, has been having some connectivity issues. So, I'm Stan Sidor, vice chair this year of the Real Estate Appraiser Commission, and I will step in to chair the meeting this morning. It is now 10:00 AM on January 15th, a Thursday, 2026, and I'm calling this meeting to order. This meeting is open to the public, and we will be providing an opportunity for public comment at the end of the meeting. As a courtesy, we do encourage and ask the public to mute themselves when they are not speaking to reduce the background noise, and one challenge in remembering to unmute yourself when you are speaking. Also, for commission members to help us capture information correctly, please state your name when making your comments.

(01:14):

Okay. Program Specialist Sandy Baur will now call roll call, confirming commissioner attendance. Once she's called your name, please respond by stating, "Here," or, "Present," or, "Aye," whatever. Okay. All yours, Sandy.

Sandy Baur (01:33):

All right, thank you so much. And I will start with you, Vice Chair Sidor.

Stan Sidor (01:37):

I am here.

Sandy Baur (01:39):

And Chair Stephens?

Denise Stephens (01:43):
Chair Stephens is here.

Sandy Baur (01:45):
Commissioner Biethan?

Scott Biethan (01:49):
Present.

Sandy Baur (01:51):
Commissioner Moore?

Joe Moore (01:53):
Present.

Sandy Baur (01:54):
Commissioner Potter?

Stan Sidor (02:01):
I see him there, he's muted. Got to unmute, Dean.

Sandy Baur (02:07):
Oh, we can't hear you, but I see you waving. So, Commissioner Potter is present. And Commissioner Sporn?

Jay Sporn (02:16):
I'm here. Present. Happy New Year.

Sandy Baur (02:19):
Perfect. Happy New Year. We do have a quorum, so back to you, Vice Chair Sidor.

Stan Sidor (02:24):
Fantastic. Thank you very much. So, first thing on the agenda this morning is approval of the agenda. We need a motion to approve today's agenda as presented.

Scott Biethan (02:34):
So moved.

Stan Sidor (02:36):
Biethan. Did we have a second?

Jay Sporn (02:42):

Second by Sporn.

Stan Sidor (02:44):

All right. We have a first and a second to approve the agenda. Any discussion, any amendments for the agenda? Okay. Hearing none, we'll call for a vote to approve the agenda. All those in favor say aye.

Scott Biethan (03:01):

Aye.

Jay Sporn (03:01):

Aye.

Denise Stephens (03:02):

Aye.

Joe Moore (03:02):

Aye.

Stan Sidor (03:05):

Any opposed, say nay. All right. Any abstentions? The motion to approve the agenda as presented has been approved. Now we need to move on to approval of the minutes. Is there a motion to approve the October 16th, 2025, minutes as presented?

Scott Biethan (03:26):

So moved. Biethan.

Stan Sidor (03:29):

Is there a second?

Jay Sporn (03:34):

Second by Sporn.

Stan Sidor (03:34):

We have a first and a second. Any discussion? Any amendments? All those in favor, say aye.

Scott Biethan (03:42):

Aye.

Jay Sporn (03:43):

Aye.

Denise Stephens (03:43):

Aye.

Stan Sidor (03:45):

Any opposed? Any abstentions? All right. The minutes have been approved. Next on the agenda is awards and recognition. Apparently there are no awards or recognition to discuss today, although I think there's something coming later in the agenda. Old business. Do we have any old business to discuss? There's nothing on the agenda for old business. Does anybody have anything they feel they need to bring up?

Sandy Baur (04:18):

We won't be able to discuss anything that isn't on the agenda due to Open Public Meeting Act.

Stan Sidor (04:24):

Got it. Is there anything we missed that we want to consider and put on the next agenda?

Sandy Baur (04:30):

We can call for that at the end of the meeting when we request agenda items for a future meeting.

Stan Sidor (04:36):

Great. Thank you, Sandy.

Sandy Baur (04:37):

You're welcome.

