



MINUTES
Elected Officers Compensation Commission
Tuesday, February 13, 2024 @ 12:00 p.m.
City Council Conference Room

Commission Member Melot called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Member Liisa Speaker
Commissioner Member Derek Melot
Commissioner Member Ben Kohrman
Commissioner Member Jeff McAlvey - excused
Commissioner Member Thomas Hoisington- excused
Commissioner Member Holli Seabury
Commissioner Member Steve Young - excused

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Jim Smiertka, OCA
Mayor Schor
Elizabeth O'Leary, HR
Jake Brower, Chief Strategy Officer
Anna Stouffer- Hopkins

Excused Absences

MOTION BY COMMISSION MEMBER SPEAKER AND SUPPORTED BY COMMISSION MEMBER HOISINGTON TO EXCUSE COMMISSIONERS HOISINGTON, YOUNG AND MCALVEY. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Minutes

MOTION BY COMMISSION MEMBER KOHRMAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 6, 2024 SUPPORTED BY COMMISSION MEMBER HOISINGTON AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

Discussion/Action

YOUTUBE Live Stream Option

Commission Member Speaker, if hurt not to live stream, but not elected or paid or do not see a reason to have live stream, and the consensus was to no live stream. The information is available on the website and the public is invited to attend the meetings.

Overview by Elected Officials – Mayor Schor

Mayor Schor spoke his role directly 13 departments, is an elected Mayor and asks the Commission to look at duties and responsibilities. He offered to answer any questions they might have.

Commission Member Speaker offered the recent municipality comparison and asked if Mayor Schor had other municipalities they should look at for “strong mayor”. Mayor Schor, in terms of “strong mayor”, Westland, Flint, Detroit and probably 10-12. Commission Member Speaker noted over years this Commission discusses comparisons between City Manager and Mayor. Mayor Schor noted he is “an elected City Manager”, but he does more as Mayor by attending neighborhood meetings, does reach out to the citizens, but commonly the City Manager does not do the same day to day, his argument would be a strong mayor does a lot more than City Manager.

Mr. Smiertka stated with his time in Flint and Kalamazoo, there was a City Manager doing the administrative. In this case the Mayor of Lansing also coordinates LEPFA, LHC, outside Authorities, etc. Mayor Schor noted he manages multiple departments and “CEO of the City” and the Mayor is the public face of the City.

Commission Member Melot asked if the Mayor is strong Mayor in Madison Wisconsin, and Mayor Schor stated he would ask. He did add that Grand Rapids has an elected Mayor and City Manager. Hollie asked why the deputy mayor compensation is higher than the Mayor compensation. Mayor Schor stated she is making less than anywhere else in senior administration, and she is compensated where she should be, and he believed he is lower. In 2023 positions were combined from Chief of Staff and Deputy Mayor. There were cost savings, but he was not able to provide that with recent budget cuts. There were two Deputy Mayors, and one was cut with benefits, and the remaining Deputy Mayor did get an increase. Commission Member Speaker asked if the savings were not seen because of budget cuts and Mayor Schor confirmed. Commission Melot stated that all discussions on the budget are out of this Commissions charge. Mayor Schor noted there is a savings in combining the positions, and Ms. Frayer is the lead person, when there are issues within departments she deals with that, she is working on funding from the State, and the right hand person to the Mayor.

Commission Member Melot stated this commission is to address the topic of not allowing elected officials in charge of their own compensation. Cannot take completely out of Council because they have fiduciary positions and role. Commission mandate is to look at job, look at pay rate, considering City wants high caliber people in those positions. Mr. Smiertka noted there is a State statute and City ordinance that keeps the compensation out of the elected officials. Commission Member Melot spoke briefly on the process with the Commission determination at the Council level.

DISCUSSION – Materials provided by Human Resources

Commission spoke briefly on comparable on “strong mayor”, and the limited comparisons because here are not a lot. Commission Member Speaker asked about previous years to Madison, WI and Loraine, Ohio. She then referenced the spreadsheet on East Lansing and the neighboring comparison. Ms. O’Leary noted that City is one they are still waiting on. Commission Member Melot note comments made in the past about saving money if hiring a City Manager, and looking at City level it could cost them more. Commission Member Seabury referenced the top six (6) employees, and how the Mayor is the lowest on the list. Commission Member Melot noted that is a result of politized. Commission Member Speaker asked if HR should look into other municipalities, and Commission Member Melot asked for what purpose. Commission Member Speaker stated that now City Manager is also consumed under the Mayor role as well. Commission Member Melot stated if hire someone to do the role of Mayor instead of elected, potential could be \$275,000-\$325,000, with current 850 FTE in the City employment. Mr. Smiertka added that after decisions are made, effective 30 days after unless rejected by Council, with 6 of the Council Members voting in opposition to the determination. Commission Member Melot says this structure allows for raises to occur without Council doing anything.

Commission Member

Commissioner Comments

Commission Member Kohrman asked about what options Council has, and it was explained they can do nothing or reject.

Commission Member Melot distributed a memo he did for the Commission to review and consider before the next meeting. This memo spoke on inflation, CPI and proposed changes for 2024 and 2025. The spreadsheet represents the current, the effective date of that rate, then the proposed rate amount in 2024, which is existing amount into the BLS calculator with 12/2023 and get a deflated investment amount. In the final column in 2025, once readjusted to catch up in 2024, then inflation increase of 3.1. This holds the value of what they are currently making against inflationary performances. The

calculator used is Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics calculator. This is separate from what the Commission wants to discuss options, and not fall further behind in the compensation. Commission Member Kohrman asked if they can propose for different years. Commission Member Melot confirmed they can because they only meet every other year. Commission Member Kohrman asked if different years be different for each position. Commission Member Melot asked if predicating on a step system, if they reject the first step, it would not work. Commission Member Kohrman asked if it can be arbitrary numbers. Mr. Smiertka stated it can be done. Commission Member Speaker stated originally it was in one determination letter, but then it was broken out into individual letters. Council Member Melot stated there is nothing prohibiting them from determining a position is worth a certain dollar amount. Commission Member Seabury asked if the position changes, and Mayor can no longer run for reelection. Commission Member Speaker stated there are no term limits. Commission Member Melot stated the salary would not change with a new Mayor. Commission Members spoke about the handouts from HR, and the comparables from other cities, but also from the top 6 FTE in the City currently. Commission Member Kohrman asked about live streaming moving forward. There may be a difference between Council seeing this in person or in writing. Commission Member Melot explained in the last two cycles members went to Committee of the Whole to explain where they were coming from. Mr. Smiertka noted that there will also be public comment at those meetings. Commission Member Melot noted it is not lack of knowledge. Ms. O'Leary noted when HR looks at positions, they look at the position, the duties and authority of a position when they have a position up for classification when they have jurisdiction or authority, it is not about a person but a position. Commission Member Speaker stated her concern with the determination by the Commission Member Melot because it would look like a big jump, so what can the Commission think about that could still do an increase but not a large jump. Mr. Smiertka clarified, there is a statute, Charter and Ordinance, and there is no prohibition of multiple years, but would not recommend beyond 2 years. Commission Member Speaker it was not proposed for more than 2 years, but individual recommendations for each elected official, for 2024 and separate recommendation for 2025.

Mr. Jake Brower stated he wanted to acknowledge all elected officials.

Anna Stouffer- Hopkins asked if the City Council has the authority has the option to take action later. Commission Member Melot stated there is a time limit once they get it, and Commission Member Speaker stated this Commission has a time limit on creating the recommendation.

Adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

Respectively submitted by:

Sherrie Boak, City Council Office Manager

Approved as presented on March 5, 2024