



# SALARY COMMISSION

## Meeting Minutes

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### SPECIALLY CALLED MEETING

**June 19, 2017**

**7:00 pm**

**Police Department Training Room  
250 Fifth Avenue, Edmonds**

**PRESENT:** Don Hall, Commissioner  
Jeff Hodson, Commissioner  
Ava Dubno, Commissioner (elected as Vice-Chair)  
Jay Grant, Commissioner (elected as Chair)  
Carl Zapora, Commissioner  
Mary Ann Hardie, Human Resources Director

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting started at 7:00 p.m. Human Resources Director Mary Ann Hardie handed out binders containing information related to the 2012 and the current salary commission process [ordinance, agenda notice, meeting minutes, survey data, etc.]. She welcomed the commission to this introductory meeting and suggested the commission introduce themselves. Commissioner

Commissioner Jay Grant suggested that each member also add information about commissioner interests and background information. The commission shared the following:

- **Don Hall** – his wife owns a business, he is a community member, and he is a long-time community resident who has been interested in this process.
- **Jeff Hodson** – he is a former journalist, grew up in Shoreline, lived in Midwest, and also overseas. Became a teacher of journalism overseas and now currently works for the UW School of Public Health (Director of Communications)
- **Ava Dubno** – she has worked for financial institutions including positions held in corporate finance, audit, accounting, and managing operations groups. She has experience with personnel and approving pay grades for positions. She lived in Edmonds for 20 years and is a CPA.
- **Carl Zapora** – he is retired; formerly CEO of Verdant. Helped launch the new health and wellness initiative; prior to that, he was the United Way CEO. Worked previously in the private sector. He moved to Chicago, worked for United Way. He also did executive search work and worked in workshops. Currently works with the Chamber, the UW Bothell Advisory Board, Board of Molina (Healthcare) and is on the Board of Edmonds Community College.
- **Jay Grant**- described himself as an Army “brat.” Grew up in Edmonds. Was in the first graduating class of Woodway and served in the Airforce. He also worked in Washington DC, worked in the state legislature, ran a national healthcare association and did

lobbying. After he left the healthcare industry, he went into homeland security. Helped write HIPAA and is currently the Director of Interport Police (international transportation security) – works on counterterrorism.

He also served on salary commission 10 years ago, and described it as a little different back then with the process and how the recommendation was made (whether or not it was approved by Council and became binding). He liked the commission group and explained that the best input (public) came from a former Council member (Dick Van Hollenbeck) who gave insight on healthcare. He explained that the Mayor hadn't had a raise in 5 years and that the Mayor was given a raise but the commission couldn't agree on Council pay and benefit changes and couldn't get a recommendation to change this. He said the commission tried very hard to look at the public servant factor and consider the importance of paying appropriately.

Ms. Hardie asked the commission if they would like a commission email set up as it would be helpful for the process and for public record purposes. The commission stated they would. Ms. Hardie stated she would get this requested and set up through IT ASAP and would email out the information the Council members.

### **APPOINTMENT OF A CHAIR**

Ms. Hardie pointed out that it was helpful and important for the commission to appoint a chair for to help facilitate and lead the process (as HR serves in a support role). There was some discussion that followed by the commission of the appointment of Chair. Commissioner Carl Zapora pointed out that it should be someone who is going to be a contact for communications on behalf of the commission. Ms. Hardie inquired as to whether or not there were nominations for chair. Commissioner Grant volunteered to chair the commission. Commissioner Ava Dubno volunteered to be the vice-chair. **Commissioner Zapora made a motion to appoint Commissioner Grant as the chair and Commissioner Dubno as the vice-chair. Commissioner Jeff Hodson seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

### **DISCUSSION OF THE PROCESS**

Ms. Hardie explained that there were items in the binder for the commission to use as resource information including the recent salary commission ordinance and amendment. She distributed a salary commission FAQ's sheet. There was discussion by the commission about what constituted a quorum for voting and motion purposes. Commissioner Zapora clarified that a quorum required 3 members, but that only an affirmative (passing motion vote) quorum would occur if all three present members voted to approve a motion or decision.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Hardie inquired as to whether the commission wanted to set a policy regarding public commentary at the meetings. There was discussion that followed by the commission about setting a policy regarding public comments at the meetings. Vice-Chair Dubno inquired as to whether or not it was required for the commission to take public comments at each meeting. Ms. Hardie stated that this was up to the commission to come up with a policy (as recommended by legal). Commissioner Don Hall stated that he thought the commission should allow public comments, but to limit them to 3 minutes at the beginning of the meeting. Commissioner Zapora said it seemed appropriate to make a motion to have a public comment agenda item at every meeting and to determine the placement on the agenda and the time limit at the discretion of the chair person. Chair Grant suggested that public comment be allowed for up to no more than 3 minutes per person.