Stan Sidor (04:39):

All right. Let's go on to new business. I guess we have no new business, so we're just cruising people. I'll tell you. We're so active. Okay. Reports, education subcommittee. And I guess Chair Stephens will provide a report to the degree she can from her cell phone there. Thank you.

Denise Stephens (05:02):

Thank you, Chair Sidor. On the education committee, we met November 21st, 2025. There was Sandy Bauer and Tim Allen from DOL and Commissioner Joe Moore, who has agreed to join the education committee. Commissioner Moore is very involved in the education for appraisers who are involved in the agricultural industry. So we're really excited to have on

the education committee. December 17th, I was able to go to Olympia and sit with Molly Voris, who is a policy and legislative director for DOL. In attendance in that meeting was Kathy Walsh from ACAW and Bill Duther from DOL. And Pete Fontana from the Appraisal Foundation and Dallas Kodorski, who are both on the Appraisal Foundation State Harmonization Task Force. The meeting was to speak with Molly Voris about the acceptance of mass appraisal experiences and qualifications towards becoming a real property appraiser. They're trying to get assessment hours counted towards educational accredited hours if you want to receive your license. So that was the discussion on that meeting.

(06:37):

Our next meeting is tomorrow, January 16th at 1:30 if any of the commissioners would like to attend one of our education committees. And if you can't make that one, we meet on the third Friday every two months. The next one is scheduled for March 20th. That's the end of my report.

Sandy Baur (07:06):

I see that Commissioner Sporn has his hand raised.

Jay Sporn (07:11):

Yeah. Denise, is there going to be a link on the DOL website that we can get into that meeting?

Denise Stephens (07:21):

No, it is not a public meeting, Commissioner Sporn. I had sent you an invitation, but it was during a time where you were unavailable. If you would like an invitation to a future meeting, I can go ahead and send you a link for that meeting as well. We just have to be sure that we don't have more than a quorum attend the education subcommittee meeting.

Jay Sporn (07:45):

Oh, okay. So that would be... Yeah, Denise. Yeah, if you can send me the one for tomorrow, that'd be great. And if that takes us over, then I won't attend.

Denise Stephens (07:57):

It will not.

Jay Sporn (07:58):

Okay, great.

Sandy Baur (08:04):

I've added that to my action item was to report on at the end of the meeting.

Denise Stephens (08:08):

Thank you, Sandy.

Sandy Baur (08:13):

You're muted, Vice Chair Sidor. You're still muted.

Stan Sidor (08:24):

I'm still muted. Geez, I thought I unmuted that.

Sandy Baur (08:26):

There we go.

Stan Sidor (08:29):

I did have a question for Chair Commissioner Stephens. On the mass appraisal hours for education, is there consideration of any and all hours to be allowed or some cap or limit on those hours versus other type of appraisal experience or what?

Denise Stephens (08:55):

They're working through that, Stan. I don't have the answers to that right now. That will probably be farther down the line if it ever gets that far.

Stan Sidor (09:08):

I appreciate it. I was just curious. Didn't know if that was part of the discussion at all or not. And I'm not saying that I advocate for one or the other or anything, so just curious. Okay. Great.

Denise Stephens (09:20):

Thank you.

Stan Sidor (09:22):

So I guess we're ready to move on, Sandy, to the next element, which is the Operational Support Services Annual Program Report.

Sandy Baur (09:30):

Yes. I'm very excited to be presenting this. So as you know, at the beginning of last year, it was decided that the department would give one overarching annual report so that we could better track trends throughout the industry. Let's go ahead and start with the complaint and investigation statuses. And this is accurate as of December 23rd of last year. From January 1st until December 23rd, we received 65 complaints, and through that exact same time period, 83 complaints were closed. Currently, well, as of December 23rd, there are 15 complaints that are still in investigation, eight that have been moved forward into legal. And as I said, there were 83 that were closed throughout the year, for a grand total of 106 complaints that were handled this year.

Stan Sidor (10:32):

Wow. Okay.

