

WHATCOM COUNTY COMMISSION ON SALARIES FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

MINUTES

Thursday, January 17, 2019, 4:00 p.m.

Whatcom Transportation Authority Board Room
4011 Bakerview Spur
Bellingham, WA

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Andy Rowlson, Commission Facilitator at 4:04 p.m.

B. INTRODUCTIONS / ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Bonne Broadway, Justin Iverson, Steve (George) King, Todd Morris, Karen Peila, Jon Sitkin, Wendy Wefer-Clinton

Members Absent: Lisa Karlberg, Wayne Tomlinson, Martin Watterson

Staff Present: Andy Rowlson-WTA Director of Human Resources and Commission Facilitator, Vicki Esser-WTA Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board and Commission Administrative Assistant

Others Present: None

Each Commission member introduced themselves. Five members are returning from the 2017 commission including Justin Iverson, Steve King, Todd Morris, Jon Sitkin, and Wendy Wefer-Clinton.

C. REVIEW OF SALARY COMMISSION HANDBOOK

Mr. Rowlson reviewed the sections in the binder provided.

D. OVERVIEW OF COMMISSION'S DUTIES

D.1 Ordinance

Mr. Rowlson reviewed the Commission's purpose and duties based on County Ordinance No. 2012-008 which established the Commission. He stated that the commission does not merely give a recommendation on salaries, but they will set the salaries for the County elected officials for 2020 and 2021.

D.2 Timeline

Mr. Rowlson stated that the Ordinance specifies that the final work product of the commission is due to the County Council by May 1, 2019.

E. SALARY DISCUSSION

E.1 Review Last Commission's Conclusions and Work Product

Mr. Rowlson reviewed the Elected Official Salary Schedule document produced by the previous commission, which included the rationale for their decisions.

E.2 Identify Information Needs

Mr. Rowlson stated that one item the last commission used was a table of data available through the Association of Washington Counties. He showed a sample of this table. He said the Commission looked at elected official salaries for the closest few counties above and below Whatcom County based on different categories in the table such as population, assessed value, number of employees, and annual budget. He also reviewed other information considered by the last commission including local jurisdiction salaries and consumer price index data.

Mr. Rowlson handed out and reviewed a list of information requested from the previous commission at their first meeting. The commission discussed the information they would like to evaluate at the next meeting.

It was decided that the following information would be requested:

INFORMATION REQUESTED - 2019

- a) Whatcom County organization chart with FTE count.
- b) Summary of duties for each elected official, from Article 3 of Whatcom County charter.
- c) Summary of duties for each county department, from county's budget document.
- d) List of comparable counties that Whatcom County uses for employee negotiations.
- e) COLA's for each county labor contract and non-represented employees for 2017, 2018, 2019 and into the future if known.

- f) 2019 compensation for all non-represented employees with the deputies to elected officials flagged so any compression issues can be noted (salaries of closest direct reports to elected officials in Whatcom County).
- g) Current job descriptions for all Whatcom County elected officials and their deputies.
- h) Elected official current salary information for AWC comparable counties (four above and four below based on population, assessed valuation, number of employees, and budget)
- i) Current salaries of elected officials and other appropriate positions from the City of Bellingham, City of Ferndale, City of Lynden, and the Port of Bellingham.
- j) Superior Court Judge compensation.
- k) Consumer Price Index for the last ten years (bring CPI information used in 2015 current, adding the last two years)
- l) General stats for compensation of management teams of companies of similar size (FTE and revenue) to Whatcom county government, within Whatcom County.

E.3 Consider Scheduling Elected Officials' Comments

There was discussion followed by consensus to invite Whatcom County elected officials to attend the February 21st meeting to speak to the Commission or to provide comments in writing.

It was decided that the following questions would be asked of the elected officials when requesting their comments:

- 1) Please describe the job duties of your position.
- 2) Do you feel the compensation is appropriate for your position? If not, why?
- 3) Is there something else you think we should be aware of?

E.4 Consider Scheduling Public Comments

It was agreed that when the commission has a tentative work product available, they will consider setting a Public Hearing to receive public comment.

F. SELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

F.1 Nominations and Voting

Wendy Wefer-Clinton nominated Jon Sitkin for Commission Chairman. Karen Peilar seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations.

Jon Sitkin was elected Committee Chairman by unanimous vote.

F.2 Meeting Quorum

Chairman Sitkin reviewed information on the definition chosen by both the 2015 and 2017 Salary Commissions for a quorum and opened discussion on this topic.

MOTION BY WENDY WEFER-CLINTON, SECONDED BY JUSTIN IVERSON THAT THE COMMISSION ADOPT THE FOLLOWING DEFINITION OF A QUORUM AND VOTING REQUIREMENTS:

- Five commission members out of ten are required for a quorum.
- An affirmative vote of the majority of the members present is required to take action, except for approval of the final work product.
- The final work product requires six affirmative votes for approval.

The motion passed unanimously.

G. CONFIRM FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

MOTION BY JUSTIN IVERSON, SECONDED BY TODD MORRIS THAT THE COMMISSION MEET MONTHLY ON THE THIRD THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH THROUGH APRIL 2019 WITH ADDITIONAL MEETINGS ADDED, IF NEEDED. THE MEETINGS WILL TAKE PLACE FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 6:00 P.M. AT THE WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY, 4011 BAKERVIEW SPUR, BELLINGHAM, WA.

The meeting dates based on the above schedule are:

Thursday, February 21st

Thursday, March 21st

Thursday, April 18th

H. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT TRAINING

H.1 Expectations for Boards and Commissions

Mr. Rowson reviewed the County's document entitled, "Expectations for Boards and Commissions"

H.2 Training Presentation

Vicki Esser gave a presentation on the elements of the Open Public Meetings Act and the Public Records Act that are relevant to this commission. The training was based on the State of Washington Attorney General's Open Government training.

I. ADJOURN

MOTION BY IVERSON, SECONDED BY PEILA TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Commission in open public meeting on _____ Date

**Whatcom County Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials
Whatcom County, Washington**

**Jon Sitkin
Chairman**

Attest:

**Vicki G. Esser
Commission Administrative Assistant**