

Should Lexington council get a pay raise? Voters may get to decide in November

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Should the 15-member Lexington council get a pay raise?

Voters may soon decide.

On Tuesday, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council voted to move forward three recommendations of the first-ever Civic Assembly, a randomly selected 36-member body which studied council pay and the city's charter, its governing document.

The assembly, which met for much of March, recommended:

- Council compensation:** Increase council member pay to \$59,987 a year, the average annual wage in Lexington, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The 15-member council makes just shy of \$40,000. Every year the amount would change according to the Consumer Price Index,



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Precinct worker Karen Devin sits outside Man o' War Church as voters cast their ballots inside during the 2026 primary election, May 19, 2026, in Lexington, Ky. "We haven't been terribly busy yet," said Devin. Voters went to the polls on primary election day across Kentucky to decide who will be on the ballot in November for major races across the commonwealth.

which is a measure of inflation. If approved by council and voters, the increase in pay would take effect in 2031. That would translate to a roughly 50% increase in pay.

- Charter review:** The city's charter would be reviewed every eight years, with the review subject to a time limit and a public input requirement. A standing

committee of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government would advise and form a commission of 36 Lexington residents, selected by a representative lottery.

- Accountability:** The assembly also advanced a recommendation the charter be amended to mandate that council creates publicly

viewable attendance and accountability expectations for the Urban County Council.

Council members James Brown and Amy Beasley were the only council members to vote against moving the referendum upping council pay to the ballot during a Tuesday work session meeting. The council voted unanimously to move the council attendance and charter review initiatives forward.

The council will take a final vote on the three referendums at a Lexington council meeting June 18. If all three are approved by a super majority of the council, nine of 15 council members, the three questions will appear on the Nov. 3 ballot.

The last time a local referendum was on the ballot was in 2024, where voters approved a separate tax for capital projects in city parks.

COUNCIL PAY, CHARTER REVIEW ISSUE FOR YEARS

The Civic Assembly was

convened by Civic Lex, a nonprofit civics education and advocacy group. Civic assemblies have been used across the country and in other countries to tackle thorny policy issues. The people were randomly selected to participate. The topics were selected through a survey.

The issue of how much council is paid has been brewing for years, but recently came to a head after multiple council members announced in 2025 they were not running for reelection. Many cited council pay as a reason why they would not run for office again.

The position is part-time but many outgoing council members said they sometimes work more than 40 hours a week on council business, making even part-time employment outside city hall difficult.

Many people want a diverse, elected council, several Civic Assembly members said. But if someone can't serve because of the low wage, it narrows the number of people who are willing to

serve, some Civic Assembly members said Tuesday prior to the council's vote.

However, some council members have spotty council attendance records, a Lexington Herald-Leader 2024 review of attendance records showed.

In 2023, four council members missed more than 10 meetings, the analysis showed. There is currently no easy way to track attendance records of council members. The Herald-Leader review was conducted using council meeting documents and minutes.

The new ballot initiative would require the council to come up with an easily-accessible and publicly-available attendance record.

The merged government charter, which was approved by voters in 1972, is also silent on how often it should be reviewed. The charter outlines how the merged government operates.

More regular reviews would help the city address ongoing issues, said Tommy Clasby, a Civic Assembly member.

"If any of these issues aren't addressed they can be addressed in the future," Clasby said.

PEOPLE

Sudeikis says his kids, not dating, are priority

Us Weekly

Jason Sudeikis is getting candid about his love life nearly six years after ending his relationship with ex-fiancée Olivia Wilde.

The "Ted Lasso" star, 50, shared on the Tuesday episode of the "Friends Keep Secrets" podcast that he is currently single.

Cohost Lil Dicky then asked Sudeikis what it was like being single, to which the comedian responded, "Ups and downs."

Dicky's wife and fellow cohost Kristin Batalucco followed up by quizzing the actor on whether he's "more of a relationship guy."

"I like being in relation to people," Sudeikis explained. "I'm not at a point in my life where it feels good or fulfilling to date numerous people all at once. That feels daunting and overwhelming, especially with being a parent."

Sudeikis said that his approach to relationships has changed since becoming a father. The actor shares son Otis, 12, and daughter Daisy, 9, with Wilde, 42.

"There's also a new thing of anyone I'm dating, that they are never number one on the call-sheet, as the showbiz saying would go. The kids are," he explained. "Even probably more so than myself."

Sudeikis and Wilde began dating in 2011 and got engaged in January 2013.

By late 2020, however, the couple had split.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

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Bolton reaches plea deal in classified information case

BY DEVLIN BARRETT AND MICHAEL S. SCHMIDT
NYT News Service

John R. Bolton, a national security adviser to President Donald Trump in his first term, has reached a tentative deal with prosecutors to plead guilty to mishandling classified information when he compiled notes for a book that was harshly critical of the president, according to two people familiar with the matter.

