

IMAGE: SYED RAZA ARIF



- CITIZENS COMMISSION ON ELECTED OFFICIAL COMPENSATION -

FINAL COMMITTEE REPORT

SUBMITTED TO MAYOR ANDREW J. GINTHER AND COLUMBUS CITY COUNCIL | NOVEMBER 2018



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
CITIZENS' COMMISSION
on Elected Official
Compensation

Printed In-house

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LETTER FROM THE COMMISSION

We have been honored to represent the citizens of the city of Columbus on the 2018 Citizens' Commission on Elected Official Compensation (Compensation Commission). The Compensation Commission was established in 2015 as a result of changes to the Columbus City Charter to ensure the process of reviewing and establishing elected official compensation is done in a transparent process and to remove the perception of politics in the setting of elected official compensation.

The Commission's charge is outlined in Section 15 of the Charter, and instructs us to review the salaries for like positions in the public sector and make recommendations for salaries appropriate to the duties and responsibilities of each elected officer of the city. At the end of our review, we make recommendations in a report submitted to the City Council for consideration. What follows is the culmination of this work. There has been significant deliberation and discussion and these recommendations were unanimously adopted by the Commission.

We believe our recommendations are fair and reasonable, and represent levels of compensation for Columbus' elected officials that reflect the work that they do on behalf of the citizens of this city. We encourage Columbus City Council to adopt these recommendations in their entirety.

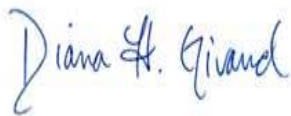
We appreciate Mayor Andrew Ginther and Council President Shannon G. Hardin providing us the opportunity to serve the city and are grateful to the staff of the mayor's administration, City Council, and City Attorney for all their support.



Fred L. Ransier, III, Chair



Joel Diaz, Commissioner



Diana Givand, Commissioner



Qiana Williams, Commissioner



Robert J. Weiler, Sr., Commissioner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Citizens' Commission on Elected Official Compensation (Compensation Commission) was created in 2015 as a result of changes to Section 15 of the City Charter approved by voters in November 2014. The Commission was created to create a more transparent and participatory process and remove a perception of politics in setting elected official compensation.

Section 15-3 of the Columbus City Charter requires the Commission to “conduct a review of salaries for like positions in the public sector. The review shall be made for the purpose of recommending salaries appropriate to the duties and responsibilities of each elective officer of the city.”¹

Section 15-4 of the Charter directs the Commission to “submit to the city clerk a report of recommendations for the salary of each elective officer of the city, including an annual cost of living adjustment which shall not exceed the average increase in the consumer price index, or successor thereto, during the preceding four years.”²

In January 2018, in accordance with Section 15-2 of the Charter, the Mayor and Council appointed a five member Compensation Commission. The members of Compensation Commission are:

- Fred L. Ransier, Chair, Partner, Vorys Sater Seymour and Pease
- Joel Diaz, Chief Marketing & Community Affairs Officer, Equitas Health
- Diana Givand, Associate, Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP
- Qiana Williams, Human Resources Director, OhioHealth
- Robert J. Weiler, Sr., Chair of the Board, The Robert Weiler Company

The Commissioners are all resident taxpayers of the City of Columbus, and possess an understanding of and experience in employment law, human resources and municipal governance. They are representative of a cross-section of Columbus residents, representing the public and private sectors, younger citizens and retirees, and the diversity of our City.

Because elected officials cannot benefit from any increase in salary during their current term in office, the Commission was tasked with making recommendations for salaries beginning January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2025. In addition, the City Attorney's office has interpreted the Columbus City Charter as prohibiting the staggering of any base salary increases meaning that a base salary increase can only occur in the first year of the recommendation time period. The Commission has grappled with the notion that it must utilize data from 2018 to recommend salaries that will not be implemented until January 1, 2022. To account for the gap between the data and implementation of its recommendations, the Commission made assumptions and estimations, a task which will, unfortunately, be repeated by each future Compensation Commission. First, the Commission assumed that the economy in Columbus will continue to grow, impacting the COLA that is added to the base salary that was established for each elected official by the 2015 Commission. In making this assumption, the Commission estimated an annual cost of living adjustment of 1.48% in 2019, 2020, and 2021. This figure represents the average COLA from 2014-2017

¹ Columbus City Charter Section 15-3 (Appendix A).

² Columbus City Charter Section 15-4 (Appendix A).

which is the most recent average available to the Commission. This estimate may be higher or lower than the actual COLA added to each salary on January 1st of 2019, 2020 and 2021. Thus, the salary that exists on December 31, 2021 may be different than those in the projections utilized by the Commission.³

The work of the 2018 Compensation Commission was informed by the work completed in 2015 by the first Compensation Commission. That Commission was charged with recommending compensation for elective officials for the years 2017 through the end of 2021. Following the 2015 Commission's report, Ordinance 3185-2015 was adopted by Columbus City Council on December 14, 2015 establishing compensation schedules for all city elected officials through the end of 2021. The first Commission's report was vital in pinpointing relevant data points and information most useful in evaluating potential salaries.

The Compensation Commission held seven meetings including one specifically intended to garner input and feedback from the public though public comment was accepted at any meeting.⁴ Considering one of the reasons to create the Commission was to increase accountability to the process of setting future compensation levels for elected officials, the participation and viewpoints of a variety of taxpayers and residents regarding the issues before the Commission were of vital importance. Following past practice, the Commission recorded its meetings, created a dedicated webpage on the City's website where anyone could submit email comments, and allowed the public an opportunity to be heard at every meeting. The Commission received one comment from the public the content of which is detailed in the meeting minutes.⁵

On September 13, 2018, the five member Commission unanimously voted on initial recommendations. As part of those recommendations, the Commission staggered an increase in the base salary of City Council President and City Council Member over four years. However, based upon an opinion from the City Attorney's office that the Commission is prohibited from increasing the base salary in any year other than 2022 (the first year of the cycle), the Commission met again on October 30, 2018 and adjusted its recommendations regarding these specific offices.

The Commission's recommendations are as follows:

Mayor: Effective 1/1/2022 - 2% increase in 2021 Base salary
 Effective 1/1/2023 - 2022 Base salary + COLA
 Effective 1/1/2024 - 2023 Base salary + COLA
 Effective 1/1/2025 - 2024 Base salary + COLA

City Council President: Effective 1/1/2022 – 20% increase in 2021 Base salary
 Effective 1/1/2023 – 2022 Base salary + COLA
 Effective 1/1/2024 – 2023 Base salary + COLA
 Effective 1/1/2025 – 2024 Base salary + COLA

³ Projected Salary Tables (Appendix B)

⁴ Commission Meeting Minutes (Appendix C)

⁵ *Id.*

City Council Member: Effective 1/1/2022 – 20% increase in 2021 Base salary
Effective 1/1/2023 – 2022 Base salary + COLA
Effective 1/1/2024 – 2023 Base salary + COLA
Effective 1/1/2025 – 2024 Base salary + COLA

City Attorney: Effective 1/1/2022 - 4% increase in 2021 Base salary
Effective 1/1/2023 - 2022 Base salary + COLA
Effective 1/1/2024 - 2023 Base salary + COLA
Effective 1/1/2025 - 2024 Base salary + COLA

City Auditor: Effective 1/1/2022 - 4% increase in 2021 Base salary
Effective 1/1/2023 - 2022 Base salary + COLA
Effective 1/1/2024 - 2023 Base salary + COLA
Effective 1/1/2025 - 2024 Base salary + COLA

The Commission also unanimously recommends that the annual cost of living increase provided to all city elected officials shall be equal to, but not exceed, the average increase in the CPI-U, All U.S. Cities, Size Class A, All Items, for the four years preceding the year in which the cost of living increase will be realized.

The Compensation Commission received the support of the following City of Columbus staff throughout the process:

- Cheryl Austin, Deputy Director of Communications, Columbus City Council
- Greg Beaverson, Compensation Manager, Columbus Department of Human Resources
- Michael S. Brown, Chief of Staff to the City Council President
- Jo Ellen Cline, Legal Analyst & Ethics Officer, Columbus City Council
- Lee Cole, Communications Director, Columbus City Council
- Josh Cox, Chief Counsel, Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein
- Matt Erickson, Senior Legislative Advisor, Columbus City Council
- Adam Friedman, Senior Policy Advisor, Mayor Andrew Ginther
- Lauren Herderick, Compensation Analyst, Columbus Department of Human Resources

MAYORAL COMPENSATION 2022-2026**RECOMMENDATIONS AND DATA ANALYSIS**

RECOMMENDATION: EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022 – INCREASE BASE SALARY THEN IN EFFECT BY 2%
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2023 – 2022 BASE SALARY + COLA
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024 – 2023 BASE SALARY + COLA
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025 – 2024 BASE SALARY + COLA

On September 13, 2018 the Citizens' Commission on Elected Official Compensation unanimously voted to recommend, beginning January 1, 2022, a 2% increase to the base salary then in effect as the mayor's base salary and a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023 – 2026. The Commission believed that the increase of 2% in 2022 to the mayor's base salary was justified given the responsibilities of the mayor in Columbus' strong mayor-council form of government.

Per Section 15 of the Charter, the mayor will receive a COLA in 2023 – 2026 based on the average COLA of the previous four years. The Commission recommends the COLA be calculated based upon the CPI-U, All U.S. Cities, Size A, All Items. This recommendation is based upon the presentation of Dr. Bill Lafayette provided to the Commission in July 2018.⁶

In 2018, when these recommendations are being made, it is impossible to state with specificity what the mayor's salary will be in 2021. This is a result of the previous Compensation Commission's recommendations to set a base salary for the year 2020 and then add a COLA to that base salary in 2021. Under Ordinance 3185-2015, the previous Commission set the mayor's salary at \$197,627 beginning January 21, 2020 and \$197,627 + COLA beginning January 21, 2021. Because this Commission cannot know the COLA that will be added to the mayor's salary on January 21, 2021 it is impossible to determine the exact amount of the mayor's salary as of December 31, 2021.

This makes determining a base salary for 2022 difficult and requires this Commission to make assumptions and estimations. Based upon recent averages in the CPI, the Commission has made the assumption that the mayor's salary on January 1, 2022 will be approximately \$205,571. This estimation is based upon a 1.48% COLA in each year that the COLA is added to the mayor's 2020 base. The estimated COLA of 1.48% is based upon the four year average of the CPI for the years 2013 – 2017.

The Commission recommendation to increase the mayor's base salary then in effect by 2% beginning January 1, 2022 is based upon these assumptions and estimations. The Commission, in contemplating a base salary figure for the mayor, wanted to achieve an amount of approximately \$210,000. A 2% increase to the estimated \$205,571 would result in a base salary figure of \$209,682. The Commission then recommends that the salary for each subsequent year (2023 – 2026) be calculated by adding the COLA to the previous year's salary.

Analysis of Peer Cities

Section 15-3 of the Columbus City Charter states, "The commission shall conduct a review of salaries for like positions in the public sector. The review shall be made for the purpose of recommending salaries appropriate to the duties and responsibilities of each elective officer of the city." Following this mandate,

⁶ Dr. Bill LaFayette, Ph.D., "The Consumer Price Index", July 14, 2018 (Appendix D)

the Commission analyzed data from 25 peer cities. Data was provided by the peer cities themselves, in response to a survey sent by the Commission, or was garnered from publicly accessible information.

The Commission noted that out of the 25 cities, Columbus is 4th most populous and, like a majority of the peer cities, does not allow the mayor to hold outside employment. Seven of the peer cities also employ a city manager who exercises substantial executive authority in the cities where they exist. In contrast, in Columbus, those duties are either the responsibility of the mayor or the mayor's chief of staff. Columbus' mayor is given a substantial amount of responsibility in the governance of the city including direct impact over the administrative structure of the city's government and oversight of the daily operations, through the city's departments.

