

# INDEPENDENT COMMISSION ON COMPENSATION FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS MINUTES

November 14, 2018

The Independent Commission on Compensation for Elected Officials met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on November 14, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.

## MEMBERS PRESENT

Caudia Walters, Chairperson  
Rich Adams  
Pete Lesar  
Bryan Raines  
Jo Wilson

## MEMBERS ABSENT

None

## STAFF PRESENT

John Pombier  
Alfred Smith  
Dee Ann Mickelsen

### 1. Introductions of new Commission members, Jo Wilson and Rich Adams.

New Commission members provided a brief background with respect to their professional and community activities.

### 2. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

### 3. Hear a presentation and discuss the duties of the Commission and the timeline for presenting recommendations to the City Council, and if approved, when they would become effective, by Alfred Smith.

Deputy City Attorney Alfred Smith reported the Commission was established in August of 2012 to review compensation for the Mayor and Councilmembers.

Mr. Smith stated the Commission's sole purpose is to determine compensation based on comparative analysis, ensuring the compensation includes causes and expenses incurred in the job, and take into account the financial circumstances of the City.

Mr. Smith reported the members are required to present a written report and recommendations relative to Council's compensation no later than 90 days following its initial meeting. He added that the Council has the option to consider the written report and recommendations in its entirety or decide to reject the report and send it back to the Commission for further consideration. He

pointed out that the Ordinance will be introduced on December 10, 2018 and up for adoption on January 7, 2019.

In response to a question posed by Commission Member Lesar, Deputy City Manager John Pombier advised in 2016 the Commission agreed to move the Councilmembers' ratio of the Mayor's salary toward 60% instead of 50%. He added it was determined the increase would gradually occur over five years. He explained the proposed Councilmember salary identified in the chart "Base Salary-Council to Mayor Ratio Comparison" is a reflection of this decision and the Commission today can reject this amount or recommend the increase.

4. Hear a presentation and discuss the 2016 Commission report, by City staff.

Deputy City Manager John Pombier advised the decision to increase the Councilmembers' ratio of the Mayor's salary to 60% was made after staff looked at the salaries of Councilmembers in neighboring Arizona cities and also cities of similar size outside of Arizona. He noted most of the cities outside of Arizona with a similar population were in fact paid more, however, staff made the decision to keep the salaries in closer range to the City of Phoenix Councilmembers.

Chairperson Walters added the ratio would reflect the fact that Councilmembers are more of a full-time employee and their job duties will continue to increase as the population of Mesa grows in the coming years.

5. Hear a presentation and discuss updated compensation data collected for elected officials of Arizona municipalities, by City staff.

Senior Human Resources Analyst Gina Levya asked the Commission Members to review the data collected chart and ask any questions regarding the information provided.

In response to a question posed by Commission Member Raines, Deputy City Manager John Pombier advised it is the understanding of staff that the Town of Gilbert's Councilmembers made a "conscious decision" to reduce their salary by 50% and no additional information is available on the reasoning for this decision.

In response to a question posed by Commission Member Adams, Ms. Levya noted compensation data is collected every three years and the data provided today was last revised on October 29, 2018.

6. Discuss and provide direction regarding the Commission's recommendation to the City Council regarding the compensation for Mesa's elected officials.

Commission Member Lesar noted the City of Phoenix Councilmembers' ratio of the Mayor's salary is 70% and other cities of similar size are higher than 60%. He stated the opinion that the 60% ratio for City of Mesa Councilmembers is at the bottom of the threshold and the Commission might want to consider increasing the percentage in the future. He added Mesa takes pride in having the best individuals representing the City and the current City Council is very active and engaged in the community. He stated the involvement level of Councilmembers will only increase with the economic growth occurring in the City.

In response to a question posed by Commission Member Wilson, Chairman Walters advised the ratio was determined as a framework for discussion and is something the Commission Members could use when making compensation decisions for the Councilmembers and Mayor.

Commission Member Lesar commented a Councilmember's compensation should be an amount considered as a "livable wage" so that the average person could fill the role while still being able to take care of a family.

Commission Member Raines requested the Commission not increase a Councilmembers' salary by more than 5% and achieve the 60% ratio, which is appropriate at this time. He stated the Commission could have a discussion in the future regarding a ratio increase for Councilmembers.

Commission Members agreed the Mayor's compensation would remain the same with no increase or decrease.

7. Take action on the Report and Recommendations to the Mayor and City Council regarding the compensation for Mesa's elected officials.

It was moved by Commission Member Lesar, seconded by Commission Member Raines, that the compensation for Mesa's Elected Officials be as follows: That the Mayor's salary would stay the same with no increase or decrease; that the Councilmembers' salary be increased to \$44,127; that the Mayor and the Councilmembers would continue to receive the same vehicle and communication allowances per month.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Walters-Adams-Lesar-Raines-Wilson

NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

Chairman Walters requested it be noted that the decision to increase the salary of Councilmembers was made based on their increased responsibilities throughout the years, the growth of the City, social media requirements, the time, effort, and commitment the Council is asked to make, and Councilmembers now being considered full-time employees. She added the Commission did not consider the salaries of Councilmembers of similar-sized cities outside of Arizona due to the fact that the compensation amount is generally higher, and it was decided the appropriate comparison would be with cities located within Arizona. She noted the City of Mesa is the 36<sup>th</sup> largest City in the United States and has the second largest budget in the State of Arizona.

8. Discuss and provide direction to City staff as to what additional information the Commission may need at a future meeting.

Chairman Walters stated that the Commission does not request any additional information from staff.

9. Discuss and set dates for upcoming meetings.

Commission Member Raines requested the Commission meet again in October of 2020.

10. Discuss and consider authorizing Chairman Walters to review and approve the minutes from today's meeting and forward to the City Council for acknowledgement.

It was moved by Commission Member Wilson, seconded by Commission Member Adams, that Chairman Walters or Commission Member Raines be authorized to review and approve the minutes from today's meeting and forward to the City Council for acknowledgement.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Walters-Adams-Lesar-Raines-Wilson

NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

11. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Independent Commission on Compensation for Elected Officials meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Independent Commission on Compensation for Elected Officials held on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2018. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

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DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

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