Sandy Baur (10:35):

Moving on, we have the historical complaint status. So starting in 2021... We have a five-year history for you. Starting in 2021, there were just under 100 complaints that were created. And within that same year, there were about 78-ish that were closed. As you can see, there was an uptick in complaints in 2022, and then they dropped back down in 2023 with a little bit more of an uptake in 2024, and then the complaint count has dropped again in 2025. For the most common complaint types that came into the department, the top three, and not necessarily in this order, the top three were inappropriate comparable sales, use of dissimilar comparable sales, use of physically dissimilar... I can talk, comparable sales.

Stan Sidor (11:50):

You can do it.

Sandy Baur (11:53):

Now, once investigation was complete, of those that fell within the jurisdiction and were moved forward for movement were post-investigation, the violations were unsupported adjustments, use of dissimilar, comparable sales, and then misreporting condition and quality. Now, once those complaints moved into action, legal action, the most common remedies that we have used in 2025 were license revocation, continuing education, and fines. And I don't have an exact number on how many of those were actually enacted in 2025. So let's move on. Yes, Commissioner Biethan.

Scott Biethan (12:56):

Yeah, thanks. Do you have any statistics on certified general versus certified residential appraisal violation, or not violations, but I mean complaints?

Sandy Baur (13:09):

That's a fantastic question. And no, we don't drill down on the data that far. We have it aggregated as appraiser industry. If you are interested in that data, I can see what I can do at drilling down even further in the data for the next year's annual report.

Scott Biethan (13:28):

Would it be possible in advance of the year? I mean, to dissect the previous year?

Sandy Baur (13:34):

I'll see what I can do.

Scott Biethan (13:36):

I mean, I know you guys are busy, but I would be very interested in that just because I think there's a real question in my mind of how that lays out. I just don't know. I think it'd be useful data. Because I want to make your job as hard as possible.

Sandy Baur (13:51):

I'll see what I can find. I'll see what I can find.

Scott Biethan (13:53):

I'm just trying to add work your desk, Sandy, and just want to make sure you feel like you're needed. Job security.

Sandy Baur (14:04):

I feel needed. Commissioner Sporn?

Jay Sporn (14:04):

Yeah. Was there any license revocations in the last year?

Sandy Baur (14:11):

I don't think there was in the last year. However, this is... The license revocation, the continuing education, and the fines is collective data through the last five years.

Jay Sporn (14:26):

Okay. Thank you.

Sandy Baur (14:27):

You're welcome. Any other questions on the complaint data? All right. Let's go ahead and move on to the licensing counts. So as far as the active licensing counts, we have a grand total of 2,599. And as you can see, the majority of those licenses fall between the ages of 45 and 64. And here, I have a five-year history of active licensees. Now, these totals do not include the temporary licenses that I had accounted for up here. So the temporary certified general and the temporary state license, I am not including those in the total active licensee historical counts. So as you can see in 2022, which mirrors our complaint counts, 2022 was our high count. We had just over 3,000 licensees in 2022. And then in 2023, 2024, and 2025, there is a downsizing in the industry.

(15:48):

So for 2025, as far as renewals and new issues, here's what we were able to gather for 2025 by month. So as you can see, May and February are the highest for renewals, and our new issues or reinstatements, highest months are May and September. So I also have the new issues and renewal data through the five-year. As you can see here, we've got... And this is very similar to our total licensee count. So the highest new licensing and reinstatements was in 2022. And as you can see, we still have a downturn in 2023, slightly increased in 2024 and back down just a hair in 2025. So for... Yes, Vice Chair Sidor.

Stan Sidor (17:00):

So it's interesting. It strikes me. It looks like we're adding around 400 new appraisers every year, but the overall count has been going down so that year to year over the last three or four years. So that must mean we're losing more than 400 approximately existing appraisers every year.

