

SALARY COMMISSION Meeting Minutes

SPECIALLY CALLED MEETING

Thursday, July 11, 2019

7:00 pm

Police Department Training Room
250 5th Ave. N., Edmonds, WA 98020

Present: Jay Grant, Chair
Ava Dubno, Vice-Chair
Don Hall, Commissioner
Jeff Hodson, Commissioner
Marilynne Beard, Consultant. MMB Consulting

Excused: Carl Zapora Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Grant called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Introduction of Commissioners

The Commissioners introduced themselves to the Ms. Beard. Ms. Beard provided information about her background in municipal government. Ms. Beard asked the Commissioners to review the contact information listed in their resource binders for accuracy. There were no changes needed to existing information for those present. Chair Grant noted that the Commission should use their City of Edmonds email account to communicate about Commission business. Ms. Beard will request that staff provide updated access information to the Commissioners and provide any necessary assistance.

Process Recap

Chair Grant reviewed the Commission's 2017 deliberation and public outreach process and provided an overview of the requirements of the ordinance establishing the Salary Commission and the obligations of the Commission. The Commission must complete their deliberations by September 30 and must hold at least two public hearings. In 2017, the Commission held seven meetings, including two public hearings. The Commission allowed the public to speak at the beginning of each meeting for up to three minutes each. The commission voted unanimously to continue the public comment period at the beginning of each meeting.

Ms. Beard asked the Commission where they would prefer to hold commission meetings and public hearings. The Commission preferred to hold their meetings in the City Council Chamber or at City Hall. Ms. Beard will inquire as to the availability of the Council Chambers and alternate meeting rooms if needed.

Salary & Benefit Information

Chair Grant walked through each tab of the resource binder provided to each commissioner. The overall contents of the binder were similar to the contents provided in 2017. Chair Grant noted that he had asked staff to include tax base information in the summary of comparable wages and benefits for Mayor and Councilmembers. The purpose of this added data was to provide a context for understanding cities' relative resources available to support employee and elected officials' compensation.

Commissioner Hall asked for cost of living adjustments and any other wage increases provided for all employee groups for 2018 and 2019. In 2017, the Commission only considered non-represented employee wage adjustments.

Chair Grant noted that the City had received a letter from the Association of Washington Cities Benefits Trust that confirming that the City could provide benefits for the City Council on the same basis as unrepresented employees even though Councilmembers are not full time. AWC would like to be advised if the City will continue this practice in the future.

The Commission reviewed the summary of Mayor-Council wage and benefits compared to other municipalities. There were six cities that had not yet responded to the salary survey inquiry. Chair Grant noted that it was most important to have wage and benefit data for cities with a Strong Mayor form of government, especially Lynnwood. He offered to reach out to Lynnwood for their information and asked staff to follow-up with the City of Wenatchee and Bremerton.

Chair Grant had inquired as to whether the Mayor and Council are subject to new sick leave requirements that was approved by the State legislature and that became effective July 1, 2019. The City Attorney advised that elected officials are not subject to the new sick live rules.

Commissioner Dubno asked that the Commission be provided an electronic version of the Full Time Equivalent (FTE's) and population for comparable cities. Ms. Beard will ask staff to provide the file and verify the source of the population data.

Commission Topics of Interest or Concerns for Future Meetings

After discussion, the Commissioners agreed that the Mr. Grant and Ms. Dubno should continue as Chair and Vice- Chair. Chair Grant advised the Commission that this was likely his final term as a Commissioner.

Chair Grant shared that he had made a presentation to the Edmonds Chamber of Commerce in February regarding the Salary Commission's work and encourage their members to offer input at the upcoming hearing later this Summer. He would

like to look at other ways to reach out the community. Also, he mentioned he had sent email correspondence offering to meet with the Alliance Citizen Edmonds (ACE) members, but did not hear back from them.

Chair Grant asked the Commissioners to share any thoughts about the 2019 Salary Commission's process and other items of interest. He reminded the Commission that they had included review of the Council President's compensation.

- Commissioner Dubno noted that this year's process should go smoothly. The Commission put a great deal of effort into the last process that provided a good starting point for this year.
- Commissioner Hall asked that the Commissioner consider cost of living adjustments approved for all employee groups, not just non-represented.
- Commissioner Hodson was interested in finding ways to increase public engagement. He suggested that the Commission have a list of groups that they could reach out to and possible provide presentations and collect survey information.

The Commission continued to discuss outreach methods including press releases (My Edmonds News and The Beacon), surveys of current councilmembers and the public, and "meet and greet" opportunities. Possible outreach techniques discussed include direct outreach to specific groups such as condo associations and providing a link to the public survey on Next Door and Facebook. The Commission noted the importance of getting input from Edmond's residents and businesses and asked if their some way to screen out non-Edmond responses.

The commission discussed how they should reach out to the City Council for their input. They agreed to start with the survey questions used in 2017. Chair Grant noted that he was particularly interested in how much time was devoted to their City Council duties. Chair Grant will reach out to the Council President regarding how best to engage the City Council in the Salary Commission's process including possibly interviewing each Councilmember individually. Chair Grant asked the Commission to review the survey questions used in 2017 in preparation for the next meeting. The Commission will discuss the survey questions and process again at the next meeting.

Commissioner Dubno asked if there was a way to measure the effectiveness of the Council when considering compensation changes. She suggested looking at the economic vitality of Edmonds. The Commission discussed the challenges associated with considering economic performance given external factors such as a recession.

Chair Grant suggested that the Council's compensation be benchmarked to a percentage of the Mayor's salary and adjusted for the number of hours councilmembers spend on City business. Ms. Beard will conduct

research factors other cities use to determine City Council compensation.

The Commissioners asked for an electronic version of the Mayor-Council comparable cities wage and benefit spreadsheet.

Commission Meeting and Public Hearing Schedule

The Commission discussed the schedule for the balance of the 2017 process. They would like to target September 17 or September 24 for a presentation to the Council. Based on that, they agreed that they should have their final decision ready to forward to the Mayor and City Council by September 11. The following schedule was agreed to:

- Wednesday, July 17, 2019 – Commission Meeting
- Wednesday, July 24, 2019 – Commission Meeting and Public Hearing
- Wednesday, August 7, 2019 – Commission Meeting
- Wednesday, August 14, 2019 – Commission Meeting
- Wednesday, August 21, 2019 – Commission Meeting and Public Hearing
- Wednesday, September 11, 2019 – Commission Meeting

All meetings will be schedule to begin at 7:00 p.m.

OTHER

There were no other items for discussion.

Chair Grant adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

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and allow 24 hours advance notice for special accommodations.