City	Mayor Salary	Population	City Manager Y/N
Lexington	123,156	321,959	Yes
Minneapolis	126,528	422,331	No
Cincinnati	131,399	301,301	Yes
St. Louis	131,820	308,626	No
Cleveland	140,889	385,525	No
Milwaukee	147,336	595,351	No
Detroit	166,500	673,104	No
Memphis	170,817	652,236	No
Denver/ Denver County	171,897	704,621	No
Nashville/Davidson Co.	180,000	667,560	No
Columbus	186,722	879,170	No
Seattle	200,552	724,745	No

The Commission believes that the salary of the mayor should reflect the size of the populous that the mayor represents and the breadth and depth of the responsibilities of the office. Although the Commission understands that the responsibilities of the office of mayor are not directly proportional to the size of the city, the relative demand for services, the number of city employees, and the fiduciary responsibility of the mayor should have a bearing on compensation. When looking at the mayor's per capita base salary, the mayor earns \$.21 per person. Currently, Columbus ranks 16th out of 25 cities in terms of the mayor's per capita base salary which is 16% lower than the median. The Commission's recommendation also acknowledges the growth of Columbus in recent years and the likelihood that this trend will continue.

Conclusion

Based upon the foregoing factors, the Commission recommends a 2% increase to the mayor's base salary, then in effect, beginning January 1, 2022 and a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023 – 2026.

CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT 2022-2026**RECOMMENDATIONS AND DATA ANALYSIS**

RECOMMENDATION: EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022 – INCREASE BASE SALARY THEN IN EFFECT 20%
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2023 – 2022 BASE SALARY + COLA
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024 – 2023 BASE SALARY + COLA
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025 – 2024 BASE SALARY + COLA

On September 13, 2018 the Citizens' Commission on Elected Official Compensation unanimously voted to recommend an increase of 10% in the base salary then in effect for City Council President beginning January 1, 2022. The Commission also recommended a 5% increase in the base salary then in effect beginning January 1, 2023 and each subsequent January 1st through 2025. Finally, the Commission recommended an additional cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023–2026.

However, the Columbus City Attorney's Office interpreted the Columbus City Charter Section 15 and the original legislative intent of the Charter Review Commission that an increase to the base salary of an elected official in 2023 – 2025 is not permissible; therefore, the Compensation Commission cannot stagger the recommended 25% increase to the base salary over the 4 year period. The Commission decided to reconvene and further discuss the salaries of City Council President and City Council Members and on October 30, 2018 voted to modify its recommendation. The Commission reconsidered its original recommendation and unanimously recommended an increase of 20% in the base salary then in effect for Council President effective January 1, 2022 and an additional COLA for 2023-2026. . The Commission believed that an overall increase of 20% to the base salary was justified based upon the same factors as those for members of City Council (discussed below). The President of Council has the same responsibilities as a member of City Council and, in addition, takes on some administrative responsibilities regarding Council staff and operations.

In changing the percentage increase to the base salary of Council President from its original recommendation, the Commissioners noted that they intended a large increase in the base salary to act as a "catch-up" to salary levels to those in peer cities including Denver and Minneapolis. In addition, after reviewing the projections provided by staff, the Commissioners noted that a 20% increase in the base salary would, over the four year period of the Commission's recommendations, result in approximately a 25% increase when the COLA was included, thus honoring the Commission's original intention.

Per Section 15 of the Charter, the City Council President will receive a COLA in 2023 – 2026 based on the average COLA of the previous four years. The Commission recommends the COLA be calculated based upon the CPI-U, All U.S. Cities, Size A, All Items. This recommendation is based upon the presentation of Dr. Bill Lafayette provided to the Commission in July 2018.⁷

In 2018, when these recommendations are being made, it is impossible to state with specificity the Council President's salary in 2021. This is a result of the previous Compensation Commission's recommendations to set a base salary for the year 2018 and then add a COLA to that base salary in each succeeding year through 2021. Under Ordinance 3185-2015, the previous Commission set the salary for City Council President beginning January 1, 2018 at \$ 69,458 and \$ 69,458+ COLA/year beginning January 1, 2019. Because this Commission cannot know the COLA that will be added to the salary each year, it is impossible to determine the exact amount of the Council President's salary as of December 31, 2021.

⁷ Dr. Bill LaFayette, Ph.D. , "The Consumer Price Index", July 14, 2018 (Appendix D)

This makes determining a base salary for 2022 nearly impossible and requires this Commission to make assumptions and estimations. Based upon recent averages in the CPI, the Commission has made the assumption that the Council President's salary on January 1, 2022 will be approximately \$73,687. This estimation is based upon a 1.48% COLA each year the COLA is added to the 2018 base salary. The estimated COLA of 1.48% is based upon the four year average of the CPI for the years 2013 – 2017. Should the Commission's recommendation be implemented, the base salary of the Council President in 2025 will be approximately \$93,776. This figure does not account for the COLA that will be added to the base percentage increase so the total compensation figure will likely be higher.

Analysis of Peer Cities

Section 15-3 of the Columbus City Charter states, "The commission shall conduct a review of salaries for like positions in the public sector. The review shall be made for the purpose of recommending salaries appropriate to the duties and responsibilities of each elective officer of the city." Following this mandate, the Commission analyzed data from 25 peer cities. Data was provided by the peer cities themselves, in response to a survey sent by the Commission, or was garnered from publicly accessible information.

The Commission noted that out of the 25 cities, Columbus is 4th most populous and the base salary of the City Council President ranks 10th out of the peer cities. The base salary was 5% above the median for the peer cities; however, the per capita base salary of \$.08 per resident is 39% below the median. The Council President's salary is slightly higher than that of a member of Council reflecting the additional administrative and supervisory responsibilities of the position.

City	Council President	Designation	Outside Employment	
			Allowed	Employed
Nashville/Davidson Co.	17,000	Part-Time	Yes	None
Memphis	30,970	Part-Time	Yes	Most
Lexington	35,185	Full-Time	Yes	Most
Cincinnati	65,700	Full-Time	No	None
Columbus	69,451	Undefined	Yes	Most
Milwaukee	82,749	Full-Time	No	None
Detroit	82,776	Full-Time	No	None
Cleveland	90,133	Full-Time	No	None
St. Louis	90,766	Undefined	Yes	
Minneapolis	98,695	Full-Time	No	None
Denver/ Denver County	102,928	Full-Time	No	None
Seattle	123,359	Full-Time	No	None

The Commission, in considering the Council President salary, considered the same issues that were considered in analyzing a Council member's salary (see below). Currently, there are 125,596 residents per Councilmember in Columbus and the population is projected to continue growing. Section 4 of the Columbus City Charter was amended by the voters in 2018 to increase the size of City Council to 9 members beginning in January 2023 with members elected from districts but by all Columbus voters. So, despite the larger size of Council and the creation of districts for residency, Council members will still be elected by and represent all residents of Columbus. Commission members do not believe that the work involved in representing all the residents of the city will diminish with the changes taking place in 2023.

The peer cities studied by the Commission have a variety of Council structures including some of which utilize city managers, others which have a ceremonial Mayor, or still others, like Columbus, that have a strong mayor/council or mayor/council structure where the offices have some equity or parity in their authority over city government. In addition, restrictions for Council Members on whether or not they can hold outside employment vary from city to city. In many of the studied peer cities, the position of City Council member is specifically designated as full-time and members are prohibited from holding employment other than their Council position. Other cities specifically designate Council members as part-time and allow for outside employment. Finally, there are cities, like Columbus, that do not specify an employment status for Council; however, outside employment by City Council members is allowed.

As discussed in the recommendations regarding members of City Council (below), the position of City Council President is not designated in the City Charter or the City Code as full-time or part-time. The Commission had extensive conversations regarding whether or not designating an employment status for City Council would better reflect the responsibilities of the office. Recognizing that the required Charter amendment to effectuate such a change would be outside its purview, the Commission instead focused its discussion on what a suitable salary for Council President would be if they were expected to work full-time in public service and not hold outside employment. The Commission's salary recommendation recognizes the breadth and depth of the responsibilities of the office as a full-time job but does not suggest a prohibition on outside employment, nor a specific status designation.

Despite the Commission's discussions regarding employment status of Council members, because the mandate to the Commission is narrow, no recommendation is made regarding the employment status of City Council members or the Council President. It should be noted, however, that Commission members believed that adequately compensating the City Council President will minimize the need for outside employment to supplement income.

Conclusion

Based upon the foregoing factors, the Commission recommends an increase of 20% in the base salary of the Council President then in effect on January 1, 2022. Finally, the Commission recommends an additional cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023–2026.

CITY COUNCIL MEMBER 2022-2026

RECOMMENDATIONS AND DATA ANALYSIS

RECOMMENDATION: EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022 – INCREASE BASE SALARY THEN IN EFFECT 20%
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2023 – 2022 BASE SALARY + COLA
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024 – 2023 BASE SALARY + COLA
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025 – 2024 BASE SALARY + COLA

On September 13, 2018 the Citizens' Commission on Elected Official Compensation unanimously voted to recommend an increase of 10% in the base salary then in effect for a member of City Council beginning January 1, 2022. The Commission also recommended a 5% increase in the base salary then in effect beginning January 1, 2023 and each subsequent January 1st through 2025. Finally, the Commission recommended an additional cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023–2026. Because the workload of Council members, the upcoming change in Council structure, the growth of the city and the projected population growth, Commissioners believed that Councilmembers' base salary needed a significant increase. Commissioners felt that a significant increase for the years 2022–2026 would allow the Council members' salary to "catch-up" to levels that accurately reflect the responsibilities of the office. Staggering the larger percentage increase over the 2022-2026 time period was intended to mitigate the budgetary impact of the recommendation.

However, the Columbus City Attorney's Office interpreted the Columbus City Charter Section 15 and the original legislative intent of the Charter Review Commission that an increase to the base salary of an elected official in 2023 – 2025 is not permissible; therefore, the Compensation Commission cannot stagger the recommended 25% increase to the base salary over the 4 year period. The Commission decided to reconvene to discuss its recommendations regarding City Council President and City Council Members. The Commission reconsidered its original recommendation and unanimously recommended an increase of 20% in the base salary then in effect for Council Members effective January 1, 2022 and an additional COLA for 2023-2026.

In changing the percentage increase to the base salary of Council Member from its original recommendation, the Commissioners noted that they intended a large increase in the base salary to act as a "catch-up" to salary levels to those in peer cities including Denver and Minneapolis. In addition, after reviewing the projections provided by staff, the Commissioners noted that a 20% increase in the base salary would, over the four year period of the Commission's recommendations, result in approximately a 25% increase when the COLA was included, thus honoring the Commission's original intention.

Per Section 15 of the Charter, members of City Council will receive a COLA in 2023 – 2026 based on the average COLA of the previous four years. The Commission recommends the COLA be calculated based upon the CPI-U, All U.S. Cities, Size A, All Items. This recommendation is based upon the presentation of Dr. Bill Lafayette provided to the Commission in July 2018.⁸

In 2018, when these recommendations are being made, it is impossible to state with specificity a member of Council's salary in 2021. This is a result of the previous Compensation Commission's recommendations to set a base salary for the year 2018 and then add a COLA to that base salary in in each succeeding year through 2021. Under Ordinance 3185-2015, the previous Commission set the salary for members of City Council beginning January 1, 2018 at \$57,738 and \$57,738+ COLA/year beginning January 1, 2019. Because

⁸ Dr. Bill LaFayette, Ph.D. , "The Consumer Price Index", July 14, 2018 (Appendix D)

this Commission cannot know the COLA that will be added to the salary each year, it is impossible to determine the exact amount of a council member's salary as of December 31, 2021.