Sandy Baur (17:29):

So what I'm showing on this screen right here, Vice Chair Sidor, is in 2021, we had slightly over 400 new issues. In 2022, we had almost 500 new issues. But in 2023, new issues dropped down to just under 300, back up to about 360 for 2024, and now we're back down to about 320-ish for 2025, and those are for new issues. And then, I can roll into the next slide, which is the renewals. So in 2021, we had high renewal count at just over 1,300, but in 2022, the renewal count dropped to just under 1,200. Then in 2023 and 2024, renewal count jumped up again, and now it's back down again in 2025.

Stan Sidor (18:34):

Well, that doesn't surprise me if we only have about 2,500 appraisers licensed in the state because they only renew every other year, every two years.

Sandy Baur (18:47):

Right.

Stan Sidor (18:48):

So it should be around 1,250-ish plus or minus every year.

Sandy Baur (18:56):

Right.

Stan Sidor (18:58):

But it is surprising to me that we're adding 300 to 400 new appraisers every year. That's surprising me because that must mean then... But even with the renewals, it just seems that our numbers should be increasing, not going down.

Sandy Baur (19:18):

Right. And I think when I move on to the next agenda item, that might shed a little light on the appraiser industry as a whole. That concludes my annual report, program report. Are there any questions on anything that I've covered so far?

Stan Sidor (19:39):

Thank you, Sandy. We appreciate that.

Sandy Baur (19:40):

You're welcome.

Jay Sporn (19:41):

Yeah, great job, Sandy.

Sandy Baur (19:43):

Thanks.

Stan Sidor (19:44):

Okay. Now I guess the next item is the state of the housing market report.

Sandy Baur (19:51):

Yeah. I'm really excited to bring you this report. It is the state of the state's housing market report for 2025. Now, this is independently gathered data from the Washington Center for Real Estate Research out of the University of Washington. And let's start off a little bit with Washington's population. As of April of 2025, Washington population exceeded 8.1 million residents. Whitman and King Counties grew by 1.4%. Clark County, Columbia, and Lincoln counties grew by 1.1%. The rest of the state grew by either 1% or less. With the counties that you see in white, their population stayed steady. The counties that you see in the orange color declined in population. Now, the medium income for... Oh, yes. Commissioner Spor?. You're muted.

Jay Sporn (21:10):

Sorry about that. Yeah, it shows Spokane County in the green between 1 and 1.5% gain. And I didn't see that over there on the side.

Sandy Baur (21:23):

For the light green, it is between 5 and 1%.

Jay Sporn (21:27):

We're at dark green, 6,600.

Sandy Baur (21:32):

Oh, right here?

Jay Sporn (21:33):

Yeah.

Sandy Baur (21:33):

Okay. I'm sorry, I missed that one.

Jay Sporn (21:37):

Oh, forgot about us over here.

Sandy Baur (21:39):

I did. I did.

Jay Sporn (21:41):

Okay, thank you.

Sandy Baur (21:43):

But all of the dark green counties did increase their population by at least 1%.

Jay Sporn (21:49):

Okay, thank you.

Sandy Baur (21:50):

The dark greens. Yeah. So the median income for all of Washington reached an all time high in the first quarter of 2025. Then it started to decline just a little bit. The median income has generally been increasing over time, so that is good news. Now, the construction costs rose sharply in 2021 and 2022. That part isn't a surprise. Then there was a huge decline in those costs, and then there was a steady increase to those costs with a sharp increase headed from 2022 to 2023. Then it declined a little bit through 2024. Now, if the costs had stayed steady, we are right about where we should be if the construction costs had increased in a linear manner.

(22:58):

Now, as far as the housing prices go, they rose over 3% from 2023 to 2025, and the Puget Sound region exceeded that statewide median, and then the rest of the state remained lower than that median. So that kind of tells me that the Puget Sound region is the one who had the most increase in the housing prices. Now, single family listings rose 35% from 2022 to 2025. During that same timeframe, housing sales declined by about 31%. Now, those trends could indicate that the housing market is going into a weakening state into 2025 and 2026. As interest rates rise, housing affordability declines, and Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver, Yakima, they all transitioned. They were classified as affordable in 2022. And in 2025, they passed that mark into unaffordable. And approximately 23% of Washingtonians who are homeowners in 2024 were cost burdened, which means they were spending over 30% of their income on housing costs.

