

City of Tacoma Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries Richard Wiklinson, Chair Brandon Kindschy Klaus Nalley David Koenig Amanda Robison Patricia O'Connor Davlin Yarbrough

## MINUTES CITIZEN COMMISSION ON ELECTED SALARIES Virtual via Zoom \*Special Meeting\* Monday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

6:00 P.M.

# I. CALL TO ORDER: 6:04pm

II. ROLL CALL: HR Liaison Olson

## **PRESENT:**

**<u>Officers</u>:** Chair Wilkinson

<u>Members</u>: Klaus Nalley, Amanda Robison, Dalvin Yarbrough <u>Absent</u>: Brandon Kindschy, David Koenig, Patricia O'Connor

# **III.** APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 3, 2021 SPECIAL MEETING:

Motion to approve: Klaus Nalley

Second: Amanda Robison Ayes: Richard Wilkinson, Klaus Nalley, Amanda Robison, Dalvin Yarbrough Nayes: 0

## IV. 2022 DECISION BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

- City Budget Overview
- **i.** Kathryn Johnson from the City budget office was unable to attend to give her overview. Chair Wilkinson asks Human Resources Manager Jen Peters to cooberate that the budget situation is not as dire as was originally thought in 2020. Human Resources Manager Jen Peters admits that while she is not the subject matter expert on the budget, there has been an uptick and she believes there are some funds that have become available through the relief act. In terms of hiring, the impact was minimal and we have operations that have not been as impacted.
- **ii.** Chair Wilkinson points out that the budget for the City of Tacoma including the Utility is nearly 2 billion dollars.
- Comparative Information
- **i.** Comparative handout of similar cities is displayed. Chair Wilkinson states having a committee that sets salaries for elected officials has become fairly common in Washington State. He believes there was a state legislative act some time ago and also states that this Commissions existance is a direct result of the last review of the city charter.

733 Market Street, Tacdma, Washington 98402 Phone (253) 591-5400 http://cityoftacoma.org/cbc Fax (253) 591-5793

### Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries

ii. Chair Wilkinson shares market review spreadsheet and speaks to the Mayor/ Council form. Chair Wilkinson asks if there are any observations and if there is anything Human Resources Manager Jen Peters wants to draw attention to. Jen states that those who show Council/ Manager more closely reflect how the City of Tacoma operates. Which is a strong Mayor. Chair Wilkinson continues to reiterate how unique Tacoma is. He notes the 2019 median house hold income of \$63,000 as a historical reference point on what is fair for City Council Members. Human Resources Manager Jen Peters states this is a difficult figure to obtain and is updated every census. Commissioner Yarbrough asks if there are numbers on the cost of living as opposed to the median. Human Resources Manager Jen Peters states there is not a true cost living number, that the CPIW is representative of the cost of goods which tends to trend with cost of living. Another factor called cost of employment or ECI, Emplement Cost Index and that is really the trend of wages of employees. That number tends to be close to the COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) a lot of organizations use hat to adjust for a cost of living.

#### • Council Workload Information and Handout

**i.** Chair Wilkinson explains how he requested this information from Council to get a good idea of just how busy they are. We've had anecdotal the Council Members we have met with who have expressed it is a full time job on top of a full time job. He wanted to see how this spreadsheet aligns with that. How many committees and commission are our elected officials expected to participate on. On top of community meetings, community activities. He believes this documentation supports that workload. Historically have used .8 FTE although for benefits they are effected at .9. He feels this information supports what the Council Members have said. Commissioner Dalvin asks if there are certain council members on more committies than others. Chair Wilkinson states that Council Member Blocker and Thoms have 14 assignments each, Beale has 11, Ushka 13, Walker 11, McCarthy has 10, Hunter and Hines have 9 each. They Mayor as expected has quite a bit. Overall I feel this cooberates that they are elected for more than just City Council Meetings.

#### • Agreements ratified in the City

i. Chair Wilkinson says he is interested to see what's the pattern of raises, especially what non union employees are receiving going into 2022. Human Resources Manager Jen Peters cannot project the non rep as we are in the midst of a class and comp study and do not have final results. The numbers are trending from one to three percent, public safety aside. 483 Power is the largest barging unit. Clerical is also a fairly large contract, they had some market adjustments. Commission Nalley states he does not believe that three precent is out of line. It is asked who the City's smallest bargaining unit? Court Clerks. What percentage of the workforce is represented? Seventy five percent.

# V. 2022 ELECTED OFFICALS SALARIES

- Chair Wilksinson states that salaries have not been raised in the last couple of years. He refers to the transmittal form that will go to the City Clerk. It show the current salaries of the Mayor and City Council. He states his personal bias is that it is time for an increase. He asks for other Commissioners perspective.
- Commissioner Nalley states he was very impressed with the Mayor when she spoke with the Commission last year. The Council Members that we spoke with all put a lot of time and effort into position and understanding because of Covid we could not give a raise. The projects last year were initially doom and gloom and it is good to see the impact wasn't as substantial. With Vaccinations hopefully that means more of a rebound with places like the Tacoma Dome opening back up and parking. I think they have earned it. I don't think we can give them what they truly deserve. I was thinking three to four and half percent myself. Dalvin I am sorry you didn't get to hear the Mayor as she is a great ambassador for our City. We gotta do something.
- Commissioner Robison states there was no raise last year and feels they should get something, I think three percent sounds reasonable.
- Commissioner Yarbrough states there area a couple things to put into perspective. The work of the people on the Council is important but I think part of this should be concerning who is coming in after, as these salaries will outlive the Council. We need to think about it terms of these positions are available to whomever wants to run which means making sure people can survive on these wages. It is difficult to manage a job and be on the City Council. It is important to set the standard for whats to come down the line. I think it is important

that it is fair in relation to the other folks working and living in the City and region. The market rate spreadsheet was very helpful. I agree a raise is in line.

Motion for a four percent payraise across the board: Klaus Nalley Second: Dalvin Yarbrough Ayes: Chair Wilkinson, Klaus Nalley, Amanda Robison, Dalvin Yarbrough Naves: 0

### VI. REVIEW OF DECISION TRANSMITAL MESSAGE

- Chair Wilkinson states he will draft the memo with the new salaries to go to the City Clerk. He feels this is striking the balance of fairness and the workload. What would the Commission like to include in the memo what the decision was based on?
  - i. Commissioner Amanda Robison states the minimum hourly commitment along with the rising cost of living in the region.
  - **ii.** Commissioner Klaus Nalley states is a cautious responsible procedure. We are still in covid, this four percent shows the Commission is acting in the best interest of these positions not only now but in the future as well.
  - **iii.** Chair Wilkinson adds that the future component is very important. Being fair to the current elected officials but also create a situation where people will be interested in the opportunity to run for office going forward. This definitely effects if someone can afford to serve the community.

## VII. TOPIC FOR NOVEMBER 1, 2021 AGENDA

- Commissioner Yarbrough asks to see numbers on median wages going forward vs cost of living in the City.
- More comparative numbers from jurisdictions nearby
- Chair Wilkinson suggests a survery of other Salary Commissions and what Criteria they use to make decisions.
- Staff Liaison states there will be a new Commission to introduce as Patricia O'Connors term is ending September 30, 2021.
- The Commissioners decide a meeting in November is not necessary and agree to add agenda items to February 2022 meeting including inviting the Mayor as well.

## VIII. ADJORNMENT

Motion to adjorn: Klaus Nalley Second: Dalvin Yarbrough

Ayes: Richard Wilkinson, Klaus Nalley, Amanda Robison, Dalvin Yarbrough Nays: 0