



City of Tacoma
Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries

Ronald Malm, Chair
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TO: Mayor Strickland and the Tacoma City Council
FROM: Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries
DATE: September 1st, 2017
SUBJECT: City of Tacoma Elected Officials Salary Decision

DECISION

The Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries decided at the Commission's August 7, 2017 meeting to set the annual salaries of City of Tacoma elected officials, effective January 1, 2018, as follows:

Mayor	\$100,000
Mayor Pro Tem	\$50,000
Council Member	\$45,000

VOTE Aye 4; Nay 1; Absent 2

The Commission's earlier decision of September 1, 2015 to eliminate the annual 2.75% increase in salaries for City elected officials remains unchanged. Termination of this annual increase process also goes into effect January 1, 2018.

DISCUSSION

Under provisions of the City Charter and state law, the Commission has the authority to set the salary and compensation of the Mayor and members of the City Council. The Commission's decisions must be implemented without modification.

With this action, the Commission decided largely to continue current levels of compensation into the coming terms of Tacoma elected officials. For comparison, the Mayor's annual salary in 2017 is \$101,483; Council Member annual salaries are \$46,010.

As background, in 2015, with less than a month to decide, the Commission set the Mayor's and Council's annual salaries for 2018 at \$78,000 and \$38,000, respectively. This was done based on the Commission's understanding of elected official salaries in other cities and with the commitment to conduct further research. In the discussion of that earlier decision, the Commission explicitly stated, "The majority [of the Commission] felt it was important to make a decision now, in a direction it believed most appropriate, and refine that decision after subsequent analysis."

The Commission's research since has included a survey of Tacoma elected officials and interviews with a former council member and the current Mayor. The Commission has also continued to monitor salaries of elected officials in other cities.

The decision on 2018 salaries is the fruition of this research and also reflects the following considerations:

1. Continuing recognition of the uniqueness of Tacoma, economically, geographically, and politically.
2. Balancing the desire to fairly recognize the demands placed on elected officials while recognizing that, in running for office, elected officials are also making an explicit commitment to public service.
3. Encouraging Tacoma citizens in all districts to not be dissuaded from running for public office for financial reasons.

Respectfully submitted:



Ronald Malm, Chair
Citizen Commission of Elected Salaries