This makes determining a base salary for 2022 nearly impossible and requires this Commission to make assumptions and estimations. Based upon recent averages in the CPI, the Commission has made the assumption that the members' salaries on December 31, 2021 will be approximately \$61,257. This estimation is based upon a 1.48% COLA added to the 2018 base salary each year. The estimated COLA of 1.48% is based upon the four year average of the CPI for the years 2013 – 2017. Should the Commission's recommendation be implemented, the base salary of a Council member in 2025 will be approximately \$77,958. This figure does not account for the COLA that will be added to the base percentage increase so the total compensation figure will likely be higher. The Commission recommendation is based upon these assumptions and estimations.

Analysis of Peer Cities

Section 15-3 of the Columbus City Charter states, "The commission shall conduct a review of salaries for like positions in the public sector. The review shall be made for the purpose of recommending salaries appropriate to the duties and responsibilities of each elective officer of the city." Following this mandate, the Commission analyzed data from 25 peer cities. Data was provided by the peer cities themselves, in response to a survey sent by the Commission, or was garnered from publicly accessible information.

The Commission noted that out of the 25 cities, Columbus is 4th most populous and the base salary of a city council member ranks 13th out of the peer cities. The base salary was the median for the peer cities; however, the per capita base salary of \$.07 per resident is 30% below the median. Currently, there are 125,596 residents per Councilmember in Columbus and the population is projected to continue growing. Section 4 of the Columbus City Charter was amended by the voters in 2018 to increase the size of City Council to 9 members beginning in January 2023 with members elected from districts but by all Columbus voters. So, despite the larger size of Council and the creation of districts for residency, Commission members will still be elected by and represent all residents of Columbus. Commission members do not believe that the work involved in representing all the residents of the city will diminish with the changes taking place in 2023.

City	Council Member	Designation	Outside Employment	
			Allowed	Employed
Nashville/Davidson Co.	15,000	Part-Time	Yes	None
Memphis	29,070	Part-Time	Yes	Most
Lexington	32,266	Full-Time	Yes	Most
Columbus	57,741	Undefined	Yes	Most
Cincinnati	65,700	Full-Time	No	None
Milwaukee	73,222	Full-Time	No	None
Detroit	78,761	Full-Time	No	None
Cleveland	80,133	Full-Time	No	None
St. Louis	87,310	Undefined	Yes	
Denver/ Denver County	91,915	Full-Time	No	None
Minneapolis	98,695	Full-Time	No	None
Seattle	123,359	Full-Time	No	None

The peer cities studied by the Commission have a variety of Council structures including some of which utilize city managers, others which have a ceremonial Mayor, or still others, like Columbus, that have a

strong mayor/council or mayor/council structure where the offices have some equity or parity in their authority over city government. In addition, restrictions for Council Members on whether or not they can hold outside employment vary from city to city. In many of the studied peer cities, the position of City Council member is specifically designated as a full-time and members are prohibited from holding employment other than their Council position. Other cities specifically designate Council members as part-time and allow for outside employment. Finally, there are cities, like Columbus, that do not specify an employment status for Council; however, outside employment by City Council members is allowed.

Neither the current Columbus City Charter, nor the City Code, addresses the employment status of Columbus City Council. The Commission had extensive conversations regarding whether or not designating an employment status for members of City Council would better reflect the responsibilities of the office. Recognizing that the required Charter amendment to effectuate such a change would be outside its purview, the Commission instead focused its discussion on what a suitable salary for a member of Council would be if that Councilmember were expected to work full-time in public service and not hold outside employment. Despite the Commission's discussions, because the mandate to the Commission is narrow, no recommendation is made regarding the employment status of City Council members.

The salary recommendation recognizes the breadth and depth of the responsibilities of members of City Council. It should be noted, however, that Commission members believed that adequately compensating Council members for their work will minimize the need for member's to seek outside employment to supplement their income.

Conclusion

Based upon the foregoing factors, the Commission recommends an increase of 20% in the base salary of the Council Member then in effect on January 1, 2022. Finally, the Commission recommends an additional cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023–2026.

CITY ATTORNEY 2022-2026**RECOMMENDATIONS AND DATA ANALYSIS**

RECOMMENDATION: EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022 – INCREASE SALARY THEN IN EFFECT BY 4%
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2023 – 2022 BASE SALARY + COLA
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024 – 2023 BASE SALARY + COLA
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025 – 2024 BASE SALARY + COLA

On September 13, 2018 the Citizens' Commission on Elected Official Compensation unanimously voted to recommend increasing the city attorney's base salary 4% on January 1, 2022 and a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023 – 2026. The Commission believed that the increase of 4% in 2022 to the city attorney's base salary was justified because Columbus needs to retain and attract talent given the responsibilities of the office.

Per Section 15 of the Charter, the city attorney would receive a COLA in 2023 – 2026 based on the average COLA of the previous four years. The COLA will be calculated based upon the CPI –U, All U.S. Cities, Size A, All Items. This recommendation is based upon the presentation of Dr. Bill Lafayette provided to the Commission in July 2018.⁹

In 2018, when these recommendations are being made, it is impossible to state with specificity what the city attorney's salary will be in 2021. This is a result of the previous Compensation Commission's recommendations to set a base salary for the year 2018 and then add a COLA to that base salary in each succeeding year through 2021. Under Ordinance 3185-2015, the previous Commission set the city attorney's salary beginning January 1, 2018 at \$184,600 and \$184,600 + COLA/year beginning January 1, 2019. Because this Commission cannot know the COLA that will be added to the city attorney's salary each year, it is impossible to determine the exact amount of the city attorney's salary as of December 31, 2021.

This makes determining a base salary for 2022 difficult and requires this Commission to make assumptions and estimations. Based upon recent averages in the CPI, the Commission has made the assumption that the city attorney's salary on December 31, 2021 will be approximately \$195,842. This estimation is based upon a 1.48% COLA added to the city attorney's 2018 base salary each year. The estimated COLA of 1.48% is based upon the four year average of the CPI for the years 2013 – 2017.

Based upon these assumptions and estimations, the Commission recommendation to increase the city attorney's base salary by 4% beginning January 1, 2022 would result in an approximate salary of \$206,290. The Commission then recommends that the salary for each subsequent year (2023 – 2026) be calculated by adding the COLA to the previous year's salary.

Analysis of Peer Cities

Section 15-3 of the Columbus City Charter states, "The commission shall conduct a review of salaries for like positions in the public sector. The review shall be made for the purpose of recommending salaries appropriate to the duties and responsibilities of each elective officer of the city." Following this mandate, the Commission analyzed data from 25 peer cities. Data was provided by the peer cities themselves, in response to a survey sent by the Commission, or was garnered from publicly accessible information.

⁹ Dr. Bill LaFayette, Ph.D. , "The Consumer Price Index", July 14, 2018 (Appendix D)

City	City Attorney Salary	Population	Salary Per Capita
Memphis	92,264	652,236	\$.14
St. Louis	110,838	308,626	\$.36
Nashville/Davidson Co.	129,611	667,560	\$.19
Lexington	137,074	321,959	\$.42
Milwaukee	147,336	595,351	\$.25
Detroit	154,981	673,104	\$.23
Seattle	170,631	724,745	\$.23
Cincinnati	170,634	301,301	\$.56
Cleveland	170,634	385,525	\$.44
Columbus	184,600	879,170	\$.21
Minneapolis	186,490	422,331	\$.44
Denver/ Denver County	196,650	704,621	\$.28

The Commission noted that out of the 25 cities, Columbus is 4th most populous and the base salary of the city attorney ranks 11th out of the peer cities and is 5% higher than the median. The Commission believes the salary of the city attorney should reflect the breadth and depth of the responsibilities of the office. Although the Commission understands that the responsibilities of the office of city attorney are not directly proportional to the size of the city, the relative demand for services and the fiduciary responsibility of the city attorney should have a bearing on compensation. When looking at the city attorney's per capita base salary, the city attorney makes \$.21 per resident of Columbus. Currently, Columbus ranks 18th out of 23 cities in terms of the city attorney per capita base salary which is 25% lower than the median salary. The Commission's recommendation is also based upon the growth of Columbus in recent years, the likelihood that this trend will continue and the desire to attract experienced, mid-career attorneys, who would earn far greater salaries in the private sector.

Conclusion

Based upon the foregoing factors, the Commission recommends increasing the city attorney's base salary by 4% beginning January 1, 2022 and a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023 – 2026.

CITY AUDITOR 2022-2026

RECOMMENDATIONS AND DATA ANALYSIS

RECOMMENDATION: EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022 – INCREASE SALARY THEN IN EFFECT BY 4%
 EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2023 – 2022 BASE SALARY + COLA
 EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024 – 2023 BASE SALARY + COLA
 EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025 – 2024 BASE SALARY + COLA

On September 13, 2018 the Citizens' Commission on Elected Official Compensation unanimously voted to recommend increasing the city auditor's base salary by 4% beginning January 1, 2022 and a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2023 – 2026. The Commission believed that the increase of 4% in 2022 to the city auditor's base salary was justified to retain and attract talent to the office.

Per Section 15 of the Charter, the city auditor would receive a COLA in 2023 – 2026 based on the average COLA of the previous four years. The COLA should be calculated based upon the CPI –U, All U.S. Cities, Size A, All Items. This recommendation is based upon the presentation of Dr. Bill Lafayette provided to the Commission in July 2018.¹⁰

In 2018, when these recommendations are being made, it is impossible to state with specificity what the city auditor's salary will be in 2021. This is a result of the previous Compensation Commission's recommendations to set a base salary for the year 2018 and then add a COLA to that base salary in each succeeding year through 2021. Under Ordinance 3185-2015, the previous Commission set the city auditor's salary beginning January 1, 2018 at \$184,600 and \$184,600 + COLA/year beginning January 1, 2019. Because this Commission cannot know the COLA that will be added to the city auditor's salary each year, it is impossible to determine the exact amount of the city auditor's salary as of December 31, 2021.

This makes determining a base salary for 2022 very difficult and requires this Commission to make assumptions and estimations. Based upon recent averages in the CPI, the Commission has made the assumption that the city auditor's salary on December 31, 2021 will be approximately \$195,842. This estimation is based upon a 1.48% COLA added to the city auditor's 2018 base each year. The estimated COLA of 1.48% is based upon the four year average of the CPI for the years 2013 – 2017.

Based upon these assumptions and estimations, the Commission recommendation to increase the city auditor's base salary 4% will result in an approximate salary of \$206,290 beginning January 1, 2022. The Commission then recommends that the salary for each subsequent year (2023 – 2026) be calculated by adding the COLA to the previous year's salary.

Analysis of Peer Cities

Section 15-3 of the Columbus City Charter states, "The commission shall conduct a review of salaries for like positions in the public sector. The review shall be made for the purpose of recommending salaries appropriate to the duties and responsibilities of each elective officer of the city." Following this mandate, the Commission analyzed data from 25 peer cities. Data was provided by the peer cities themselves, in response to a survey sent by the Commission, or was garnered from publicly accessible information.

The Commission noted that out of the 25 cities, Columbus is 4th most populous and the base salary of the city auditor ranks 1st out of the peer cities and is 50% higher than the median. Because per capita salary was important to the Commission when evaluating the other elected officials' salaries they also looked at

¹⁰ Dr. Bill LaFayette, Ph.D., "The Consumer Price Index", July 14, 2018 (Appendix D)

this data for the city auditor. The Columbus city auditor's salary per capita is the median salary per capita for auditors in the peer group: \$.21 per resident.

