



# City Council Report

**Date:** May 19, 2014  
**To:** City Council  
**Through:** Christopher J. Brady, City Manager  
**From:** John Pombier, Deputy City Manager  
**Subject:** Magistrate Salary Adjustment

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## **Purpose and Recommendation**

The City Manager's Office is respectfully requesting the Mesa City Council authorize an increase to the base salaries of the City of Mesa Magistrates by 10% effective July 1, 2014. This salary review and increase is based on the recommendation of the Judicial Advisory Board ("Board"). Attached is a recommendation letter from the Board.

## **Background**

The Mayor and City Council requested a salary review of the City's magistrates. The Judicial Advisory Board met in August and September, 2013 and conducted an extensive compensation and market review of the magistrates in neighboring Valley cities, which led to the Board's recommendation to the Council for consideration.

## **Discussion**

The judicial salary review conducted by the Judicial Advisory Board included the following: 1) compensation comparisons of neighboring cities, 2) statistical comparison information of neighboring cities, such as population, number of magistrates, case load, etc., 3) magistrate extracurricular activities, such as community work, committee membership, teaching opportunities, etc., 4) organizational charts, 5) job descriptions, 6) job responsibilities as set forth in the Administrative Order 2005-32; and 7) compensation history for Mesa's magistrates.

In summary of the review, the Board found that it has been six years since the magistrates have received a salary increase, their caseload is among the highest out of cities reviewed, that Mesa's population and subsequent judicial matters are second among Valley cities, that Mesa's magistrates perform and participate in many civic roles outside of their time on the bench and that Mesa lags in magistrate compensation compared to the cities reviewed.

Based on the findings of the review, the Board recommends the base salaries for Mesa's magistrates to be increased within a range of 9% to 14%. They concluded that a salary

increase within this range will be competitive with other Valley municipal magistrates and will promote a quality judicial staff and retention of same. The Board's recommendation is that the Council should determine the appropriate level of increase, within the recommendation, based on the City's fiscal constraints.

A second recommendation was made suggesting that the salaries of the City's magistrates undergo a review every two years with the anticipation of helping to ensure Mesa's magistrate salaries remain commensurate with neighboring jurisdictions.

The Board's final recommendation is that the City explores the development of ongoing communications with other Valley agencies regarding compensation for magistrates. The intent of this recommendation is to encourage collaboration with other cities so that salaries are not increasing so rapidly that it appears the jurisdictions are in competition with respect to magistrate compensation.

### **Recommendations**

Staff recommends the City Council authorize an increase of the Presiding City Magistrate and the City Magistrates base salary by 10%. A 10% increase is within the range recommended by the Judicial Advisory Board and will bring the magistrate's compensation proportionate to the market average.

### **Alternatives**

The City Council can suggest a different level of adjustment to the City magistrate's compensation within the Board's recommended range or turn-down the recommendation altogether and request an additional review.

### **Fiscal Impact**

A 10% salary adjustment will increase the Presiding City Magistrate salary from the current base of \$150,000 to \$165,000 and the City Magistrates from a current base of \$130,000 to \$143,000. The adjustment will take effect on July 1, 2014 and will be on-going costs.

### **Coordinated With**

The Judicial Advisory Board and the City Manager's Office.