

SULTAN CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

ITEM NO: D-1
DATE: February 5, 2009
SUBJECT: Council/Mayor Compensation
CONTACT PERSON: Deborah Knight, City Administrator

ISSUE:

The issue before the city council subcommittee is a continued discussion of council and mayor compensation. The city council directed a subcommittee of members to review council and mayor compensation and make a recommendation to the full council

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Review the agenda cover provided to the Council on January 22, 2009. Discuss the alternatives presented. Ask questions and prepare a recommendation for council consideration.

SUMMARY:

The city council discussed council and mayor pay structure at the council meeting on January 22, 2009. The council spent the majority of time discussing pay for the mayor's position versus pay for the person. There was a lengthy discussion of increasing compensation in order to attract more potential candidates for vacant positions and/or more informed candidates. The underlying idea is more qualified people would be interested and available to serve as a council person or mayor if the pay for the position compensated the person for the amount of time spent performing official duties.

Staff did research the question of whether increased pay correlated to increased qualified candidates. There was only one study of the issue prepared for the City of Worcester¹. The study indicated no specific connection between salaries and the competitiveness of elections.

Currently, the mayor receives a flat salary of \$500/month. Council members are paid \$40 per council meeting for a maximum of two council meetings per month, and \$35 per meeting for other meetings for a maximum of two meetings per month.

¹ <http://www.wrrb.org/reports/05-03elections.pdf>

The council can choose to change the mayor's pay at any time with a proper budget amendment. The council can not increase its own pay unless a salary commission is established under RCW 35.21.015.

ALTERNATIVES:

Mayor

1. Keep the current flat salary per month. Base any proposed increase on an analysis of compensation for mayor's serving similarly sized cities. Under this model there is no specific connection between work level and compensation.
2. Create a pay structure for the mayor with a base salary and add compensation for meetings as defined by the council. This allows some connection between work level and compensation.
3. Provide a specific budget for the mayor. Currently, the city administrator has an annual budget for conferences, seminars, travel and training. There is no specific budget for the mayor. This provides a two pronged approach. The mayor received both compensation to spend as he or she sees fit, and reimbursement for job related expenses.
4. The council can choose to keep the pay at the current level and discuss future increases as a part of the 2010 budget process. The current mayor was elected to office knowing the pay structure. The City's budget is built on the current salary of \$500.00/month any proposed increase would require a budget amendment and a reduction of expenses (and planned programs) in another part of the budget.

Council

1. Keep the current structure based on attendance at two council meetings and two "other " meetings with a cap of \$150.00/month.
2. Base pay on meetings with no differentiation between council meetings and "other" meetings. This would remove the "penalty" for missing a council meeting if the council member attended other meetings to make up the difference.
3. Increase council compensation by increasing the cap. This could encourage council members to attend additional outside meetings and regional forums.
4. Remove any connection between pay and attendance at meetings. This alternative removes the current incentive to attend council meetings.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The 2009 budget does not include funding for changing council and/or mayor compensation. Any decision to increase pay will need to be offset by reducing expenditures and programs in other budgeted line-items.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Discuss the alternatives provided by staff. Suggest other alternatives. Prepare a recommendation for council consideration.

ATTACHMENT

A - Agenda cover Council/Mayor Pay Structure January 22, 2009.

SULTAN CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Agenda Item #: Discussion D 1
Date: January 22, 2009
SUBJECT: Council/Mayor Pay Structure
CONTACT PERSON: Laura Koenig, City Clerk/Deputy Finance Director *JK*

Summary:

The issue before the Council is the amount and method of payment of the monthly salary for the Mayor and Councilmembers. The current code (Attachment A) provides for a salary for the Mayor of \$500 per month. Councilmembers are paid \$40 per council meeting/maximum of two per month and \$35 per other meeting/maximum of two per month.

In accordance with RCW 35A.12.070 (Attachment B), the Council can not increase its own pay unless a Salary Commission is established under RCW 35.21.015. The Council can increase the Mayor's pay at any time with the proper budget amendments. RCW 35.21.015 (Attachment C) provides for establishment of a salary commission which allows mid term increases to council pay.

The current pay structure requires the attendance at two council meetings a month and two other meetings in order to receive the full payment of \$150. Councilmembers that have attend several other meetings and workshops in a month do not earn the maximum pay possible if they are unable to attend both council meetings due to unforeseen circumstances.

There are policy issues that the Council needs to address:

1. Should the method of calculating payment be changed?
2. Should there be an increase in the monthly amount?

Alternatives for Calculating Council pay:

1. A flat monthly payment with no connection to the number of meetings.
2. Pay based on meetings with
 - a. No differentiation between council and other meetings
 - b. No change to current structure.

Alternatives:

1. Refer the matter to the Sub-committee for review and a recommendation.
2. Leave the existing code section in place.

Attachments:

- A. SMC Chapter 2.05 – Council Salaries
- B. RCW 35A.12.070 – Council salaries
- C. RCW 35.21.015 – Salary Commissions
- D. AWC Salary Data for Mayor and Council

**Chapter 2.05
COUNCIL SALARIES**

Sections:

- 2.05.010 Effective date.
- 2.05.020 Salaries set.
- 2.05.030 Meetings defined.
- 2.05.040 Deductions for nonattendance.

