

Local Officers' Compensation Commission
City Hall
10 N. Division Street, Room 302A
June 3, 2019
11:00 AM

Members Present: Joan Dillman, John Godfrey, Becky Squires, Walt McIlroy, Jeremy Wilson, Ross Simpson, Stan Chubinski

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Victoria Houser, City Clerk

Call to Order: Clerk Houser called the meeting to order at 11:00 am, recognizing a quorum was present.

Nomination of Commission Chair

Ms. Houser stated the first order of business was to nominate a Chairperson to preside over the meeting.

A motion was made by John Godfrey, supported by Becky Squires, to nominate Joan Dillman as Chair. All yes, none opposed. Motion approved.

Approval of Minutes:

Chair Dillman noted the next order of business was to approve the minutes from the last meeting, August 23, 2017. Ms. Dillman asked if there were any discussions. There were none.

A motion was made by Becky Squires, supported by John Godfrey, to approve the meeting minutes of August 23, 2017. All yes, none opposed. Motion approved.

Discussion on City Commission Compensation:

Committee members introduced themselves and shared their experience and background.

Chair Dillman expressed appreciation to Clerk Houser for all of the municipal research she compiled, stating it was very complete.

Chair Dillman asked for discussion for consideration of compensation increases for the City Commission.

Mr. Simpson requested more detail of the Committee's responsibilities.

Chair Dillman noted the Committee meets every two years, stating the Committee is responsible for considering the elected officials' compensation every two years, stating they review data collected from other similarly sized municipalities, relative to their elected officials' compensation and responsibilities.

Mr. Godfrey reminded the Committee that the discussions they had in 2015 led to changing the City Commission election from odd years to even years in 2017, to coincide with the November even year general elections. Mr. Godfrey stated this saves the City at least \$30,000 for a stand-alone election in off years, while providing cost savings during even year shared elections. Mr. Godfrey shared some of the other recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Committee in 2018, expressing appreciation to the Commission for their consideration and action on the recommendations.

Ms. Squires stated her conversations with a City Commissioner indicate no increase in elected official wages were included in the 2019-2020 budget, stating it was not recommended at this time due to numerous budget reductions.

Mr. Godfrey informed the Commission members that the State of Michigan Compensation Committee recommended no increases for State officials.

Chair Dillman noted she considered populations similar to Battle Creek, stating it was recommended to her the wages be externally comparable and internally consistent, stating the organization should not be the highest, or

lowest. Chair Dillman confirmed the data confirms the Battle Creek Commission compensation falls right in the middle with other municipalities.

Mr. Chubinski agreed Battle Creek compensation was comparable to similar size municipalities.

Mr. Simpson, as a member of DDA, stated he understood there were budget struggles, particularly this year, noting low personal property taxes and reduced State funding.

Chair Dillman asked the members if there was a motion to increase City Commission compensation.

Mr. Wilson inquired as to the last time City Commission compensation was increased.

Chair Dillman noted the most recent increase was in 2005, increasing the compensation from \$100 per meeting to \$200 per meeting. Chair Dillman noted the Mayor and Vice Mayor receive additional monthly compensation. Chair Dillman also noted the commission compensation in 1997 was \$25 per meeting, with meetings held every week.

Ms. Squires noted elected officials do not serve to collect monies, they want to serve the community.

Mr. Simpson suggested any excess funds be used for security at council meetings and City Hall to ensure staff safety, instead of elected official compensation increases.

A motion was made by Mr. Wilson, supported by Mr. Godfrey, to hold commission compensation at current levels, \$200 per meeting attended (\$4,800) with an additional \$250 per month to the Mayor (\$3,000/year) and an additional \$75 per month to the Vice Mayor (\$900/year), noting no increases are recommended.

All in favor, none opposed. Motion Approved.

Public Comment: There were none.

Commission Comment:

Mr. Simpson informed the Compensation Committee members that he considered running for Comm. Walters' vacancy last year, but was very concerned with the amount of discord from the public and a resident carrying a gun to the meeting. Mr. Simpson also noted elected officials had received some threats of violence recently and in the past, also expressing concern of recent events at a municipal building in Virginia. Mr. Simpson recommended the City Commission consider additional measures to ensure the safety of all staff, stating no amount of money was worth employees putting themselves in harm.

Compensation Commission members questioned why State and County buildings prohibited weapons, but the City did not prohibit weapons, suggesting the City Attorney research why City buildings could not prohibit weapons. All Compensation Commission members supported a recommendation the City Commission and City administration re-evaluate security measures in City Hall and other buildings, including prohibiting the ability to carry weapons in City Hall, the installation of metal detectors and the reassessment of all other policies to ensure the safety of staff and residents.

Adjournment:

Chair Dillman adjourned the meeting at 11:26 AM.