City	City Auditor Salary	Population	Salary Per Capita
Cleveland	64,613	385,525	\$.17
Cincinnati	86,784	301,301	\$.29
Nashville/Davidson Co.	94,755	667,560	\$.14
Memphis	104,540	652,236	\$.16
St. Louis	112,190	308,626	\$.36
Minneapolis	119,506	422,331	\$.28
Milwaukee	125,607	595,351	\$.21
Lexington	131,364	321,959	\$.41
Denver/ Denver County	148,061	704,621	\$.21
Detroit	154,981	673,104	\$.23
Seattle	155,882	724,745	\$.22
Columbus	184,600	879,170	\$.21

The Commission believes that the salary of the city auditor should reflect the breadth and depth of the responsibilities of the office but also understands that the 2015 Commission made two observations when setting the salary schedule for the city auditor: 1) the city auditor and city attorney have historically made equivalent salaries; and 2) the auditor in 2015 had been the auditor for nearly fifty years and deserved recognition for his service. This Commission is constrained by neither of those factors. After discussion regarding this parity in salary, the Commission voted unanimously to maintain this practice in its recommendations. However, the Commission does not believe that the auditor and city attorney must be compensated equally and encourages future Compensation Commissions to continue to review compensation parity for these offices.

As mandated by the Charter, the Commission is tasked with making recommendations based upon its findings of appropriate compensation based upon the duties and responsibilities of the office. The Commission did note during its deliberations that the Columbus City Auditor makes significantly more than those in peer cities. However, the Commission also recognizes that the auditor position in Columbus is far more similar to the Chief Financial Officer of a major corporation than a traditional auditor role. As such the office is a vital part of ensuring the continued growth for Columbus and the Commission wishes to ensure that strong, experienced leadership continues into the future by maintaining a competitive salary.

Conclusion

Based upon the foregoing factors, the Commission recommends increasing the city auditor's base salary by 4% beginning January 1, 2022 and the addition of a cost of living adjustment each subsequent year (2023 – 2026).

APPENDIX A**Columbus City Charter****Sec. 15. - Compensation of officers and employees.**

Subject to the provision of this charter as to the salary of council members, the auditor, the city attorney, and the mayor, council shall fix by ordinance the salary or compensation of all officers and employees of the city government. The salary or compensation so fixed shall be uniform for like service. All such salaries and rates of pay shall be reported to the civil service commission forthwith. The salary of any officer, employee, or member of a board or commission in the unclassified service of the city who was elected or appointed for a definite term shall not be increased or diminished during the term for which the individual was elected or appointed, and all fees pertaining to any office shall be paid into the city treasury.

Sec. 15-1. - Citizens' commission on elected official compensation.

The salary of all elective officers provided for in this charter shall be established by ordinance upon recommendation from a citizens' commission on elected official compensation. (Ord. No. 1749-2014, 7-21-2014)

Sec. 15-2. - Commission membership.

The citizens' commission on elected official compensation shall consist of five members, who shall be qualified electors of the city, shall not hold any other office or employment in the city government, and shall serve without compensation. Two members shall be appointed by the council, two members shall be appointed by the mayor, and one member shall be jointly appointed by the council and the mayor, such member serving as chair of the commission. Such appointments shall take place at the second regular meeting of council in 2018 and of each succeeding fourth year thereafter; except that the first commission shall be appointed at the second regular meeting of council in 2015. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as prescribed for the original appointment. The commission shall be considered a public body. (Ord. No. 1749-2014, 7-21-2014)

Sec. 15-3. - Commission duties.

The commission shall conduct a review of salaries for like positions in the public sector. The review shall be made for the purpose of recommending salaries appropriate to the duties and responsibilities of each elective officer of the city. (Ord. No. 1749-2014, 7-21-2014)

Sec. 15-4. - Commission report.

Within three months of appointment, the commission shall submit to the city clerk a report of recommendations for the salary of each elective officer of the city, including an annual cost of living adjustment which shall not exceed the average increase in the consumer price index, or successor

thereto, during the preceding four years. If the commission fails to timely submit the report, the council may compel a meeting of the commission to prepare and submit the same. (Ord. No. 1749-2014, 7-21-2014)

Sec. 15-5. - Council action to establish salaries.

After the report is submitted, council shall by ordinance either accept the commission recommendations or any portion thereof, or reject the same. If council rejects the recommendations, the salaries then in effect shall remain unchanged. In no event may council adopt an ordinance establishing salaries which exceed the recommendations of the commission.

APPENDIX B - PROJECTED SALARY TABLES

Mayor Projected Salary Table (1.48% COLA Added to Base Salary)						
2021 Base 205,571	2022 1.48% COLA	2023 1.48% COLA	2024 1.48% COLA	2025 1.48% COLA	4-Year Percentage Change	Average Annual Increase
0%	208,613	211,701	214,834	218,014	5%	1%
1%	210,700	213,818	216,982	220,194	6%	1%
2%	212,786	215,935	219,131	222,374	7%	2%
3%	214,872	218,052	221,279	224,554	8%	2%
4%	216,958	220,169	223,427	226,734	9%	2%
5%	219,044	222,286	225,576	228,914	10%	2%
6%	221,130	224,403	227,724	231,094	11%	3%
7%	223,216	226,520	229,872	233,275	12%	3%
8%	225,303	228,637	232,021	235,455	13%	3%
9%	227,389	230,754	234,169	237,635	14%	3%
10%	229,475	232,871	236,318	239,815	15%	4%
11%	231,561	234,988	238,466	241,995	16%	4%
12%	233,647	237,105	240,614	244,175	17%	4%
13%	235,733	239,222	242,763	246,355	18%	5%
14%	237,819	241,339	244,911	248,536	19%	5%
15%	239,905	243,456	247,059	250,716	20%	5%
16%	241,992	245,573	249,208	252,896	21%	5%
17%	244,078	247,690	251,356	255,076	22%	6%
18%	246,164	249,807	253,504	257,256	23%	6%
19%	248,250	251,924	255,653	259,436	24%	6%
20%	250,336	254,041	257,801	261,616	25%	6%
21%	252,422	256,158	259,949	263,797	26%	7%
22%	254,508	258,275	262,098	265,977	27%	7%
23%	256,595	260,392	264,246	268,157	29%	7%
24%	258,681	262,509	266,394	270,337	30%	7%
25%	260,767	264,626	268,543	272,517	31%	8%

Council President Projected Salary Table (1.48% COLA Added to Base Salary)						
2021 Base 73,687	2022 1.48% COLA	2023 1.48% COLA	2024 1.48% COLA	2025 1.48% COLA	4-Year Percentage Change	Average Annual Increase
0%	74,778	75,884	77,007	78,147	5%	1%
1%	75,525	76,643	77,777	78,929	6%	1%
2%	76,273	77,402	78,548	79,710	7%	2%
3%	77,021	78,161	79,318	80,491	8%	2%
4%	77,769	78,920	80,088	81,273	9%	2%
5%	78,516	79,678	80,858	82,054	10%	2%
6%	79,264	80,437	81,628	82,836	11%	3%
7%	80,012	81,196	82,398	83,617	12%	3%
8%	80,760	81,955	83,168	84,399	13%	3%
9%	81,508	82,714	83,938	85,180	14%	3%
10%	82,255	83,473	84,708	85,962	15%	4%
11%	83,003	84,232	85,478	86,743	16%	4%
12%	83,751	84,990	86,248	87,525	17%	4%
13%	84,499	85,749	87,018	88,306	18%	5%
14%	85,246	86,508	87,788	89,088	19%	5%
15%	85,994	87,267	88,558	89,869	20%	5%
16%	86,742	88,026	89,329	90,651	21%	5%
17%	87,490	88,785	90,099	91,432	22%	6%
18%	88,238	89,543	90,869	92,214	23%	6%
19%	88,985	90,302	91,639	92,995	24%	6%
20%	89,733	91,061	92,409	93,776	25%	6%
21%	90,481	91,820	93,179	94,558	26%	7%
22%	91,229	92,579	93,949	95,339	27%	7%
23%	91,976	93,338	94,719	96,121	29%	7%
24%	92,724	94,097	95,489	96,902	30%	7%
25%	93,472	94,855	96,259	97,684	31%	8%

Councilmember Projected Salary Table (1.48% COLA Added to Base Salary)

2021 Base 61,257	2022 1.48% COLA	2023 1.48% COLA	2024 1.48% COLA	2025 1.48% COLA	4-Year Percentage Change	Average Annual Increase
0%	62,164	63,084	64,017	64,965	5%	1%
1%	62,785	63,714	64,657	65,614	6%	1%
2%	63,407	64,345	65,298	66,264	7%	2%
3%	64,029	64,976	65,938	66,914	8%	2%
4%	64,650	65,607	66,578	67,563	9%	2%
5%	65,272	66,238	67,218	68,213	10%	2%
6%	65,893	66,869	67,858	68,863	11%	3%
7%	66,515	67,499	68,498	69,512	12%	3%
8%	67,137	68,130	69,139	70,162	13%	3%
9%	67,758	68,761	69,779	70,812	14%	3%
10%	68,380	69,392	70,419	71,461	15%	4%
11%	69,002	70,023	71,059	72,111	16%	4%
12%	69,623	70,654	71,699	72,760	17%	4%
13%	70,245	71,284	72,340	73,410	18%	5%
14%	70,867	71,915	72,980	74,060	19%	5%
15%	71,488	72,546	73,620	74,709	20%	5%
16%	72,110	73,177	74,260	75,359	21%	5%
17%	72,731	73,808	74,900	76,009	22%	6%
18%	73,353	74,439	75,540	76,658	23%	6%
19%	73,975	75,070	76,181	77,308	24%	6%
20%	74,596	75,700	76,821	77,958	25%	6%
21%	75,218	76,331	77,461	78,607	26%	7%
22%	75,840	76,962	78,101	79,257	27%	7%
23%	76,461	77,593	78,741	79,907	29%	7%
24%	77,083	78,224	79,381	80,556	30%	7%
25%	77,705	78,855	80,022	81,206	31%	8%

City Attorney Projected Salary Table (1.99% COLA Added to Base Salary)						
2021 Base 195,842	2022 1.48% COLA	2023 1.48% COLA	2024 1.48% COLA	2025 1.48% COLA	4-Year Percentage Change	Average Annual Increase
0%	198,740	201,682	204,667	207,696	5%	1%
1%	200,728	203,699	206,713	209,773	6%	1%
2%	202,715	205,715	208,760	211,850	7%	2%
3%	204,703	207,732	210,807	213,927	8%	2%
4%	206,690	209,749	212,853	216,004	9%	2%
5%	208,677	211,766	214,900	218,081	10%	2%
6%	210,665	213,783	216,947	220,158	11%	3%
7%	212,652	215,800	218,993	222,234	12%	3%
8%	214,640	217,816	221,040	224,311	13%	3%
9%	216,627	219,833	223,087	226,388	14%	3%
10%	218,615	221,850	225,133	228,465	15%	4%
11%	220,602	223,867	227,180	230,542	16%	4%
12%	222,589	225,884	229,227	232,619	17%	4%
13%	224,577	227,900	231,273	234,696	18%	5%
14%	226,564	229,917	233,320	236,773	19%	5%
15%	228,552	231,934	235,367	238,850	20%	5%
16%	230,539	233,951	237,413	240,927	21%	5%
17%	232,526	235,968	239,460	243,004	22%	6%
18%	234,514	237,985	241,507	245,081	23%	6%
19%	236,501	240,001	243,553	247,158	24%	6%
20%	238,489	242,018	245,600	249,235	25%	6%
21%	240,476	244,035	247,647	251,312	26%	7%
22%	242,463	246,052	249,693	253,389	27%	7%
23%	244,451	248,069	251,740	255,466	29%	7%
24%	246,438	250,085	253,787	257,543	30%	7%
25%	248,426	252,102	255,833	259,620	31%	8%