(24:36):

So in conclusion, the state of the state housing report indicates that Washington's population continues to rise, and there's no indication that it will fall. Washington does continue to have housing affordability challenges and annual multifamily permits do continue to decline into 2026. The full entire housing market report was included in your

packets. And for members of the public, you can go to the Washington Center for Real Estate Research website. I have it showing on the screen here, and you can read the report in its entirety. Are there any questions?

Stan Sidor (25:21):

Thank you, Sandy. That was a very thorough report.

Sandy Baur (25:24):

Thank you.

Jay Sporn (25:25):

Yeah, I want to say I've already sent that to a number of other appraisers and people I worked with at the county, and they just thought that was absolutely fantastic information. So thanks for including that, Sandy.

Sandy Baur (25:36):

You're welcome. There is a lot of information in that annual report. What I presented was just the wave tops. So I would encourage everyone to go to that website and look at their annual report. They also publish quarterly reports that contain a lot of the same information.

Dean Potter (25:59):

Commissioner Potter. Sandy, could I ask you a quick question?

Sandy Baur (26:02):

Yes.

Dean Potter (26:03):

Okay. You reported on median income. Was that median household income?

Sandy Baur (26:11):

Correct. That was median household income.

Dean Potter (26:13):

Okay.

Sandy Baur (26:14):

Not individual.

Dean Potter (26:16):

Okay, thanks.

Sandy Baur (26:18):

That was a great question.

Stan Sidor (26:21):

Okay. Good. Any other questions? Okay. Are we ready to move on then to review the master action item list?

Sandy Baur (26:36):

All right. That's me again.

Stan Sidor (26:39):

There we go. Yeah.

Sandy Baur (26:39):

Yeah. So we had two action items that were assigned at the last meeting. The first action item was to invite Commissioners Sporn and Moore to the next education subcommittee, which we did. We'll continue to invite Commissioners Moore and Sporn to future meetings. It was also requested that we send out meeting invitations closer to the meeting date to be a listener. I was sure to send out the meeting invitations with one week to go, and then I also sent it out yesterday to make sure it was at the top of people's emails. Vice Chair Sidor?

Stan Sidor (27:23):

I noticed it says next meeting, January 15th, that's today.

Sandy Baur (27:27):

That's a typo.

Stan Sidor (27:27):

Isn't the meeting tomorrow?

Sandy Baur (27:30):

So when it was assigned, it was assigned at the October meeting and the next meeting to report out on it was today. So any action items that are assigned to me today, we'll say date assigned as 1-15. And then the date I report out on it will be the next meeting, which I believe is the April 16th, I believe.

Stan Sidor (27:57):

So that's not the next meeting date of that committee. That's the date this is reported out to us, the Real Estate Appraiser Commission. Got it.

Sandy Baur (28:05):

Correct.

Stan Sidor (28:06):

Understand. Thank you.

Sandy Baur (28:07):

All right.

Stan Sidor (28:11):

All right. Okay. All right. That is through most of our agenda items. We now will make the meeting open for public comments. I'm going to open the floor to the public to address the commission, share any thoughts, concerns, and requests. Written comments may also be submitted at least two days prior by emailing the dolboards@dol.wa.gov. And members of the public, while you are addressing the commission, please remember that each member is limited to a three-minute comment. Comments submitted in writing count as your three minutes, comments must be on matters within the commission's jurisdiction, and commissioners are limited to directing staff to study the matter further or request the matter be scheduled for later discussion. So Sandy, were any comments submitted in writing?

Sandy Baur (29:19):

I did not receive any written comments for today.

Stan Sidor (29:22):

All right. Appreciate that. So now a call on public members with their hands raised. Any calling members to speak, let us know if you can't use the hand raise function.

Sandy Baur (29:38):

All right. I see Mr. Dallas Kidowskri has his hand raised.