There was further discussion that followed by commission. Ms. Hardie stated that the Council meetings had up to 3-minute public comments at the meetings. Vice-Chair Dubno stated that she thought it was important to set a consistent meeting practice (amount of comment allowed per person at each meeting). Commissioner Hall stated that most commissions (that he has observed) allow for public comments for up to 3 minutes. Chair Grant stated that it seemed appropriate to allow for public comments at each meeting for up to 3 minutes per person and a submittal in writing by the commenter if needed. **Vice-Chair Dubno made a motion to approve a 3 minute, per person, comment limit at each meeting. Commissioner Zapora seconded he motion. The motion carried.**

## **MEETINGS SCHEDULE**

Commissioner Hall inquired as to when the public hearings needed to be held. There was some discussion that followed by the commission about the public hearings. Ms. Hardie referenced the ordinance which noted that there were two hearings that needed to be held and that perhaps the commission wanted to consider when the best timing was for this so that this could be scheduled when the commission discussed setting the schedule of the regular meetings. Vice-Chair Dubno thought it might be good to have one toward the beginning of the process and one toward the end (as the binding recommendation was finalized). Chair Grant stated that he thought this might be helpful in having one close to one of the early meetings and then to go back and add the second one toward the end when the commission was making final decisions.

The commission then discussed the times and dates of the meetings and public hearings as follows:

### **Meeting Dates**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MEETING TYPE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
• July 10, 2017	Regular meeting	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
• July 24, 2017	Public Hearing	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
• August 7, 2017	Regular Meeting	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
• August 14, 2017	Public Hearing	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
• August 21, 2017	Regular Meeting	7:00 -- 9:00 p.m.

**Commissioner Hall made a motion to approve above salary commission meeting schedule. Commissioner Hodson seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

## **PRESENTATION OF BINDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

There was some discussion that followed about when the presentation should occur (following the City Attorney’s review) and how long the presentation would be in length. After some discussion by the commission, **Commissioner Hall moved to schedule the presentation for the Council meeting on 9/12 (time to be determined). Commissioner Zapora seconded the motion. The motion carried**

## **SURVEY DATA & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED**

There was some discussion that followed by the commission as they reviewed the data provided so far by Ms. Hardie for the current commission process as well as the information from the 2012 commission process as follows:

- Commissioner Zapora requested that the population information be added along with the annual total salary and wage information to the wage charts.
- Chair Grant requested that further information be provided on the breakdown of the City’s (Edmonds) medical benefits premium costs.

- Vice-Chair Dubno inquired as to the Council's total budget. Ms. Hardie said she wasn't sure, but could obtain that information. Commissioner Zapora stated that this wasn't something the commission would necessarily take into consideration.
- Commissioner Hall inquired as to whether or not these cities had legislative assistants to help with their Council.
- Vice-Chair Dubno inquired as to whether there was a survey template that could be provided to Council (that was used for this process).
- Commissioner Zapora stated that he would like to see the 1988-2017 Mayor and Council salary history graphed with CPI. Ms. Hardie stated that she could send this chart out to the commission to create for this purpose and that further information would be needed on which CPI was used and the historic information for CPI (if available), would also need to be provided.
- Commissioner Hodson inquired as to whether or not there were any national survey databases that could be used. Ms. Hardie stated that the cost of living was different in other parts of the country and may be difficult for comparators, but that the AWC salary survey that would be coming out for this year would be helpful. She stated that she will ask AWC when the 2017 survey results are available.

Chair Grant inquired as to whether or not the commission was missing any cities from the information provided. Vice-Chair Dubno asked if the commission can we look at other items (financially) about other cities to compare to Edmonds. Ms. Hardie stated that budget size and assessed valuation could be considered, for example, but that past population size was used previously. Commissioner Zapora thought that using the population size as a comparator was best. There was a nodding of heads from other commissioners about using cities of similar population size. Commissioner Zapora recommended using data from cities with **30,000- 50,000** in population size from across the state.

Commissioner Zapora stated that he would like to have further discussion about what the Commission's responsibility is for this process. He stated that he believes the work is about setting a fair and reasonable compensation for the Mayor and Council. Chair Grant asked if there were any pending raises for the Mayor and Council. Ms. Hardie stated there were not. Vice-Chair Dubno inquired as to whether or not there was compensation provided to Council members for being on commissions and attending meetings. Commissioner Hall pointed out that, in 2012, the commission changed the process (combining base wage with meeting pay) and made it a total of \$1000 including up to 8 meetings.