City Auditor Projected Salary Table (1.48% COLA Added to Base Salary)						
2021 Base 195,842	2022 1.48% COLA	2023 1.48% COLA	2024 1.48% COLA	2025 1.48% COLA	4-Year Percentage Change	Average Annual Increase
0%	198,740	201,682	204,667	207,696	5%	1%
1%	200,728	203,699	206,713	209,773	6%	1%
2%	202,715	205,715	208,760	211,850	7%	2%
3%	204,703	207,732	210,807	213,927	8%	2%
4%	206,690	209,749	212,853	216,004	9%	2%
5%	208,677	211,766	214,900	218,081	10%	2%
6%	210,665	213,783	216,947	220,158	11%	3%
7%	212,652	215,800	218,993	222,234	12%	3%
8%	214,640	217,816	221,040	224,311	13%	3%
9%	216,627	219,833	223,087	226,388	14%	3%
10%	218,615	221,850	225,133	228,465	15%	4%
11%	220,602	223,867	227,180	230,542	16%	4%
12%	222,589	225,884	229,227	232,619	17%	4%
13%	224,577	227,900	231,273	234,696	18%	5%
14%	226,564	229,917	233,320	236,773	19%	5%
15%	228,552	231,934	235,367	238,850	20%	5%
16%	230,539	233,951	237,413	240,927	21%	5%
17%	232,526	235,968	239,460	243,004	22%	6%
18%	234,514	237,985	241,507	245,081	23%	6%
19%	236,501	240,001	243,553	247,158	24%	6%
20%	238,489	242,018	245,600	249,235	25%	6%
21%	240,476	244,035	247,647	251,312	26%	7%
22%	242,463	246,052	249,693	253,389	27%	7%
23%	244,451	248,069	251,740	255,466	29%	7%
24%	246,438	250,085	253,787	257,543	30%	7%
25%	248,426	252,102	255,833	259,620	31%	8%

APPENDIX C – COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**Meeting Minutes for the Citizens' Commission on Elected Officials Compensation**

July 16, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

Columbus City Hall, Conference Room 225

Attendance:

- Fred L. Ransier III, Commission Chair
- Diana Givand, Commissioner
- Qiana Williams, Commissioner
- Robert J. Weiler, Sr., Commissioner
- Joel Diaz, Commissioner (via telephone)
- Greg Beaverson, Compensation Manager, Department of Human Resources
- Adam Friedman, Office of Mayor Andrew J. Ginther
- Jo Ellen Cline, Legal Analyst & Ethics Officer, Columbus City Council
- Lauren Herderick, Columbus Department of Human Resources
- Dr. Bill Lafayette, Regionomics LLC, Presenter

Chair Ransier called the meeting to order and asked the Commission members and staff members to introduce themselves.

Dr. Bill Lafayette, owner of Regionomics LLC, spoke to the Commission regarding the consumer price index (CPI). Dr. Lafayette explained what the CPI measure, how it is calculated and which CPI should be used in benchmarking compensation. He detailed some of the problems with the CPI including changes in the quality of the underlying goods being used and the shifting of purchasing patterns over time. These problems result in use of the "chained CPI" which changes the weights on goods and services measured based upon the monthly Consumer Expenditure Survey. However, the chained CPI is not a good idea for compensation because it requires a formalized process to adjust compensation after it is released and could result in a downward adjustment. Commissioners, in considering Dr. Lafayette's testimony, asked if the salary of an elected official could be lowered during their term. Staff will research this question.

Dr. Lafayette suggested that the Commission consider utilizing the CPI-U, Size Class A, All Items and a national average for large regions nationwide for its purposes. According to his presentation (available in the Commission materials) the four-year average would be 1.48%. With no further questions from Commissioners, Chair Ransier thanked Dr. Lafayette for his presentation.

Mr. Beaverson then presented the Commissioners with the results of the peer city survey. He started with an overview of the definition of "market" and noted that some of the peer elected officials may have different job responsibilities, might be part-time and not full-time, or may have voluntarily reduced their pay. For these reasons, the median salary information is most useful in determining the market for a

particular job. He also noted that it is a best practice in compensation to have a “market window” that is plus or minus 5% to plus or minus 10% of the market amount.

Mr. Beaverson then presented the results of the peer city survey. Chair Ransier asked for a comparison of the median line in 2015 versus 2018. Mr. Friedman gave one example of the median line for the mayor/city manager. A comparison chart will be available at the next meeting. Ms. Williams asked for a comparison of the roles and responsibilities of a mayor and a city manager. The same information was requested by Chair Ransier for the Auditor and Comptroller positions. Ms. Williams asked if all Council Members are paid the same or if there is a difference in salary based upon the number of years in service. Mr. Beaverson answered that, in Columbus, all Council Members have the same salary except for the Council President regardless of the number of years they have served on Council. Research will be done to determine if any of the peer cities pay Council Members based on years in service.

Ms. Williams asked if staff had broadened the market for the City Attorney position or Auditor position. Ms. Givand opined that there may be a need to look at other attorneys or auditors because those positions require a specialized skill set and the Commission should, perhaps, set a premium for those special skills.

Chair Ransier asked for a comparison of salaries in relation to the peer cities’ budgets. Staff will provide that analysis at the next meeting. Ms. Williams asked if staff made any analysis of the survey results. Mr. Beaverson answered that staff only wanted to provide the data to the Commissioners.

Chair Ransier asked if the size of the City Council played any part in the calculus of the 2015 Commission. Staff responded that there is no indication that number of Council members played a significant role in that Commission’s deliberations. This led Chair Ransier to discuss the passage of Issue 3 earlier this year which will add two additional City Council members beginning January 1, 2024. Because the Commission will be setting salaries beginning January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2025, the addition of two new members must be considered in the Commission’s discussions. Mr. Friedman talked about the Charter Review Commission and the philosophy behind adding two more members. Ms. Williams stated that it felt like adding two members doesn’t lessen any member’s workload but just gets Columbus closer to the median for number of Council members. Staff will provide the Commission with further background, including the ballot language, at its next meeting.

Chair Ransier announced that the next meeting would be on July 26, 2018 at 12:00 p.m. and thanked staff for their work. Mr. Beaverson thanked Ms. Herderick for her work in tracking down survey responses. With no further business to discuss, Chair Ransier adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Minutes for the Citizens' Commission on Elected Officials Compensation

July 26, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

Columbus City Hall, Conference Room 225

Attendance:

- Fred L. Ransier III, Commission Chair
- Joel Diaz, Commissioner
- Diana Givand, Commissioner
- Robert J. Weiler, Sr., Commissioner
- Greg Beaverson, Compensation Manager, Department of Human Resources
- Jo Ellen Cline, Legal Analyst & Ethics Officer, Columbus City Council
- Lauren Herderick, Columbus Department of Human Resources
- Matt Erickson, Senior Legislative Analyst, Columbus City Council
- Michael S. Brown, Chief of Staff, City Council President Shannon G. Hardin

Commissioner Weiler called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. Upon motion and second the minutes of the July 16, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

Minister Kujenga Ashe addressed the Commission as a member of the public supportive of increased compensation for city elected officials. He noted city elected officials are far more accessible and responsive to their constituents and should be compensated accordingly.

Matt Erickson, Senior Legislative Analyst – Columbus City Council, presented information to the Commission as requested regarding budget projections for City Council after the implementation of Issue 3 which adds two Council members. He noted that the figures presented were based upon the current base salaries of Council members with COLAs continuing into the future. The projections would change if the Commission recommends any change to the base salary. Commissioners sought clarity on the Commission's responsibility to set salaries in the future and the unpredictability of the economy and resources.

Michal Brown, Chief of Staff to the City Council President, discussed the philosophy behind the Charter Review Commission recommendation to expand Council to 9 members elected by district but voted on by the entire city. He noted that the Charter Review Commission wanted to acknowledge the increased workload of Council members by adding more members and, at the same time, make Council more geographically representative. Chief Brown also noted to the Commissioners that the City Council budget, even with the additional members, only represents a very small portion of the City's budget. The Commission asked Chief Brown about the ability of Council members to hold outside employment. Chief Brown opined that compensation does have an impact on the ability to recruit people in certain professions to public service. He also noted that precluding outside employment would lead to Council members having fewer conflicts of interest on matters that come before Council. He noted that several

current Council members do hold outside employment but not all members. The Commissioners asked for information about peer cities structure - whether they preclude outside employment or specifically designate their Council members as full or part time. Mr. Beaverson directed the Commissioners to consult the spreadsheet created by Mr. Friedman for the last meeting as the information is contained in that document.

Ms. Cline and Mr. Beaverson then provided the Commissioners with updated information requested by the Commissioners at the last meeting.

Commissioner Diaz noted that the Commission needs to focus on whether or not the Commission believes that Council members should be compensated with a higher base salary while precluding outside employment as that consideration will drive many of the recommendations. Commissioner Weiler also noted that the Commission needs to make a decision as to which CPI it will utilize in its recommendations.

Commissioners will hold a public hearing to take public comment on August 16, 2018. They also asked if Auditor Kilgore could attend that meeting to give an overview of growth and trends that occurred from 2015 to 2018 and make some projections regarding trends and growth for 2022 through 2026. The Commission will begin to formulate and discuss its recommendations at its meeting scheduled for August 20, 2018. One final meeting will likely be scheduled for September.

With no further business to come before the Commission, the Commission adjourned at 2:06 p.m.

Meeting Minutes for the Citizens' Commission on Elected Officials Compensation

August 16, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

Columbus City Hall, Chambers

Attendance:

- Fred L. Ransier III, Commission Chair
- Diana Givand, Commissioner
- Robert J. Weiler, Sr., Commissioner
- Greg Beaverson, Compensation Manager, Department of Human Resources
- Jo Ellen Cline, Legal Analyst & Ethics Officer, Columbus City Council
- Adam Friedman, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Mayor Andrew J. Ginther
- Lauren Herderick, Columbus Department of Human Resources

Chair Ransier called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

The minutes of the July 26, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

Darlene Wildes, Deputy City Auditor gave a presentation to the Commission, presenting an overview of city revenues. After her presentation, Chair Ransier asked how far out the Auditor's Office would forecast and what criteria would be used in forecasting. Ms. Wildes responded that it is difficult to forecast much beyond the next year because there are so many factors that can change. For example, it is difficult to estimate shared revenues because the state legislature can make changes that impact those funds. Currently, the City Auditor's office is predicting that revenues will be flat in 2019.

Peggy Williams, Secretary of the South Linden Area Commission, briefly addressed the Commission. Ms. Williams noted she had thought that Council members would be meeting to discuss compensation; however, she asked for a copy of the City Auditor's presentation so she could share it with the South Linden Area Commission. She noted she was very concerned about the state taking funds from local governments.

No other public comments were given or speakers were present. With no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Ransier adjourned the Commission at 11:00 a.m.

Meeting Minutes for the Citizens' Commission on Elected Officials Compensation

August 20, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

Columbus City Hall, Conference Room 225

Attendance:

- Fred L. Ransier III, Commission Chair
- Joel Diaz, Commissioner
- Diana Givand, Commissioner
- Robert J. Weiler, Sr., Commissioner
- Qiana Williams, Commissioner
- Greg Beaverson, Compensation Manager, Department of Human Resources
- Jo Ellen Cline, Legal Analyst & Ethics Officer, Columbus City Council
- Lauren Herderick, Columbus Department of Human Resources

Chair Ransier called the meeting to order at 12:11 p.m.

