



CITIZENS COMMISSION ON COMPENSATION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS Meeting Minutes

**March 20, 2014
5:30 p.m. Public Safety Training Room (Police Department)
250 Fifth Avenue, Edmonds**

PRESENT

Commissioners:

**Brent Hunter
Co-Chair Dilys Rosales
Co-Chair Mike Hathaway
Evelyn Wellington
Norma Middleton**

Staff:

**Carrie Hite, Parks and Recreation Director/
Reporting Director for HR
Mary Ann Hardie, HR Manager**

Public:

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting started at 5:37 pm.

There was a short discussion by the Commission that followed as to the number of members needed for a quorum; it was determined that the Commission had a quorum for the purposes of voting for the meeting.

APPOINTMENT/REAPPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONERS & CHAIR

Commissioner Brent Hunter made a motion to approve the appointment of Evelyn Wellington to the Commission. Commissioner Dilys Rosales seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Mike Hathaway made a motion to approve the reappointment of Norma Middleton (for a second term) to the Commission. Commissioner Hunter seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Rosales stated that she would accept the position of Co-Chair and nominated Commissioner Mike Hathaway as another Co-Chair. Commissioner Norma Middleton seconded the motion to appoint Commissioner Rosales and Commissioner Hathaway as Co-Chairs. The motion carried. **Commissioner Rosales and Commissioner Hathaway were appointed to the Commission as Co-Chairs.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Since there was not a quorum at the March 13, 2014 meeting, the meeting was cancelled shortly after starting. Therefore, there were no meeting minutes to approve.

DISCUSSION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION

Reporting Director for HR Carrie Hite explained that the Commission would be looking at the salary and benefit information for the elected positions at the City (the Mayor, Council and the Judge). Ms. Hite further pointed out that, for the judge's position, that the Mayor was bringing forward a request to change the amount of hours and corresponding salary (given the increase in hours) to .85 FTE from .55 FTE with a salary increase to \$116,704 annually.

Additionally, Ms. Hite explained that the Commission would be filing their recommendations as to any salary and/or benefits changes for 2015 & 2016 for the Mayor/Council/Judge by May 1 and that she understood that the recommendations are binding.

There was some discussion that followed by the Commission as to what a binding recommendation meant [whether or not Council would be voting on the recommendations]. Ms. Hite stated that HR would get another ruling from the City Attorney's Office as to whether or not this was binding and would provide that the Commission by the next meeting.

DISCUSSION OF THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

There was some discussion that followed by the Commission as to the Commission having meetings/interviews (as the Commission did in 2012) with the current Council Members and the Mayor and the benefit of doing so. It was determined by the Commission that it would be important for them to obtain the input from the Council and the Mayor through individual meetings/interviews.

Commissioner Evelyn Wellington stated that she was concerned that the comparator cities that were provided in the materials HR provided of comparable cities' Mayor/Council/Judge salary information may not be the most inclusive comparator cities to use for the Commissions' 2014 process. Commissioner Wellington stated that she thought that Mount Vernon, Lake Stevens and some Eastern Washington cities' comparator information could be used as well.

Commissioner Hunter stated that he respectfully disagreed with Commissioner Wellington and that he felt that the comparator city information that was provided was good information. Commissioner Wellington pointed out that the Commission is not charged with determining the form of government used for comparison, but similar city size. Co-Chair Rosales stated that she would not want to include Eastern Washington cities as comparators.

Reporting Director Hite provided some historical context for the Commission as to which cities have been used for comparison purposes for salary and benefits throughout the City (for employees, the union and Council). These comparator cities include: King, Pierce, Thurston and Kitsap county cities with population sizes 10,000 total citizens greater than and 10,000 citizens less than Edmonds (that have similar costs of living). Edmonds has a population size of roughly 39,680, so this would include cities in these counties with similar forms of government with roughly 50,000 citizens down to 30,000 citizens. Reporting Director Hite stated that this has been an adopted framework of cities and that this information provides a solid compensation comparison.

Commissioner Wellington pointed out that some cities used in the comparison have strong Mayor/Council forms of government and others have City Managers and Council and that this may be difficult to compare to. Reporting Director for HR Carrie Hite explained that with a City

Manager form of government, the City Council positions may not be very different and that the City Manager position may not differ greatly necessarily from the role of a Mayor in a strong Mayor/Council form of government. Reporting Director Hite further pointed out that the Commission's role was not to evaluate the form of government but to look at the roles of the City Council and the Mayor, etc. If the Commission should decide to use some additional comparators for the Mayor's position, they may want to consider that. Reporting Director Hite suggested that the comparables provided are good comparables.