Chair Grant stated he would like to hear the commission's thoughts on what they think is important for the commission to bring to the table and do (get done). Commissioner Hall stated that he felt he was not sure that the salaries meant a lot, but that it was necessary to provide the Council with some form of recognition. He believes that there is an interest to have a salary that would ideally entice people to serve on Council (as in paying wages similar to a full-time employee, but is not sure that is feasible. Commissioner Zapora noted that the Mayor is a full-time employee. Commissioner Hall stated that we have been fortunate to have good Mayors. Commissioner Grant pointed out that the Council members do lose time or are losing "billable" hours with work they do that is outside of the Council meeting process. Vice-Chair Dubno stated that she would like to provide an acknowledgement of their work. Commissioner Hodson stated that he believed that the Council and the Mayor were "not in it for the money." He stated that he thought it would be nice for these electeds to be recognized throughout the community for work that they do and that it is valued. He also thought it was important to try to make it a fair pay in line with the other communities and is not sure they are paid fairly or not. Commissioner Zapora pointed out that the commission's job is to determine what is a fair and

reasonable compensation for the work they are doing and competitive or not “overly low.” It wouldn’t necessarily result in the Council being paid at the top of comparators necessarily, but he was also not “against” that. Beyond that, he thought that the City Council members work hard, and take calls all day and night. Commissioner Zapora inquired as to how many full-time employees were at Edmonds. Ms. Hardie stated about 220. Commissioner Zapora stated that the City has had pretty good Mayors over the years and that they should be compensated fairly. Chair Grant said that he would like to consider more thinking “outside the box” with this process if possible and that he felt disappointed that they [the commission he served on] didn’t get any “real” input. He expressed an interest in how to get the public involved in providing feedback with the process. Chair Grant suggested using an on-line form that people could fill out. He said that he thought that people are embarrassed and they may not want to come to a public meeting and talk about their input. Also, there is the possibility that someone will tell you they don’t agree with you (in public).

Chair Grant wondered if there was anyone other than the public and Council they should be reaching out to perhaps using electronic format. Commissioner Hall thought this was a good idea due to problems in past about transparency. Vice-Chair Dubno stated that she was unsure as to who would monitor and this process and what input would be received. How would it be received (perhaps a fillable form), or to print out materials for Council to be looked at. Commissioner Zapora stated that they did this for the community college (with an electronic feedback survey form) and this survey has been in the newsletter and on website.

Vice-Chair Dubno asked how long this might take to get set up. Ms. Hardie stated that she wasn’t sure, and that she would talk to IT about this. Vice-Chair Dubno suggested creating a template and wondered how long this would take. Ms. Hardie stated that it would depend on what the commission decided that they wanted to put on the template, but emphasized that she would talk to IT about this to see about the options. Commissioner Hodson stated that he thought it would be nice to get the information out to the public and good to have all of this data information (from the binders) on the website. Chair Grant stated that he found out that Council member makes \$1000 but receives \$700 worth of benefits and that if the benefits are not used; there is only the option to use the benefits. Ms. Hardie reminded the commission that there was a change with the 2012 commission (under section 12 of the tabs) that noted that they can get paid out for the benefits in compensation if they do not use the medical insurance.

Chair Grant inquired as to what does the Council president does. Ms. Hardie explained that he sets Council meeting agendas, does Council retreats, and coordinates the Council meetings. Chair Grant inquired as to whether or not there was anything of further concern for the commission. Vice-Chair Dubno stated that she was still concerned about the survey for Council members. There was further discussion that followed by the commission about interviewing and face-to-face meetings and/or a survey. Chair Grant asked the commission what they would like to do with the Council to solicit their feedback such as 1) invite them to one of the regular meetings, or 2) have them complete a survey. He expressed the importance of anonymity and to invite the Council and Mayor to a commission meeting. He thought it would be important to show that the commission is interested in having dialogue and if they show up to the meeting to provide input, that would be great. Vic-Chair Dubno wondered as to how they would respond to this invitation.

Ms. Hardie stated that the 2014 and 2013 commission processes used interviews (individual, one-on-one) with each commissioner interviewing one Council member. She suggested that she could provide the surveys to the electeds at a Council meeting (before it started) and then have them return their completed surveys to the HR interoffice mailbox. Commissioner Hodson expressed concern as to the anonymity of the process. Chair Grant stated that hoped that they would get good information from the commission from this process. With the binding

recommendation situation and responsibility of the process, he thought it was important to try to get input from different people.

Chair Grant asked Ms. Hardie to look into electronic survey options. Chair Grant inquired as to whether there could be a press release from the commission about this survey. Ms. Hardie stated she wasn't sure why there could not.

**The meeting adjourned 8:45 pm**