A notice in Maryland federal court, where Bolton was indicted last year, indicates he is now scheduled for a arraignment — a hearing that can signal a planned guilty plea. The hearing is set for June 26.

Under the terms of the plea deal, which still requires approval from a judge, Bolton plans to plead guilty to a single count of illegal retention of classified information and pay a fine, facing anywhere from no prison time to five years of incarceration when he is sentenced, according to the people familiar with the negotiations, who spoke on

condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss them. If Bolton had gone to trial and lost, he could have faced decades in prison.

The plea would provide Trump perhaps his most significant victory in his campaign to prosecute his perceived enemies, which so far has largely foundered once cases hit the courts.

But the case against Bolton, who has emerged as a persistent critic of Trump since leaving the administration in 2019, was always different from others that Trump has pushed the Justice Department to prosecute. The investigation into him was also pursued and gained momentum under the Biden administration, when U.S. intelligence agencies gathered what former officials have described as troubling evidence.

A Justice Department spokesperson declined to comment.

The original 18-count indictment against Bolton accused him of using personal email and a messaging app to share more



DOUG MILLS NYT

John Bolton, then the White House national security adviser, speaks to reporters during a briefing in 2018 at the White House. Bolton has said he was being treated unfairly by an administration determined to use the justice system to silence the president's critics.

than 1,000 pages of notes, which included national defense information, with two family members who did not have security clearances.

The information was shared as part of Bolton's effort to write a memoir of his time in the first Trump White House. Those relatives were Bolton's wife and daughter, according to people familiar with the matter. They spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe details of the case that were not in court filings.

After his indictment, Bolton said he was being treated unfairly by an administration determined to use the justice system to

silence the president's critics. His lawyer, Abbe Lowell, said the issues in the case had been investigated years ago and had not been deemed worthy of criminal charges.

The indictment charged that as he wrote notes for his 2020 book, "The Room Where It Happened," Bolton indicated that he knew he was describing carefully guarded government secrets. One entry by Bolton began, "The intel briefer said," while another read, "While in the Situation Room, I learned."

Unlike some other investigations involving classified information, including charges filed in 2023

against Trump, Bolton was not accused of retaining the secret documents themselves, but rather of keeping diaries and sending emails that mentioned details of his daily work in national security.

Bolton's emails, however, were later hacked by someone associated with the government of Iran, the indictment said.

"A representative for Bolton notified the U.S. government of the hack in or about July 2021, but did not tell the U.S. government that the account contained national defense information, including classified information, that Bolton had placed in the account from his time as national security adviser," according to the filing.

One surreal section of the indictment described Bolton apparently being taunted by his hacker. A message July 25, 2021, warned, "I do not think you would be interested in the FBI being aware of the leaked content of John's email (some of which have been attached)." The email went on to declare, "This could be the biggest scandal since Hillary's emails were leaked, but this time on the GOP side! Contact me before it's too late."

A representative for Bolton forwarded the email to the FBI.

FROM PAGE 1A

DARTPOINTS

the company and is expected to play an important role in its broader growth strategy as it looks to serve larger, more power-intensive customers, DartPoints said in an announcement of the acquisition.

The company will develop the site to support a broad mix of customers and uses, including for the support of different types of artificial intelligence.

The site, as is, has an approximately 20 megawatt to 30 megawatt capacity, though DartPoints said there is long-term

expansion potential to 70 MW.

Data center capacity is measured in megawatts to indicate the total electrical power a facility can use at its peak. A medium commercial data center uses around 20 MW, whereas a hyperscale data center uses more than 100 MW.

A 20 MW data center consumes approximately the same amount of electricity as 16,500 average U.S. homes annually, according to the federal Energy Information Administration.

The future data center

campus is intended, DartPoints said, to support up to 200 kilowatts per rack for dense environments. That means each server can use as much as 200 KW, or the same amount of power to continuously run about 200 average U.S. homes at once. With that kind of electricity, the company said there will be air and liquid cooling architecture designed for the campus.

The more than 345,000 square feet of space across nearly 30 acres and two buildings was listed for sale seven months before closing, according to a social media post from Haymaker Company.

One building was partially leased to a variety of

tenants, including a call center, a logistics service business and a financial planning office. The other building includes more than 81,600 square feet of former IBM data center space, according to a still available online property listing.

The land was previously used and is already zoned in such a way that permits data center and other technology-related uses.

There is a Kentucky Utilities sub station on site, which was a draw for DartPoints in addition to existing data center infrastructure and room for expansion.

According to the property listing, one of the buildings already has cooling

and power management equipment, raised floor systems for cooling and backup generators. The property has more than 600 surface parking spaces, the listing said, advertising that feature as land for future expansion.

In the acquisition announcement, DartPoints CEO Scott Willis said Lexington serves as the right platform for customers looking for sites that can grow with them and support more power.

"Lexington gives us a rare combination of existing infrastructure, a supportive power environment and the ability to scale in a meaningful way," he said.

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