



City of Tacoma
Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries

Ronald Malm, Chair
Richard Wilkinson, Vice Chair
Terry Mensonides
Robert Anderson
Dianne Conway
Randy Droppert
Shari Barrera

MINUTES

TIME: Monday, February 5th, 2018, 6:00 PM

PLACE: 747 Market Street, Room 243, Tacoma, WA 98402

PRESENT: Ronald Malm, Richard Wilkinson, Dianne Conway, Shari Barrera, Julianna (Julie) Yust

ABSENT (Excused): Randy Droppert, Pandora Schaal

Call to Order:

At approximately 6:00 pm, Chairman Malm, called the meeting to order.

Roll Call:

At approximately 6:01 pm, staff liaison, Chantra Real did roll call.

Introductions of Committee Members:

Julie – I moved to Tacoma in 2009. I work for the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department for about 10 years. I left there just 2 years ago to work for Labor Union. I represent City of Tacoma, Pierce County, all of our local south sound area; Teamsters Local 117. I live just up in Hilltop and am excited to do this.

Richard – I am mayor's appointee to this commission. Although I've never met either mayors until she came to our last commission meeting (Mayor Strickland). I'm Assistant Vice Chancellor at organizational effectiveness at UW Tacoma. I really like it there and I like UW Tacoma's commitment to City of Tacoma. So in fact, I've actually lived in Tacoma for 4 years before I took the job here. I was a terrible Seattle snob for many years until I moved here and I realize what a cool place Tacoma is. Now I'm into all the grit cities and talking about the Seattle snobs and so forth. My background, I think that the requirement that the commission has an HR expert and legal advisor so I am the HR expert. I was HR Director for City of Renton for 15 years, left that and went into global health. Worked both with NGO and the Department of Health in Seattle and came down here to Tacoma.

Shari – I live in Northeast Tacoma and I teach in Federal Way and have been teaching in Federal Way as a Special EDs teacher for 27 years. I'm also an AR rep for a union for the Special Ed and am working on our contract.

Richard – By the way I live 2 blocks from here.

Ron – I'm the chair of this lovely group. I am a chemical dependency professional. I am on vacation for a while. Actually I have a construction background; I am a dry wall finisher by heart and trade. I have stepped into the professional world to change things and make a difference in people's lives. I'm lucky enough to be accepted into this commission. It's been a lot of fun for the past few years.



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Dianne – I'm a partner at Gordon Thomas Honeywell which practice environmental lineages and real estate law. I've been on this commission since this inception. I am the lawyer representative appointed by then Mayor Strickland. I live next to Point Defiance Park.

Chantra – My name is Chantra. I'm HR Assistant here with the City. I got drafted to do this and I'm still here.

Discussion of Mayor & City Council Salaries:

Chantra – Next topic on our agenda is our discussion on mayor and city council salaries. I wasn't exactly quite sure if you guys have suggestions or extra research that you'd like done.

Richard – Yes I do. I want to know what the Spokane mayor and council gets paid. I find it very annoying that they present their information in hourly rates. I'd like to know what they get paid for the year. I think it would be important information for us to factor in and it's frustrating to not know what their annual salary is.

Chantra – So you'd like an updated 2018 salary then?

Richard – Yes.

Chantra – Alright I'll look into that. Is there anything else?

Ron – It would be kind of cool to meet the new mayor to see how excited she is to be mayor of this beautiful little city we call home. You know to get to know her prior to. We got to meet Mayor Strickland at the end of her term and heard what she had to say about her job, how she felt about it, and what her direction was. But it would be kind of neat to our city.

Julie – I think for me it would be really telling to see if this person wasn't willing to come and speak with us. I hope she is.

Richard – She seems pretty open. I saw her at our MLK breakfast and she seems jazzed.

Dianne – I think she would be totally fine coming to meet with us. Maybe we want to think about before having her come to talk, being that she was on council for a number of years and now mayor. I'm thinking of whether we should send her the survey we did a few years ago. It seems like it's something we should do routinely just to kind of see how, because we have several new council members at this state; now a couple of them are brand new. I was thinking about this of maybe waiting until June since we're not sure if they have their committee assignments yet. I remember Blocker who was new at the time and someone else who was new as well. We have a different membership of council now than we did at the time we did the first survey.

Richard – I think that's a good idea. Just to piggy back on that Dianne, I think we should talk to the new mayor first before asking for the survey. We should since she has both hats, it would be a good idea to get her perspective. It's always a struggle to figure what a fair compensation is for elected officials. I'd get in her perspective. I know as Mayor Strickland says it's very



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awkward for elected officials to talk about their salaries because it's almost not appropriate for them to do so and yet there is still an expectation that they be fairly compensated. Anything that would help us get a perspective on how to get closer to getting this right.

Chantra – So do we have somewhat of a guideline of what we'd like to ask Mayor Woodards or will this be more of an impromptu of what she's currently doing, what her perspectives are, difference from being council member to now mayor? How do you guys want to approach this?

Richard – I think if it's more open ended, we're setting salaries, we'd like to know the people who we're thinking salaries for. I guess for me though, I would also like if it's not completely wide open, I guess it would be helpful to know what's your initial impression of the contrast between mayor and council member? Right now we have the mayor about double that of council member. What's her take on her role versus city manager's role? How does she see that starting out. If she has a perspective on pay, we'd like to hear that.

Shari – Yes I think impromptu, open ended would give a better read off somebody. Instead of if we had questions we'd have to fit within the hour. We can kind of piggy back on what she says.

Julie – Even at 7, we're not a large group. She wouldn't be inundated with questions.

Shari – IT would be nice to see where she sees the job and what she sees it as.

Chantra – Ok. So for our next meeting, were you guys just interested in having a sit down with the mayor and do the survey afterwards?

Richard – I'd like to know from the mayor Woodards. How does she see is the best way to collect information and get the insight.

Ron – A new line of questions to hand over to the council questions based off on what she says.

Chantra – So for our next meeting, we'd like to have an updated 2018 salary and request a meeting with Mayor. Was there anything else we'd like to discuss?

Julie – I'd like to propose to have the next meeting date added onto the agenda?

Chantra – I can do that.

Richard – I'd be interested in how the mayor sees as her peers. We're looking at this array of cities. Who does she sees as comparable? I'm not sure if there's any that seems comparable because of the Charter and the uniqueness of Tacoma and yet what's her frame of reference? Seems like a good union question. I think it's just harder at the elected level versus other jobs.

Chantra – I did send out a quick email on Friday asking if mayor would be interested. I haven't heard back yet but I will have an answer for you guys by our next meeting. Are you also interested in maybe any of the other council members coming in to chat or just mayor?



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Julie – I wouldn't be opposed but my first touch would be the mayor.

Shari – I agree with that.

Richard – Yes mayor is key.

Review & Approval of August 7th, 2017 and November 13th, 2017 Minutes:
All in favor.

Adjournment
(6:20 pm)

Chantra Real, HR Assistant, Human Resources

Richard Wilkinson, Vice Chair