**04.06.22 Meeting Minutes**

Attendance

* Michael Kasler, Chair
* Sarah Ingles, Commissioner
* Fred Ransier, Commissioner
* Keisha Hunley-Jenkins, Commissioner
* Qiana Williams, Commissioner
* Greg Beaverson, Compensation Manager, Department of Human Resources
* Jason Jenkins, Mayor’s Office
* Robert Tobias, City Attorney’s Office
* Darlene Wildes, City Auditor’s Office
* Niyah Walters, Columbus City Council
* Nikki Brandon, Director, Department of Human Resources

Chair Kasler called the meeting to order

* Introductions
* Presentation of meeting minutes and approval
* Presentation by Greg Beaverson with median per capita salary updates that included looking at the City Auditor salary in comparison to more CFO like positions which are more in line with the work she does.
* Commission Ransier noted that inflation is on track to hit 7% this year.
* Greg stated noted that the inflation rate between 2020 and 2021 was about 7%
* Chair Kasler asked Former Mayor Coleman why there were no percentage increases from 2021-2015 and he stated it was because of the recession years. Hair stated that this was the reason for some of the wage compression between the Mayor and the City Attorney and City Auditor. Auditor and Attorney also gave back some of their increases.
* Commissioner Ransier asked if given the Charter amendment, can elected officials refuse a salary increase?
* Robert stated that yes they basically just have to refuse it before legislation is passed
* Greg confirmed that the Auditor and Attorney gave funds back. We saw salary for elected for other elected officials continue to increase regardless of whether they accepted or not except for the Mayor because his salary wasn’t legislated
* Chair Kasler introduces the numbers that he came up with. Which include for 2026, 7.5% for Mayor, 10% for Council President, 5% for Council and nothing for the City Attorney and City Auditor plus COLA and then COLA annually 2027-2029.
* Commissioner Ransier looks at this and the effects of collective bargaining and is influenced by the thought to use the median. He liked that it was the universal standard used by employers
* Commission Williams stated that elected officials are behind. Unions are not exactly behind so comparing the union to elected officials isn’t an apples to apples comparison. Median would bring them to where they should be and then getting their COLA.
* Commission Ingles clarified that bargaining units are bargaining for a unit not an individual and unions don’t get a COLA so it’s not a direct comparison.
* Commission in agreement to the use the All Cities Consumer Price Index