The minutes of the August 16, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

Mr. Beaverson provided several updates to data that had previously been presented to the Commission. Data slides were updated to add eight additional cities that did not respond to the initial Commission survey but were included in the comparison spreadsheet. Commissioner Diaz asked about cities that might be comparable to Columbus in terms of growth. Mr. Beaverson explained that the original survey cities were chosen to be as similar to Columbus as possible and, in some instances that would include growth. Mr. Beaverson then talked about new slides presented to the Commission as new ways of presenting data they already have. For example, one slide shows salaries in comparison to general fund budgets in a bar chart. Chair Ransier asked about Columbus' seemingly large size but smaller general fund budget. Mr. Beaverson clarified that some comparison cities are "uni-governments" where the city and county or region are combined. Mr. Beaverson also presented an Executive Summary table that shows where Columbus' elected official salaries rank in the field of twenty-five comparison cities and where they rank in comparison to the median of those cities' elected official salaries. Finally, the Commissioners were presented with projected salary tables. Mr. Beaverson told the Commission that Dr. Lafayette's presentation on CPI would give elected officials a COLA of 1.48% in 2022 if they recommend the use of the CPI, Nationwide.

The Commissioners began discussing the parameters for their recommendations. Chair Ransier asked for information regarding increases in salary for city collective bargaining units and those employees covered by the MCP. Commissioner Williams pursued the questioning regarding city employee pay increases asking about a standard for making decisions on such increases. Mr. Beaverson offered to provide her with the city's pay policy. Commissioners discussed the criteria for comparisons that they might consider in making recommendations – population, council size, form of government, etc. When discussing the COLA increases, staff reiterated that the Commission recommendation cannot exceed the CPI average over the last four years preceding the year of the increase. The Commission asked that

staff redraft the salary projection charts to show a 1.48% CPI based upon that being the CPI average over the last four years. The Commissioners believe it is very important to not reduce the future purchasing power of elected officials with their recommendations. In discussing whether the Commission should make any comment on the full-time or part-time status of City Council, the Commission believed it would be best to leave the status undefined as it is now. Commissioner Givand indicated that she believed the base salary of Council Members and the Council President should be raised based upon where Columbus' salaries rank among peer cities. Commissioners also discussed increases for the Mayor and the City Auditor in light of Columbus' impressive economic growth. Commissioner Williams cautioned, however, that the Commission should be considering fiscal responsibility as well because the data shows that, in most categories, Columbus' elected official salaries are near the median for peer cities.

The Commission discussed three decision points: 1) base salary; 2) COLA; 3) potential increase in base salary for City Council that they would like to consider. Each Commissioner will send staff their thoughts and suggestions on these decision points, staff will compile them and the Commission will consider them for recommendations. The Commission then scheduled two meetings for September: September 13 and September 19 both from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. With no further business to discuss, the Commission adjourned at 2 p.m.

Meeting Minutes for the Citizens' Commission on Elected Officials Compensation

September 13, 2018 @ 11:00 a.m.

Columbus City Hall, Conference Room 225

Attendance:

- Fred L. Ransier III, Commission Chair
- Joel Diaz, Commissioner
- Diana Givand, Commissioner
- Robert J. Weiler, Sr., Commissioner
- Michal S. Brown, Chief of Staff to the Council President, Columbus City Council
- Adam Friedman, Senior Policy Advisory, Office of the Mayor
- Greg Beaverson, Compensation Manager, Department of Human Resources
- Jo Ellen Cline, Legal Analyst & Ethics Officer, Columbus City Council
- Lauren Herderick, Columbus Department of Human Resources

Chair Ransier called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

The minutes of the August 20, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

The Commission began its deliberations regarding recommendations for elected official salaries. Because the Commission had been provided a large amount of information and data over the past few meetings, the Chair took the time to ensure that all Commissioners were on the same page as to what the projected salaries charts meant as far as a starting point for deliberations. Once there was clarity on this issue, the Commission came to an informal agreement to utilize the CPI index that Dr. Bill LaFayette suggested in his presentation – CPI-U, National, Size Class A, All Items.

The Commission discussed the base salary of the Mayor as it may exist in 2021. Based upon the projections and the Commission's desire that the Mayor be compensated in a manner that reflects the responsibilities of the office, the Commission suggested that the 2021 base salary be increased by 2% effective on January 1, 2022 and that a COLA be added in each subsequent year. The Commission then decided that, instead of voting on that suggestion immediately, it would discuss the other elected officials and vote when consensus had been reached on all positions. The Commission did, however, take up the issue of the COLA and upon motion by Commissioner Diaz and a second by Commissioner Weiler, the Commission unanimously recommends that the COLA for the years 2023 – 2026 be calculated utilizing the CPI-U, National, Size Class A, All Items CPI per the requirements of the Columbus City Charter.

The Commission then discussed the base salary for Councilmembers. Pointing out the workload of councilmembers, the upcoming change in Council structure, the growth of the city and the projected population growth, Commissioners believed that Councilmembers' base salary needed a significant increase. Commissioners felt that a significant increase for the years 2022 – 2026 would allow the Councilmembers' salary to "catch-up" to levels that accurately reflect the responsibilities of the office. The Commission believed staggering the larger percentage increase over the 2022-2026 time period would mitigate the budgetary impact of the recommendation. There was consensus that an overall 25% increase in base salary was required to adequately compensate Councilmembers. The suggestion

was to increase the base by 10% in 2022 and 5% in each subsequent year and, in addition, apply the standard COLA. Commissioners then applied the same thoughts to the position of Council President.

Finally, the Commission discussed the compensation of City Attorney and City Auditor. First, the Commission discussed the idea of parity in compensation between the two positions. Commission Chair Ransier noted that it is difficult to ignore that the Columbus City Auditor makes significantly more than city auditors in peer city. Chief of Staff Brown, who provided the Commission with a memorandum, outlined that the Columbus City Auditor has, over the years, taken on significantly more responsibility and an expansive role in city government. The Auditor's responsibilities are more on par with that of a company Chief Financial Officer as opposed to a traditional auditor role. Commissioners were clear that they had no desire to reduce the amount either official will be making in 2021. Commissioners suggested that keeping parity between the positions would be justified because the Auditor will have an important role to play in the growth of the city and, as a city that wants to retain its talent given the responsibilities of the offices; both positions require a high level of professionalism and experience.

Having completed their discussion of each office, the Commission voted unanimously on separate motions to recommend the following:

- Mayor: Effective 1/1/2022 - 2% increase in 2021 base salary
 Effective 1/1/2023 - 2022 Base salary + COLA
 Effective 1/1/2024 - 2023 Base salary + COLA
 Effective 1/1/2025 - 2024 base salary + COLA
- Councilmember: Effective 1/1/2022 – 10% increase in 2021 base salary
 Effective 1/1/2023 – 5% increase in 2022 base salary
 Effective 1/1/2024 - 5% increase in 2023 base salary
 Effective 1/1/2025 – 5% increase in 2024 base salary
- Council President: Same as Councilmember
- City Attorney: Effective 1/1/2022 - 4% increase in 2021 base salary
 Effective 1/1/2023 - 2022 Base salary + COLA
 Effective 1/1/2024 - 2023 Base salary + COLA
 Effective 1/1/2025 - 2024 base salary + COLA
- City Auditor: Same as City Attorney

Having completed its work, the Commission thanked staff for their work and staff expressed its appreciation to each of the Commissioners for their service. A final report will be circulated to Commission members when completed.

With no further business to come before the Commission, the Commission adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

APPENDIX D

The Consumer Price Index

Columbus City Council Compensation Review Commission

Bill Lafayette, Ph.D., owner, Region omics® LLC

April 30, 2015

Revised July 14, 2018

The City Charter ties officials' compensation to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This is a summary of the CPI, what it measures, how it is calculated, and which CPI should be used to benchmark compensation.

Purpose and Calculation of the CPI

The CPI is one of a number of alternative ways to measure inflation, which is a process of continuously rising prices – in other words, continuously declining value of money. In inflation, a dollar doesn't buy as much as it did before. The whole point of cost-of-living pay increases is to give workers the same purchasing power as they had before inflation hit. The CPI is designed to measure inflation and how much the dollar's purchasing power has changed between two specific periods.

The CPI is constructed by measuring the price of a pre-defined basket of goods and services at a particular time and place. It is based on the prices of 211 items in 38 places, meaning that 8,018 prices are collected each month to construct the index. The prices of the items are weighted to approximate the purchasing patterns of a typical household. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) surveys consumers' purchases to figure out what the correct weights should be. The result is the Consumer Expenditure Survey, which is useful in its own right.

A price index shows the path of price changes over time. The price level at a specific date (called the base date) is set to a particular value. This is usually 100 and it is 100 in the CPI, but it doesn't have to be. The date chosen as the base date is also arbitrary. The index value in each following month is based on the change in the value of the basket relative to the base month. Say, for example, the price of the basket at the base date is \$1,000. The price index is 100.0 (by definition). If the price of the basket the following month is \$1,002, the index is calculated as the current month's price divided by the base date price times the initial value of the index:

$$1,002 / 1,000 \times 100 = 100.2.$$

One year later, say the price of the basket has increased to \$1,050. The index is

$$1,050 / 1,000 \times 100 = 105.0.$$

In other words, you need \$1,050 to buy the same things that \$1,000 got you the year before.

The inflation rate is easy to calculate from the CPI. Inflation is typically measured from one year to the next or from one month to the next. (Monthly inflation rates are often converted to annualized rates.) The inflation rate is calculated as the percentage change in the price index between the first and second date. If the index value at the first date is I_1 and the index value at the second date is I_2 , this is:

$$\frac{I_2 - I_1}{I_1} = \frac{I_2}{I_1} - 1.$$

In the example above, the change in the price index is $105.0/100.0 - 1 = 5.0$ percent. In other words, the purchasing power of the dollar has fallen by 5 percent. You can leave workers in the same position as they were last year by increasing their wages by 5 percent.

Actual values of the CPI over the last three Junes are as follows:

- June 2016: 241.018
- June 2017: 244.955
- June 2018: 251.989

So the inflation rates are as follows:

- June 2016 – June 2017: $244.955 / 241.018 - 1 = 1.6\%$
- June 2017 – June 2018: $251.989 / 244.955 - 1 = 2.9\%$

Average inflation for a year is calculated the same way, using the average CPI for each year rather than that for a particular month. This is illustrated later.

Types of CPIs

There are 10,614 different CPIs. They fall into several major groups. One dimension is according to the type of consumer. The two primary categories are Consumer Price Indices for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), which is the most commonly-used category, and Consumer Price Indices for Urban Wage and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). The difference between these two categories is the weighting of the items in the basket. CPI-W is designed to reflect the purchasing pattern of a lower-income household.

A second dimension is according to the breadth of the basket. Some indices are based on all items, while others track various subsets of the basket. These include indices tracking specific categories of groups of goods and services (e.g., food, energy, services, and healthcare) and a large number of very specific items. Other categories exclude groups of items. The most common of these is All Items Less Food and Energy. This is called the “core CPI.” Prices of food and energy are especially volatile, so excluding those removes some of the noise and allows policymakers and analysts to see the underlying path of inflation more clearly.

