

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.