Commissioner Wellington inquired as to whether the Commission should look at a different set of comparator cities for the Mayor than for Council and different comparator cities for the Judge's position.

There was further discussion that followed by the Commission as to the comparator cities for this process. Commissioner Middleton stated that she would agree that the Commission is not looking at the form of government but at the salary ranges in similar population ranges. Commissioner Hunter stated that he agreed with Commissioner Middleton, and that, in the event that the City needed to recruit, the recruitment process would consider looking in areas from which the recruits would come from; this is not a recruitment process for Mayors.

Commissioner Middleton further expressed concern about the perception of "special treatment" having been used by the Commission if the Commission decided to change comparator cities such that, if the comparator cities that have been used were not "good enough" comparators for the policy makers [Council] but they were for the employees, that this could be an issue. Commissioner Middleton stated that she would like to maintain the current comparator information.

Co-Chair Hathaway stated that it seemed appropriate to operate from the same structure [comparators used] as the entire City and this is a good reason to do so.

It was decided by the Commission to take a vote on whether or not to continue using the current comparator city data. **Co-Chair Rosales made a motion to keep the current comparator cities [for the Mayor, Council and Judge] Co-Chair Hathaway seconded the motion. There were four in favor of the motion and one opposed. The motion carried.**

Reporting Director Hite excused herself from the meeting due to another meeting commitment @ 6:05 pm.

REVIEW OF MATERIALS

Ms. Hardie reviewed each section of the materials provided to the Commission with the Commission.

- Commissioner Hunter pointed out that with the last process, the Commission did not increase the Council's salary but changed to a cafeteria style of benefit.
- Additionally, the judge's salary is set by the state (through a grant) at .95% of the amount set forth in the grant (in order for the City to receive the grant). If the Judge's salary changes to 85%, the salary will increase at the rate set by the grant.

GOALS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Commissioner Hunter stated that the Commission should really focus on where it was going to work. He suggested not looking at the Judge's salary given that the state sets the minimum salary and that the Council is likely well compensated or close to the compensation amount (in relation to the comparator cities). The Commission could focus on the Mayor's position.

Co-Chair Rosales suggested that the Commission review the Council and the Mayor's benefits. For example, as to whether or not the Mayor receives a car allowance. Ms. Hardie stated that the Mayor does not. Co-Chair Rosales stated that she had been thinking about offering (as part of the compensation and benefits) training and/or seminar opportunities for Council to enhance their development and growth. Commissioner Middleton stated that she was aware of training through the Association of Washington Cities and that the newly elected are required or directed to go through an Elected Officials' training program. Commissioner Middleton further stated that at a previous employer, that organization had hosted training at their facilities incurring only at minimal cost by doing so (hosting).

Commissioner Hunter suggested asking Council as to their input since, if the recommendations are binding and continued professional development through training is a recommendation of the Commission, this would be helpful.

Ms. Hardie stated that she would contact AWC and WCIA to find out what training was available for elected officials and what scholarship opportunities may be available and would get this information to the Commission by the next meeting. Ms. Hardie suggested that the Commission may want to narrow their course selection or training focus to a specific topic area in order to help determine what is available.

Ms. Hardie inquired as to when the Commission would like to contact the elected officials for their input in the Commissions' process (as previously discussed at the beginning of the meeting).

Co-Chair Rosales suggested that each member of the Commission contact one or two members of Council and the Mayor. The assignments were as follows:

Commissioner Middleton	Council Member Thomas Mesaros
Co-Chair Hathaway	Council Member(s) Kristiana Johnson and Strom Peterson
Commissioner Wellington	Council President Diane Buckshnis and Council Member Adrienne Fraley-Monillas
Commissioner Hunter	Council Member(s) Joan Bloom and Lora Petso
Co-Chair Rosales	Mayor Dave Earling and Judge Doug Fair

The Commission discussed their questions they would ask the elected. The questions were:

1. What motivated them to become a Council Member/Mayor/Judge?
2. How important is the salary to them?
3. How important are the benefits to them?
4. What could we (as the Compensation Commission) do to attract more diverse candidates to run for office?
5. Would it be a benefit to provide additional training to increase their professional development? If so, what kind of training might that be?

Ms. Hardie stated that she would provide e-mails and phone contact information for the elected to the Commissioners in the next day or two. The Commission stated that they would work on getting these interviews done by the next meeting (March 26, 2014).

Commissioner Wellington inquired as to when the Commission would be looking at salary information. Ms. Hardie stated that one of the agenda items for the Commission at the next meeting would be to look at the Council and Mayor's salary and benefits information.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 pm.

Upcoming Critical Dates:

April 3	5:30	Public Hearing	
April 17	5:30	Public Hearing	