**Discussion on percentage increase**

* Commissioner Williams wants to utilize median per capita data to set pay.
* Commissioner Ingles asked if based on that data, should the City Attorney make more than the Mayor.
* Commissioner Williams stated that these are the numbers but we can layer on the “art” but the numbers are the science
* Commissioner Hunley-Jenkins stated that the data says that elected officials should get an increase and the numbers proposed by Chair Kasler seem low based on the median per capita data. 2018 Commission members said they probably left money on the table because they didn’t want to give too large of an increase.
* Greg stated that the Commission can look at median per capita data but should also consider the original comparator cities data
* Commission Ransier reminded that the Columbus Mayor is the second highest paid.
* Chair Kasler doesn’t feel comfortable creating pay disparity between the City Auditor and City Attorney
* Auditor
  + Commissioner Williams asked if we wanted to give a 5% base increase to the Auditor and everyone agreed.
* Attorney
  + Commissioner Ransier asked why there had always been parity in pay for the Attorney and Auditor. He also noted that if we always do that there is no path for really moving forward. He was not comfortable hinging on it’s always been done that way so that’s what we will do. He would rather just give 5% because that’s what the Commission deemed appropriate. He agreed with Chair Kasler on the 5% but not for the same reasons
  + Chair Kasler stated the City should have job description
  + Commissioner Williams said based off the 27% median per capita salary 5% seems low and we should fall more in the middle at like 12%
  + Commissioner Ingles stated that would being the salary to roughly 224K
  + Commissioner Ransier asked of elected officials could defend that salary to the public
  + Commissioner Williams would give them 12% plus COLA
  + Commissioner Ransier asked if we wanted to risk falling behind in salaries
  + Commissioner Hunley-Jenkins stated that if we are looking at data alone that makes sense but is there another number
  + Maintaining parity between Auditor and Attorney is important to Chair Kasler
  + Commissioner Ingles Thinks that Auditor and Attorney are similar but could support an increase based on data. The public would likely struggle to digest the increases. She would also be inclined to support a smaller increase taking parity into account
  + Commissioner Ransier asked if other cities used COLA
  + Commissioner Ingles shared that the Attorney duties were more clear and additionally that COLA is status quo so we should really be looking at the value of the job
  + Commissioner Hunley-Jenkins reminded that we also have to keep in mind that if we give the Attorney gives a significant raise that chips away at the differential between the Mayor
  + Chair Kasler supportive of a 5-12% increase for both Attorney and Auditor
  + Commissioner Ingles noted that private sector individuals make about the same
  + Commissioners decided on and everyone agreed to 10%
  + Chair Kasler reminded that the Commission received a presentation from the Auditor and she explained what she did
  + Darlene shared that there wasn’t really a good comparison for our Auditor to other auditors
  + Commissioner Hunley-Jenkins noted that the next Auditor may not have all the skills that the current Auditor has because the position is elected. She also recommended the per capita median data be available at the outset
* Mayor
  + Commissioner Williams is comfortable with a 14% increase based on the median per capita data
  + Chair Kasler noted that a salary of about 242 would create a 10% differential between the City Attorney salary and the Mayor
  + Mayor’s salary will be estimated 219K in 2025
  + Commissioner Ingles noted that if the Commission gave the Mayor 18% that would catch up the salaries and create the 10% differential
  + Commissioner Hunley-Jenkins shared that a 6% differential between the Mayor and the Attorney if we go with 14% increase
  + Commissioner Williams was in support of a 14% base increase
  + Commissioner Ingles asked how the Commission would justify giving the full median per capita increase to the Auditor and Mayor but not the Attorney. Additionally which differential were they going to go with?
  + Commissioner Ransier stated that he was not moved by creating the differential and that had very little impact on his decision
  + Commissioner Ingles was fine with the differential but wasn’t sold on 14%
  + Robb states that the Commission should look at each position independently and not at the differential. You heard from a lot of people but ultimately the Commission is independent and should make their decision
  + Commissioner Ransier stated that 14% catches up the Mayor’s salary and creates a greater differential that what exists. Everyone is in agreement that they should be paid more.
  + Consensus was achieved on the 14%
* Council President and Councilmembers
  + Commissioner Williams doesn’t have a lot of heartburn over giving Council President a 40% increase because of how far behind he is
  + Commissioner Ransier noted that Council President is voted on by members not the public so when they ran they were expecting a regular Councilmember salary
  + Commissioner Ingles noted that when assessing Council President’s duties, looking at the role needing 40% to catch up it seems like the salary is very low
  + Commissioner Williams noted that the Council President role is distinctly different from Councilmembers and views the Council President role as a full-time job
  + Chair Kasler referred the Commission to Sec. 10 of the Charter
  + Commissioner Ransier asked if the difference between Council President and Councilmembers worth a 27% increase?
  + Commissioner Ingles expressed worry about how to justify the increase to the public
  + Chair Kasler reminded the Commissioners that ultimately Council gets to decide if they want to accept the Commission’s recommendations
* Final Numbers
  + All years 2026-2029 will receive a COLA
  + Mayor 14%
  + Council President 40%
  + Councilmembers 13%
  + City Attorney 10%
  + City Auditor 5%
  + Commission voted unanimously to approve these recommendations
* Official vote on the All Cities CPI
* Commissioner Ransier reiterated need for job descriptions
* Commissioner Williams stated that if CPA isn’t required than is a salary bump given to someone with a CPA
* Commissioners engaged in more discussion regarding full-time/part-time
* Commissioner Hunley-Jenkins recommended that we survey the community to get their feedback as to whether they consider Council as full-time or part-time