

Beat: Miscellaneous

Obama, Romney to meet for lunch at White House on Thursday

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USPA News - U.S. President Barack Obama will host former Republican challenger Mitt Romney for a private lunch at the White House on Thursday afternoon, marking their first meeting since Obama defeated him in the presidential election earlier this month. White House Press Secretary Jay Carney said Obama will meet Romney for lunch at approximately 12:30 p.m. local time at the Private Dining Room of the White House.

He said Obama is looking forward to meeting Romney but said there will be no press coverage. "It's a private lunch; only the two men will be in the room," he said. Obama secured a second four-year term in the White House earlier this month when he defeated Romney, who served as Governor of Massachusetts from January 2003 until January 2007. Obama received a total of 332 electoral votes, well above the 270 electoral votes required to win re-election. On election night, Obama said he would sit down with Romney to talk about where they could work together to move the country forward. But Obama later said he was not suggesting he has a specific assignment for his former political rival, and Carney agreed on Wednesday that there is a "symbolic element" to the lunch. "I'm not either prejudging what he's interested in doing, nor am I suggesting I've got some specific assignment," Obama said on November 14 during his first post-election news conference. "But what I want to do is to get ideas from him and see if there are some ways that we can potentially work together." Obama praised Romney for his work during the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City and said there are "certain aspects" of Romney's record and ideas that he believes could be helpful. "He presented some ideas during the course of the campaign that I actually agree with," he explained. "So it would be interesting to talk to him about something like that. There may be ideas that he has with respect to jobs and growth that can help middle-class families that I want to hear."

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