Dallas Kidowskri (29:48):

Hello. Thank you for letting me speak today, and thank you for all the work you guys do. I think you're doing a great job, so really appreciate all the work you guys put in. I know it's just volunteer. But yeah, I just wanted to address the master appraisal thing. Washington State currently already allows 100% experience to come from mass appraisal, so there's no change that's happening there. The change is mainly aimed at... I only have three minutes, I'm not going to get into the details, but it's mainly aimed at essentially allowing the chief assessing officer or the chief appraiser in each county or the authorized official in that office to basically verify the experience log, whether they're credentialed or not.

(30:30):

And this change is in line with the current AQB exposure draft, which under section rationale for proposal revisions, Section 5, experience revisions, Part 2, mass appraisal and ad valorem environments, which it says it's a rationale for proposal for revisions, but then it's actually a clarification because AQB already allows this, that essentially says that, that the change is allowing the chief assessing officer or authorized official to essentially sign off on that experience, whether they're credentialed or not. And I think this goes right in line with the lowering barriers to entry. This is what we talk about a lot, that this is where the rubber meets the road as far as actually lowering that barrier to entry and allowing more people in. And these aren't people with no experiences or people that work in mass appraisal every day. And our license count, obviously we saw was kind of trending down. And so, this is also in line with the national trend of lowering those barriers to entry and allowing more entrance into the field. So thank you again for all that you guys do and appreciate everything. Thank you so much.

Sandy Baur (31:49):

Thank you for your comment.

Stan Sidor (31:52):

Oh, thank you. Next, anybody else?

Sandy Baur (31:58):

I do not see any other hands raised.

Stan Sidor (31:59):

No other members. All right. We appreciate Dallas for sharing the information. The floor is now closed to public comments. So I guess we're onto announcements. Does the staff or any commissioners have any announcements to share?

Sandy Baur (32:17):

The staff does have an announcement to share. I'm really excited to announce that both Vice Chair Stan Sidor and Commissioner Sporn have been reappointed to another term. I really look forward to working with the both of you moving forward. This is very exciting.

Stan Sidor (32:37):

Thank you. Yes, and I'm excited, too. That's great. And they're six-year terms, right?

Sandy Baur (32:45):

Correct.

Stan Sidor (32:47):

All right. Got it. Okay. Any other announcements? Commissioners? Anybody? Okay. Requests for future agenda items. Commissioners, are there any items you would like to

add or request be added to our next meeting? Okay. Seeing none, I guess Sandy, we'll review action items at this time, if any.

Sandy Baur (33:18):

Yep. So I did get two action items from this meeting. One is to continue to invite Commissioner Sporn to the education subcommittee, which we will do so. We'll send out an invitation for tomorrow's subcommittee meeting. And then my second action item was to see if we could drill down a little bit more on complaint data and see if it was general versus residential. Did I miss anything?

Stan Sidor (33:49):

So actually, there are three licensing categories, certified general, certified residential, and state licensed. So I don't know if it would be possible to break it down that fine, but if so, great.

Sandy Baur (34:03):

I will check on that. I am not sure that the complaint comes in in that way. I receive it aggregate, but I will check to see what I can do for that.

Stan Sidor (34:15):

Appreciate whatever you can do, Sandy. Thank you.

Sandy Baur (34:17):

You're welcome.

Stan Sidor (34:17):

Okay.

Sandy Baur (34:17):

That's all I have.

Stan Sidor (34:21):

I guess that's it for the meeting. It's now 10:34 AM on January 15th, 2026, and this meeting is adjourned. Our next meeting will be virtual via Teams on April 16th, 2026, at 10:00 AM.

Thank you, everybody. Appreciate it.

Jay Sporn (34:42):

Thanks, everybody.

Sandy Baur (34:43):

Thank you.

Stan Sidor (34:44):

Have a good rest of the day and month and week.

Sandy Baur (34:47):

And we can stop the recording.

Stan Sidor (34:51):

Okay. Thanks, Anne.