Indices can be measured as their calculated value or on a seasonally-adjusted basis. Seasonal adjustment is a statistical technique that removes the impact of a recurring change in prices. One example is the usual price increase in gasoline in late spring as refiners switch from winter blend to summer blend. Gasoline price increases at this point mean less than they do at other times during the year. (Because seasonal adjustment is a purely mathematical process, there is no need to figure out up front what forces are causing recurring pricing impacts. Sometimes you can look at the resulting seasonal adjustment factors and guess at the underlying forces, but not even this is necessary.)

Price indices also vary according to their geographical coverage. The broadest indices are U.S. city average. Other indices refer to broad regions of the country – Northeast, Midwest, South, and West – and to 25 metro areas (not including Columbus). A series of indices also track price changes by the size of the metro area. These are in four size classes. Size Class A is a population of 1.5 million or more; Size Class D is a population of less than 50,000. Regions are intersected with region size (e.g., Midwest Metros, Size Class A).

Finally, there is a series of 28 national-level “chained” CPIs that are designed to address a problem with the traditional CPI, discussed in the next section.

Problems with the CPI

As discussed above, the market basket used to calculate the CPI is based on the purchase patterns of a typical consumer. People in different places, different ages, different household types, and different income levels spend very differently. The CPI for wage-earners and clerical workers takes a stab at addressing this problem, but that is the only reflection of this problem.

One problem arises from changes in quality of the underlying goods. The CPI basket includes a television, but at some point that television changed from black and white to color, and at some point it changed from a one with a picture tube to a high-definition flat screen. The pace of change in technology-dependent goods, such as computers, is even faster. Each change may have resulted in a price increase, but households probably wouldn't see it that way because the new good delivers more satisfaction than the old. People have experimented with ways to address this problem, but these fixes have been difficult to implement, so none has been. This means that you have to be careful when looking at price changes over long periods, even four years. There is no practical way to fix the problem. You just have to be aware of it.

A second problem is that purchasing patterns shift over time. Tastes change, new goods appear, and expenditure shares change. This means that the weights on the prices used to calculate the CPI become less relevant over time. The results of the Consumer Expenditure Survey are used to recalibrate the basket every two years.

Substitutions also happen much more dynamically as the price of goods and services shift relative to one another. If the price of margarine goes up and the price of butter comes down, people switch from margarine to butter. If the price of movies goes up, fewer people go to movies and more people rent movies at home or go bowling. The fact that the price of margarine and movies went up influences people's buying patterns, but once the shift has been made, the higher prices of those items become irrelevant because they are no longer in the basket. This means that the CPI with a fixed basket overstates the actual financial impact of changing prices on households.

The chained CPI is a response to the second and third of these three problems. The chained CPI is calculated like the traditional CPI except the weights on the goods and services change every month based on the results of the monthly Consumer Expenditure Survey. Because the chained CPI includes the impact of households' attempts to minimize the impact of rising prices, you expect the chained CPI inflation rate to be lower than the traditional CPI inflation rate, and it generally is. The chained inflation rate from June 2016 to June 2017 is 1.2 percent rather than 1.6 percent. The chained rate from June 2017 to June 2018 is 2.7 percent rather than 2.9 percent.

The chained CPI sounds like a solution to these problems. The Simpson-Bowles Commission on Deficit Reduction recommended the use of the chained CPI in setting Social Security benefits in December 2010 – although it was more because the chained CPI's measured inflation rate is lower than because this is a theoretically better measure. There is a potentially serious practical problem with using the chained CPI to set compensation, though. The chained CPI values come out with all the others – about three weeks after the end of the month to which they refer. But because the Consumer Expenditure Survey only comes out with a three-quarter lag, the index values for the past year or so are preliminary and are revised a couple times before they are final. On the other hand, the traditional CPI values are final on their first release – unlike most other BLS stats. If a chained CPI is used to set compensation, it will be necessary to specify a formal process to adjust compensation after the fact (possibly downward).

Which CPI Should Be Used to Benchmark Compensation?

As noted earlier, there are a number of different measures of price changes, but the CPI probably is the best for this purpose. The problem arises in benchmarking pay increases to no more than a four-year average of inflation. This is unwise because it makes the pay escalation unresponsive to changes in inflation. It is what economists call “sticky.” If inflation increases, the wage adjustments increase much more slowly and the officials wind up losing purchasing power. If inflation declines, the average overstates current inflation.¹

Which of the 10,614 CPI values should be used? It is better to use an all-items index rather than one excluding food and energy (the core CPI). Core inflation is more stable, but in real life officials do have to buy food and energy, so is unfair not to reflect this. The chained CPI is at least theoretically better, but you have to be comfortable with ambiguity and figure out how you are going to reflect restatement of the inflation rate. The rate for the past year (one-quarter of your wage adjustment) is likely to change. You have to decide how to handle this. Do you retroactively adjust people’s pay for the incorrect initial rate, or do you leave it alone? In any case, using the chained CPI requires formally setting a date on which the CPI values are retrieved to avoid any conflict later on. This is not an important consideration with the traditional CPI because those values don’t change once they are issued. An annual-average inflation rate requires the use of the non-seasonally-adjusted CPI because annual averages are not defined for seasonally-adjusted series. In any case, measuring inflation year-over-year – even at a particular month – should also be done with the unadjusted numbers.

As mentioned earlier, there is no CPI for Columbus, but there are for Cincinnati and Cleveland. These should not be used for Columbus, though, because the demographics, economies, and purchasing patterns in Cincinnati and Cleveland are different from those in Columbus. Also, individual city indices are more volatile than regional or national indices. The best CPI is probably the CPI-U, Midwest, Size Class A, All Items. This is not a perfect solution because Columbus is demographically different from many Midwestern cities, but this CPI does incorporate the purchasing behavior of Midwesterners, and it does include Columbus information to a greater extent than the national index.

The annual average values of this CPI to obtain the inflation rates for the last four years yields the following:

Year	CPI-U, Midwest Size A	Inflation
2013	222.562	
2014	225.658	1.39%
2015	224.513	(0.51%)
2016	226.632	0.94%
2017	230.856	1.86%

¹ However, the four-year average rate is the maximum adjustment. If inflation is declining and the four-year average were significantly higher than the rate for the most recent year, there would no problem with using the most recent rate as the cost of living adjustment.

The four-year average change would be calculated as:

$$(0.0139 - 0.0051 + 0.0094 + 0.0186) / 4 = 0.0092, \text{ or } 0.92 \text{ percent.}^2$$

The four-year average is 0.92 percent, much less than the 2017 average of 1.86 percent. Inflation is currently accelerating: as noted above, the 12-month rate to June 2018 is 2.9 percent. The 0.92 percent is a ceiling, so unless the inflation rate declines significantly over the next year (which is not expected) officials will lose purchasing power.

Using the national average for large regions nationwide instead of in the Midwest yields the following³:

Year	CPI-U, All U.S. Cities, Size A	Inflation
2013	212.579	
2014	216.114	1.66%
2015	217.051	0.43%
2016	220.307	1.50%
2017	225.405	2.31%

The four-year average is a somewhat higher 1.48 percent.

The two following attachments are first, BLS guidance for using the CPI for wage escalation, and second, a series of screenshots providing a step-by-step guide for downloading CPI values from the BLS website.

² There is a technical problem in using the standard average (called an arithmetic average) when negative changes are present, essentially because a 0.51 percent decrease is not the same as a 0.51 percent increase. A more correct approach is to calculate a geometric average:

$$\sqrt[4]{(1 + r_1)(1 + r_2)(1 + r_3)(1 + r_4)} - 1 = \text{average rate.}$$

In other words, you multiply the four rates plus one, take the fourth root of the product, and subtract one from the result. In this case:

$$\sqrt[4]{(1.0139)(0.9949)(1.0094)(1.0186)} - 1 = 0.0092.$$

The two answers are the same to the fourth decimal place because there is only one negative rate and it is small. That would not be the case if there were more negative rates and/or they were larger.

³ The index values are smaller than for the Midwest index because the base of the index is December 1986 rather than the 1982-1984 average. The base date does not affect the calculation of the inflation rate as long as the base date is consistent across all years (which it always will be).

Attachment A

How to Use the Consumer Price Index for Escalation

Source: <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/factsheets/escalation.htm>. Retrieved 13 July 2018.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the average change in the prices paid for a market basket of goods and services. These items are purchased for consumption by the two groups covered by the index: All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) and Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, (CPI-W).

Escalation agreements often use the CPI—the most widely used measure of price change—to adjust payments for changes in prices. The most frequently used escalation applications are in private sector collective bargaining agreements, rental contracts, insurance policies with automatic inflation protection, and alimony and child support payments.

The following are general guidelines to consider when developing an escalation agreement using the CPI:

Define the base payment

Define clearly the base payment (rent, wage rate, alimony, child support, or other value) that is subject to escalation.

Identify which CPI series will be used

Identify precisely which CPI index series will be used to escalate the base payment. This should include the population coverage (CPI-U or CPI-W), area coverage (U.S. City Average, West Region, Chicago, etc.), series title (all items, rent of primary residence, etc.), and index base period (1982-84=100).

Specify reference period

Specify a reference period from which changes in the CPI will be measured. This is usually a single month (the CPI does not correspond to a specific day or week of the month), or an annual average. There is about a two-week lag from the reference month to the date on which the index is released (that is, the CPI for May is released in mid-June). The CPIs for most metropolitan areas are not published as frequently as are the data for the U.S. City Average and the four regions. Indexes for the U.S. City Average, the four regions, nine divisions, two city-size classes, eight region-by-size classes, and three major metropolitan areas (Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York) are published monthly. Indexes for the remaining 20 published metropolitan areas are available only on a bimonthly basis. Contact BLS for information on the frequency of publication for the 23 metropolitan areas.

State frequency of adjustment

Adjustments are usually made at fixed intervals, such as quarterly, semiannually, or, most often, annually.

Determine adjustment formula

Determine the formula for the adjustment calculation. Usually the change in payments is directly proportional to the percent change in the CPI index between two specified periods. Consider whether to make an allowance for a “cap” that places an upper limit on the increase in wages, rents, etc., or a “floor” that promises a minimum increase regardless of the percent change (up or down) in the CPI.

Provide for revisions

Provide a built-in method for handling situations that may arise because of major CPI revisions or changes in the CPI index base period. The Bureau always provides timely notification of upcoming revisions or changes in the index base.

The CPI and escalation: Some points to consider

The CPI is calculated for two population groups: All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) and Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). The CPI-U represents about 94 percent of the total U.S. population and is based on the expenditures of all families living in urban areas. The CPI-W is a subset of the CPI-U and is based on the expenditures of families living in urban areas who meet additional requirements related to employment: more than one-half of the family’s income is earned from clerical or hourly-wage occupations. The CPI-W represents about 28 percent of the total U.S. population.

There can be small differences in movement of the two indexes over short periods of time because differences in the spending habits of the two population groups result in slightly different weighting. The long-term movements in the indexes are similar. CPI-U and CPI-W indexes are calculated using measurement of price changes of goods and services with the same specifications and from the same retail outlets. The CPI-W is used for escalation primarily in blue-collar cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). Because the CPI-U population coverage is more comprehensive, it is used in most other escalation agreements.

The 23 metropolitan areas for which BLS publishes separate index series are by-products of the U.S. City Average index. Metropolitan area indexes have a relatively small sample size and, therefore, are subject to substantially larger sampling errors. Metropolitan area and other subcomponents of the national indexes (regions, size-classes) often exhibit greater volatility than the national index. BLS recommends that users adopt the U.S. City Average CPI for use in escalator clauses.

The U.S. City Average CPIs are published on a seasonally adjusted basis as well as on an unadjusted basis. The purpose of seasonal adjustment is to remove the estimated effect of price changes that normally occur at the same time and in about the same magnitude every year (e.g., price movements due to the change in weather patterns, holidays, model change-overs, end-of-season sales, etc.). The primary use of seasonally adjusted data is for current economic analysis. In addition, the factors that are used to seasonally adjust the data are updated annually and seasonally adjusted data are subject to revision for up to 5 years after their original release. For these reasons, the use of seasonally adjusted data in escalation agreements is inappropriate.

