

SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL SALARY COMMISSION

Meeting Notes

Tuesday, August 16, 2022, 5:00-6:30 pm
Shoreline City Hall Conference Room 440 and Via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT: Commissioner John Hoey, Commissioner Paula Itaoka, and Commissioner Robin McClelland

ABSENT: None

STAFF: John Norris, Assistant City Manager and Melissa Muir, Human Resources Director

GUESTS: Doug Johnson, Ralph Anderson & Associates

1. Welcome and Review Agenda

The meeting began at 5:01 pm when the Microsoft Teams meeting recording was started with Commissioner John Hoey presiding and all Salary Commission members present. Commissioner Hoey outlined the agenda and the timing for the agenda items. No members of the public were in attendance at the start of the meeting.

2. Review and Approval of July 26, 2022 Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner McClelland made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Itaoka, to approve the minutes of July 26, 2022. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Public Comment

Commissioner Hoey then sought public comment but no members of the public were in attendance at the meeting.

4. Review Current Councilmember Information Question Responses

The Commission then discussed the Current Councilmember Survey Question Results. Six out of seven Councilmembers responded to the one-question information survey that was sent to them on July 27, 2022. The Commission stated that they felt the responses were helpful and that no follow up survey questions would be needed.

The Commission further discussed various topics about how Councilmember compensation may entice or discourage someone from running for Council. The Commission discussed what may drive a community member to run for a City Council position, including wanting to serve, making change, having influence, giving back to the community, etc., and the acknowledgement that current Council compensation is small enough that it likely doesn't replace having a job. The Commission also discussed that each Councilmember brings a different set of skills and resources to the position and agreed that the amount of time a Councilmember puts into the role is not a compensable factor for the position.

5. Comparable Jurisdictions Council Salary Survey Review

Following the Councilmember survey results discussion, Doug Johnson from Ralph Anderson & Associates joined the meeting and reviewed the total compensation survey data his firm collected from the Commission-identified 12 comparable jurisdictions. Total compensation data included both salary and benefit information or deferred retirement compensation in lieu of benefits. Mr. Johnson explained how the benefit information impacts the total compensation, compared with the initial review that provided just a base salary comparison. The Commission discussed how Shoreline is now about 12% above the median of its comparable jurisdictions when looking at total compensation.

The Commission then discussed again how the 'in lieu of benefits' works for Councilmembers and employees with the City's relationship with the Association of Washington Cities, the City's insurance provider. Councilmember Itaoka raised the idea of considering a change in structure to the Council compensation package so that all compensation is provided as base salary and that in lieu of benefits for deferred compensation is eliminated for Councilmembers. The Commission agreed that they would discuss and review various options for structuring and setting Council total compensation at their next meeting.

The Commission then thanked Mr. Johnson for his work on the total compensation survey of the City's comparable jurisdictions and for the simplicity of the format his data table provided. Commissioner McClelland also summarized a number of takeaways she gathered from the survey data and salary and benefits discussion that the Commission held, including that Shoreline is the only jurisdiction that allows unused health benefits to roll over into a deferred compensation plan; that the Council's benefits package was established by Council Ordinance many years ago; that the determination on choosing to receive health benefits, which requires majority of the City Council to support, is the Association of Washington Cities' policy and is not Council policy that can be changed by the Commission; that the City provides 60% of health benefits allotment to Councilmembers, which is codified in the Council Ordinance establishing health benefits for the Council; that the Commission can amend the structure of how total compensation, including benefits, is provided and that Commission is not beholden to prior Council Ordinances that established salaries or benefits, and that Shoreline's total compensation is currently 12% above the median and 3.9% above the average of the 12 comparable cities that the Commission reviewed.

6. Discussion of Remaining Meeting Schedule and Potential City Council Presentation

At roughly 6:20 pm, the Commission then discussed their upcoming meetings and meeting schedule and how their final decision on Council compensation would be packaged and delivered to the City Clerk. Staff reminded the Commissioners that by Code, their work must be complete by October 1, 2022, and given that October 1st is a Saturday this year, they must have their work submitted to the City Clerk by the close of business on Friday, September 30.

The Commission agreed that their next meeting, which they tentatively set for August 25, 2022, should focus on discussing their findings and how to structure the total compensation package for the Council. The Commissioners all stated that they would bring their thoughts and potential options/proposals of how to do this to the next meeting for this discussion.

The Commission also discussed how best to document and provide their findings to the City Clerk. While staff explained that the Municipal Code is silent on how to do this, staff suggested that a report be drafted that outlines the work and background of the Commission, provides the market data and other information considered by the Commission, and provides the Commission's findings and decision on Council compensation. Staff stated that they could put together a draft report for review and approval by the Commission. All three Commissioners thought that this was a good idea and that it would provide a template for future Salary Commissions in documenting their work and findings. Commissioners also felt that a subsequent meeting to their next meeting on August 25th could be used to review the draft report and provide edits and feedback to staff.

Staff also suggested the idea of staff or Commissioners, if so inclined, presenting the findings of the Commission's work to the City Council at a future time following the submittal of the findings to the City Clerk. This would serve as a way to transparently share the outcome of the Salary Commission's work. The Commissioners felt that if staff was to present this in the future, that it would be a good idea. No Commissioners stated that they would like to participate in the presentation and felt that this was a good role for staff to conduct.

7. Adjournment

The Salary Commission meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.