



CITY OF
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND SALARY COMMISSION

James Hermanson, Chair
Fred Whittlesey
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Steve Lakich
Lisa Neal
Andi O'Rourke

To: City Council, City Clerk and the City of Bainbridge Island

Date: April 19, 2021

Subject: 2020 Salary Determination

The Salary Commission ("Commission") was appointed on October 13, 2020, and completed its duties on April 12, 2021, having met six times. The Commission is an independent body, operating without oversight or influence by the City Council ("Council"), for the purpose of evaluating/determining Councilmember compensation. The Commission was formed pursuant to state law (RCW 35.21.015) and City of Bainbridge Island's ("City") Code (BIMC 2.74, as amended by Ord. 2020-27). As required by state law, none of the appointed Commissioners are Councilmembers, nor do any Commissioners have family ties to any on the Council. RCW 35.21.015. A Salary Commission may not be formed more frequently than every seven years. BIMC 2.74.010.C. The Commission has the duty to review the salaries paid to each elected city official and may reduce, increase, or defer changes to the salaries. BIMC 2.74.040, as amended by Ord. 2020-27. The Commission's determination is final and not subject to review by the City Council. RCW 35.21.015(3).

The City has not raised the salary paid to its Councilmembers since 2008. The pay for Councilmembers is currently \$1,000 per month. In 2009, pay for the mayor was increased by \$250 per month, or a total of \$1,250.

The Commission thanks the City's Human Resources Manager, Kate Brown, for her assistance in gathering the history of council salary, salary and benefit information for similar cities, cost of living adjustment schedules, and other similar information from cities around the State of Washington. The Commission reviewed all such information, as well as City salary overviews and cost of living analyses prepared by Commissioners. Further, the Commission requested and received responses to a survey drafted by the Commission from sitting Councilmembers. The survey responses provided significant insight into what we ask our City Councilmembers to do, and the length of time it takes to do it. The information reviewed allows the conclusion that City Councilmembers spend at least 20 hours, and frequently up to 50 hours, per week on City business, time that comes from the Members' personal and professional commitments.

City Council meets at least four times per month, usually for over three hours, and Councilmembers must review, understand, and often research large (often over 500 pages) agenda packets to prepare for voting on policy issues and direction to staff, ordinances, and budgeting. Each Councilmember is liaison to, and attends the meetings of, at least two, and sometimes up to five, citizen committees. The Mayor is responsible not only for running each City Council meeting, but for making appointments to (currently 17)

citizen committees, including reviewing applications and interviewing applicants, for setting each agenda after a weekly meeting with the City Manager, and other significant and time-consuming administrative duties. On a rotating basis, Councilmembers represent the City at multiple regional committees, such as those allocating population growth and other critical issues, at WSDOT meetings regarding SR 305 changes, on the Kitsap Transit Board and on the Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council. Beyond these obligations, Councilmembers meet with constituents, take telephone calls from constituents, received hundreds of emails per day from constituents, and research, draft and advocate for ordinances that change our Municipal Code to better implement the Comprehensive Plan.

All Commissioners began this process with an acknowledgment of the great debt City residents owe our representatives for their service. The majority reaching this determination further sought to arrive at a compensation level that more fairly compensates our City Councilmembers for the significant time and energy they provide to us, while acknowledging that each also serves out of a sense of civic duty and a desire to “give back.” The final additional factor informing the Commission’s determination herein is that a low compensation level places an often insurmountable bar before many otherwise qualified residents who might wish to serve.

Determination: Effective immediately, the salary for all Members of City Council is \$36,000 per year. Each Council-elected Mayor shall receive an additional \$1,000 per month for each month of service as Mayor (total of \$48,000 annually while serving as mayor).