Escalation agreements using the CPI usually involve changing the base payment by the percent change in the level of the CPI between the reference period and a subsequent period. This is calculated by first determining the index point change between the two periods and then determining the percent change. The following example illustrates the computation of a percent change:

CPI for current period	232.945
Less CPI for previous period	229.815
Equals index point change	3.130
Divided by previous period CPI	229.815
Equals	0.0136
Result multiplied by 100	0.0136 x 100
Equals percent change	1.4%

The Bureau of Labor Statistics neither encourages nor discourages the use of price adjustment measures in contractual agreements. Also, while BLS can provide technical and statistical assistance to parties developing escalation agreements, we can neither develop specific wording for contracts nor mediate legal or interpretive disputes which might arise between the parties to the agreement.

Additional information may be obtained from the Consumer Price Index Information Office at cpi_info@bls.gov or 202-691-7000. Information on the CPI's overall methodology can be found in [Chapter 17](#) of the BLS Handbook of Methods.

Last Modified Date: February 14, 2018

Attachment B

Retrieving CPI Values from the BLS Website

These instructions will retrieve values for the CPI-U, Midwest Size Class A, All Items. Open the Bureau of Labor Statistics website, www.bls.gov and click "Data Tools" in the black menu bar at the top.

The screenshot shows the Bureau of Labor Statistics website in a Safari browser window. The address bar displays www.bls.gov. The website header includes the United States Department of Labor logo and the Bureau of Labor Statistics name. A navigation bar at the top contains links for Home, Subjects, Data Tools, Publications, Economic Releases, Students, and Beta. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a calendar for July 13, 2018, and several news articles. The first article is titled "U.S. import prices fall 0.4% in June; export prices rise 0.3%" and includes a brief summary and links to HTML, PDF, RSS, and Charts. Below this are three more articles with dates and titles: "CPI for all items rises 0.1% in June as shelter, gasoline, food indexes increase", "Real average hourly earnings increase 0.1% over the month in June", and "PPI for final demand rises 0.3% in June; services increase 0.4% and goods advance 0.1%". A "GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION" section is also visible. On the right side, there is a "BLS VIDEOS" section with a video thumbnail titled "Contingent and Alternative Employment Arrangements" and a "read more" link.

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JUL 13

U.S. import prices fall 0.4% in June; export prices rise 0.3%
U.S. import prices decreased 0.4 percent in June following a 0.9-percent advance in May. Despite the monthly decline, import prices advanced 4.3 percent for the 12 months ended in June. U.S. export prices increased 0.3 percent in June and rose 5.3 percent over the past 12 months.
[HTML](#) | [PDF](#) | [RSS](#) | [Charts](#)

07/12/2018 **CPI for all items rises 0.1% in June as shelter, gasoline, food indexes increase**
07/12/2018 **Real average hourly earnings increase 0.1% over the month in June**
07/11/2018 **PPI for final demand rises 0.3% in June; services increase 0.4% and goods advance 0.1%**
07/10/2018 **Job openings (6.6 million) edge down; hires and separations little changed in May**
[read more »](#)

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION »

BLS VIDEOS

Contingent and Alternative Employment Arrangements
Learn about the different types of jobs covered in BLS data on contingent and alternative employment arrangements.
[read more »](#)

A page titled “Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject” comes up, offering access to dozens of different BLS databases. The first entry on this page under Inflation & Prices is “All Urban Consumers (Current Series).” There are two options for retrieving data, the “One-Screen Data Search” (green button) and the “Multi-Screen Data Search” (yellow button). BLS recently redesigned the one-screen search so that it no longer requires increasingly rare Java-equipped browsers. Unfortunately, as of now this search does not work either with Safari or Firefox. Unless it does work on your browser, you will have to use the somewhat more cumbersome multi-screen search. Click that button.

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Inflation & Prices

Database Name	Special Notice	Top Picks	Data Finder	One Screen	Multi-Screen	Tables	Text Files
Prices - Consumer							
All Urban Consumers (Current Series) (Consumer Price Index - CPI)							
Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (Current							

This retrieval method takes you through a series of screens that narrow down your choice to the specific data series that you want. You initially have 7,795 price index series to choose from. The first screen allows you to choose seasonally adjusted or not seasonally adjusted data. Click “Not Seasonally Adjusted” and click “Next form.”

The screenshot shows the BLS website interface in a Safari browser window. The page title is "Create Customized Tables". Below the title, it says "CPI-All Urban Consumers (Current Series) -- Seasonal (Screen 1 of 6)". A message states: "You have a total of 7795 series to query for." Below this, there are two radio buttons: "Seasonally Adjusted" (which is selected) and "Not Seasonally Adjusted". The "Next form" button is visible. The page also features a navigation menu with links like "Home", "Subjects", "Data Tools", "Publications", "Economic Releases", "Students", and "Beta". A sidebar on the left contains links for "TOOLS", "CALCULATORS", "HELP", "INFO", and "RESOURCES". The footer includes the BLS logo and contact information.

Next you choose your area. Scroll down to find “Midwest – Size Class A” and click “Next form.” (If you want all large areas nationwide, scroll down to and click “Size Class A.”)

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Create Customized Tables

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CPI-All Urban Consumers (Current Series) -- Area (Screen 2 of 6)
 Your query has been narrowed to **7481** series.

Choose Area:

- S12B Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD
- S200 Midwest - Size Class A**
- S23A Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI
- S23B Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI
- S24A Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI
- S24B St. Louis, MO-IL

Next form Reset form

Search Area: Search (Text search is a close/approximate match.)

Code: Search (Code search is an exact match. You can use wildcards * and ?.)

[Assistance with formulating a search.](#)

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www.bls.gov/CPI | Telephone: 1-202-691-7000 | [Contact CPI](#)

Next, choose the “Current” rather than the “Alternate” base and click “Next form.”

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) website. The address bar shows data.bls.gov. The page title is "CPI-All Urban Consumers (Current Series) -- Base (Screen 3 of 6)". Below the title, it states "Your query has been narrowed to 124 series." and "Choose Base: ☐ Alternate ☒ Current". There are buttons for "Next form" and "Reset form". The page features a navigation menu with links like "Home", "Subjects", "Data Tools", "Publications", "Economic Releases", "Students", and "Beta". A sidebar on the right lists "TOOLS", "CALCULATORS", "HELP", "INFO", and "RESOURCES". The footer contains links to "Freedom of Information Act", "Privacy & Security Statement", "Disclaimers", "Customer Survey", and "Important Web Site Notices".

Next, choose the items covered in the price index. Click “All items” (the first item in the list) and click “Next form.”

The screenshot shows the Bureau of Labor Statistics website in a Safari browser. The page title is "Create Customized Tables". The breadcrumb trail is "CPI-All Urban Consumers (Current Series) -- Item (Screen 4 of 6)". The text indicates "Your query has been narrowed to 122 series." Under the "Choose Item:" section, a dropdown menu is open, displaying a list of items: "SAO All items", "SAOE Energy", "SAO.L1E All items less food and energy", "SAO.L2 All items less shelter", "SAO.L5 All items less medical care", and "SAO.L6 All items less energy". The "SAO All items" option is highlighted. Below the dropdown, there are "Next form" and "Reset form" buttons. Further down, there are search fields for "Text" and "Code" with instructions on how to use them. The page footer contains links for "Freedom of Information Act", "Privacy & Security Statement", "Disclaimers", "Customer Survey", and "Important Web Site Notices". The dock at the bottom of the screen shows various application icons.

Select the periodicity as “Monthly” and click “Next form.”

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Bureau of Labor Statistics website. The page is titled "Create Customized Tables" and is part of a series (Screen 5 of 6). The main content area shows the "CPI-All Urban Consumers (Current Series) -- Periodicity" screen. It states that the query has been narrowed to 2 series and allows the user to choose the periodicity, with "Monthly" selected. There are "Next form" and "Reset form" buttons. The page includes a navigation menu with categories like TOOLS, CALCULATORS, HELP, INFO, and RESOURCES. The footer contains contact information for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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Create Customized Tables

CPI-All Urban Consumers (Current Series) -- Periodicity (Screen 5 of 6)

Your query has been narrowed to 2 series.
Choose Periodicity: ☒ Monthly ☐ Semi-Annual

Next form Reset form

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U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics | Division of Consumer Prices and Price Indexes, PSB Suite 3130, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE Washington, DC 20212-0001
www.bls.gov/CPI | Telephone: 1-202-691-7000 | [Contact CPI](#)

This gives you a confirmation screen telling you that you have narrowed your possible selections from 7,795 to one. Click “Retrieve data.”

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CPI-All Urban Consumers (Current Series) -- Year (Screen 6 of 6)

Your query has been narrowed to **1** series.

Tip for repeat users:

- You may wish to save the series ID(s) generated from this query for later use in Series Report.
- To save these series ID(s), cut and paste to a text file.

The following series ID(s) were generated from your query.
To save these series ID(s), cut and paste to a text file.

(Edits are ignored. To change these series ID(s) you will need to restart Selective Access.)

CUURS2005A0

Retrieve data

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Here is your data screen. By default you get 10 years of data, but the pull-down menus at the top allow you to retrieve more or fewer years. (Click your desired beginning and ending years and click the blue “Go” button.)

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Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject

Change Output Options:

From: 2008

To: 2018

☐ include graphs
 ☐ include annual averages

[More Formatting Options](#)

Data extracted on: July 14, 2018 (2:58:57 PM)

CPI-All Urban Consumers (Current Series)

Series Id: CUURSA0000000000

Not Seasonally Adjusted

Series Title: All items in Midwest - Size Class A, all urban consumers, not seasonally adjusted

Area: Midwest - Size Class A

Item: All items

Base Period: 1982=100

Download: xls

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual	HALF1	HALF2
2008	202.830	203.347	205.141	206.590	208.291	209.813	211.003	210.341	210.283	207.049	202.922	200.465	206.506	206.002	207.010
2009	202.001	202.639	203.240	203.463	204.443	206.308	205.656	206.591	206.459	206.625	207.277	206.399	205.092	203.682	206.501
2010	202.325	207.329	207.975	208.308	208.489	208.289	208.556	208.912	209.253	209.182	209.344	209.936	208.575	207.953	209.197
2011	210.129	211.503	213.449	214.878	216.376	216.290	216.350	216.870	217.360	216.130	216.097	215.633	215.155	213.904	216.407
2012	216.883	217.320	219.269	219.519	219.484	219.307	219.229	220.594	221.431	220.767	219.795	219.314	219.409	218.630	220.188
2013	219.667	222.055	222.448	222.329	223.539	224.350	223.475	223.604	223.601	222.329	221.968	221.384	222.562	222.398	222.727
2014	222.545	223.694	225.869	226.587	226.893	227.965	227.235	226.789	226.850	225.925	224.531	223.021	225.658	225.591	225.725
2015	221.935	222.441	223.624	224.088	225.022	226.105	226.097	226.278	225.354	225.319	224.476	223.237	224.513	223.869	225.157
2016	224.074	223.726	224.768	225.918	226.850	228.354	227.157	227.554	228.236	227.913	227.482	227.549	226.632	225.615	227.649
2017	228.968	229.334	229.554	230.477	230.634	230.941	230.957	231.441	232.224	231.661	232.391	231.695	230.856	229.985	231.728
2018	232.913	233.202	233.584	234.666	235.884	236.586								234.473	

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