



**INDEPENDENT SALARY COMMISSION (ISC)
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, June 29, 2015
City Hall Conference Room 1E
6000 Main Street SW
Lakewood, WA 98499-5027**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Connie Coleman-Lacadie, Fae Crabill, Helen McGovern-Pilant, John Fuller, and Steve Mazoff

Staff Present: Debra Young, Human Resources Director and Tho Kraus, Assistant City Manager – Administrative Services, Heidi A. Wachter, City Attorney

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Introductions:

This is the first meeting of a newly formed Commission. An introduction of members and staff was completed.

Overview of Ordinance:

City Attorney Wachter provided an overview of the formation of the commission. The purpose of the Independent Salary Commission (ISC) is to specifically address the salaries of the Mayor/Councilmembers. Compensation for the elected officials can get very political and controversial. The ISC shall determine what compensation to offer Councilmembers.

The ISC is governed by Washington State law. If the City Council were to vote to change their compensation, it cannot apply to their current term of office without the ISC. Otherwise, it is not effective until their current term ends and they are re-elected. With an ISC, the salary recommendation, once approved by the Council can occur immediately.

The Ordinance requires a recommendation from ISC within 45 days of creation of the commission. We may request an extension however should attempt to meet timelines.

Orientation:

City Attorney Wachter conducted an orientation as required by law. The Open Records Act just hit its one year anniversary. To comply with the law all members of advisory boards and commissions must receive training on open government. A review may be done periodically.

What you need to know - People have the right to know what their government is doing, in the form of documents and open meetings. Documents include writing, photos, and everything else. We now have technology and personal devices. The City's interpretation of the law is that if a document is about City business and we have access to the document, we must produce it. It doesn't matter if the document is on a public or personal device.

An example of how this crosses over to personal devices is if you were interacting with another member of the Commission on your personal device regarding personal information such as how the grand kids are doing and then you added something business related such as, I sure hope we are able to discuss X at the next meeting, then the entire email becomes open to the Public Disclosure Act. In the past we were able to redact the personal conversation portion but not anymore. The best practice is to confine discussion to a specific place and time.

If your liaison Debi, communicates to all of you as a group, such as sending information ahead of time related to the next meeting, respond back, only to Debi. Otherwise it would be considered a meeting that violated the Open Public Meeting Act since the public was not allowed to hear the discussion. Wait until the meeting for discussion.

There are a few exemptions under the Open Public Meeting Act. If you have questions, feel free to contact the Legal Department. If you sought the advice from the Legal Department, that provides you with protection.

If we receive a Public Disclosure Request (PDR), we must respond within five days. That doesn't mean we have to provide the information at that time, we just need to respond. We might provide a timeline of when we think we will have the information for them.

Violations of the Public Disclosure Act (PDA) are very severe. It can be up to a \$100 fine per day. But even if there was no financial fine, we may have to pay their attorney's fees. This can get very expensive. Violations of the Open Public Meeting Act may not be severe financially but it puts a black eye on the organization. It can instill a lack of confidence in the organization.

Resources are available such as:

- The Legal Department
- Attorney General's Office
- Association of Washington Cities (AWC)
- Municipal Research and Services Center (MSRC)
 - There is quite a bit of information on their websites

The orientation ended with the routing of an attendance sheet signed by all members to show that the training was provided.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:

Fae nominated Steve for Chair of the Commission; it was seconded by Helen. Passed unanimously.

John nominated Helen for Vice-Chair of the Commission; it was seconded by both Fae and Steve. Passed unanimously.

Review of Market Data/Determine Comparable Jurisdictions:

Debi distributed 2014 Salary Data – Cities and Towns – Council/Manager Form of Government from other cities. The data included all WA State cities with populations over 15,000. The full-time Mayor entities were removed with the exception of Tacoma as noted by Chair Mazoff.

Additional information sheets were provided which included: a list of each labor union's negotiated comparable entities; 2014 data on just those entities; 2010 City population; property tax; sales tax and assessed valuation of all entities that meet an arbitrator's normal definition of a comparable (50% above or below the City of Lakewood); and a chart that compared the City of Lakewood with other entities and any additional benefits on a graph.

Vice-Chair McGovern-Pilant asked if reimbursements of expenses were considered when we identified other benefits. Debi clarified, no we did not. Member Coleman-Lacadie asked what types of expenses are reimbursable? Are there parameters? We will research the issue.

Debi also clarified that our elected officials do not receive additional benefits other than those required by law. The City does opt out of social security and provides a 401social security replacement plan.

General discussion continued which resulted in the following requests:

- Follow up on expenses budgeted or reimbursed. Areas such as; travel, training, professional development, payments/reimbursements, etc.
- How much time does is spent on Councilmember duties? What meetings do they attend in addition to regular and special council meetings?
- Provide a history of compensation for the Mayor and Councilmembers since incorporation.
- Identify which cities are full service cities, strong Mayor, etc.

Next Meeting Agenda (July 1st from 2pm to 4pm):

- Discuss follow up items.
- Determine comparable jurisdictions.
- Set up future meeting dates.
- Determine if a need for an extension is needed.

OTHER

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.


Steve Mazoff, Chair


Debra Young, HR Director