2.05.010 Effective date.

The salaries of the elected city officials shall be as set forth in SMC 2.05.020, commencing January 1, 2000, and shall remain in effect until such time as the city council shall otherwise provide by ordinance. (Ord. 711-99)

2.05.020 Salaries set.

The mayor and city council members shall receive salaries as follows:

Mayor	\$500.00 per month
Councilmembers	\$40.00 per council meeting/ maximum two per month \$35.00 per other meetings/ maximum two per month

(Ord. 711-99)

2.05.030 Meetings defined.

Meetings shall include regularly scheduled council meetings, special council meetings, public hearings, council workshops, committee meetings and other city related task force or associations that the councilmember has been appointed to or requested to attend. (Ord. 711-99)

2.05.040 Deductions for nonattendance.

No compensation shall be paid to the mayor or councilmember who has an extended excused absence or disability that prevents attendance at all meetings during a calendar month. Pro-tem appointments during the mayor's or councilmember's absence shall receive the regular monthly salary for that position. (Ord. 711-99)

ATTACHMENT B

RCW 35A.12.070 Compensation of elective officers--Expenses.

The salaries of the mayor and the councilmen shall be fixed by ordinance and may be revised from time to time by ordinance, but any increase in the compensation attaching to an office shall not be applicable to the term then being served by the incumbent if such incumbent is a member of the city legislative body fixing his own compensation or as mayor in a mayor-council code city casts a tie-breaking vote relating to such ordinance: PROVIDED, That if the mayor of such a city does not cast such a vote, his salary may be increased during his term of office.

Until the first elective officers under this mayor-council plan of government may lawfully be paid the compensation provided by such salary ordinance, such officers shall be entitled to be compensated in the same manner and in the same amount as the compensation paid to officers of such city performing comparable services immediately prior to adoption of this mayor-council plan.

Until a salary ordinance can be passed and become effective as to elective officers of a newly incorporated code city, such first officers shall be entitled to compensation as follows: In cities having less than five thousand inhabitants, the mayor shall be entitled to a salary of one hundred and fifty dollars per calendar month and a councilman shall be entitled to twenty dollars per meeting for not more than two meetings per month; in cities having more than five thousand but less than fifteen thousand inhabitants, the mayor shall be entitled to a salary of three hundred and fifty dollars per calendar month and a councilman shall be entitled to one hundred and fifty dollars per calendar month; in cities having more than fifteen thousand inhabitants, the mayor shall be entitled to a salary of twelve hundred and fifty dollars per calendar month and a councilman shall be entitled to four hundred dollars per calendar month: PROVIDED, That such interim compensation shall remain in effect only until a salary ordinance is passed and becomes effective as to such officers, and the amounts herein provided shall not be construed as fixing the usual salary of such officers. The mayor and councilmen shall receive reimbursement for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of their office, or the council by ordinance may provide for a per diem allowance. Procedure for approval of claims for expenses shall be as provided by ordinance.

RCW 35.21.015

Salary commissions.

(1) Salaries for elected officials of towns and cities may be set by salary commissions established in accordance with city charter or by ordinance and in conformity with this section.

(2) The members of such commissions shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of a city charter, or as specified in this subsection:

(a) Shall be appointed by the mayor with approval of the city council;

(b) May not be appointed to more than two terms;

(c) May only be removed during their terms of office for cause of incapacity, incompetence, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office or for a disqualifying change of residence; and

(d) May not include any officer, official, or employee of the city or town or any of their immediate family members. "Immediate family member" as used in this subsection means the parents, spouse, siblings, children, or dependent relatives of the officer, official, or employee, whether or not living in the household of the officer, official, or employee.

(3) Any change in salary shall be filed by the commission with the city clerk and shall become effective and incorporated into the city or town budget without further action of the city council or salary commission.

(4) Salary increases established by the commission shall be effective as to all city or town elected officials, regardless of their terms of office.

(5) Salary decreases established by the commission shall become effective as to incumbent city or town elected officials at the commencement of their next subsequent terms of office.

(6) Salary increases and decreases shall be subject to referendum petition by the people of the town or city in the same manner as a city ordinance upon filing of such petition with the city clerk within thirty days after filing of the salary schedule. In the event of the filing of a valid referendum petition, the salary increase or decrease shall not go into effect until approved by vote of the people.

(7) Referendum measures under this section shall be submitted to the voters of the city or town at the next following general or municipal election occurring thirty days or more after the petition is filed, and shall be otherwise governed by the provisions of the state Constitution, or city charter, or laws generally applicable to referendum measures.

(8) The action fixing the salary by a commission established in conformity with this section shall supersede any other provision of state statute or city or town ordinance related to municipal budgets or to the fixing of salaries.

(9) Salaries for mayors and councilmembers established under an ordinance or charter provision in existence on July 22, 2001, that substantially complies with this section shall remain in effect unless and until changed in accordance with such charter provision or ordinance.

[2001 c 73 § 4.]

NOTES:

Findings -- Intent -- 2001 c 73: "The legislature hereby finds and declares that:

(1) Article XXX, section 1 of the state Constitution permits midterm salary increases for municipal officers who do not fix their own compensation;

(2) The Washington citizens' commission on salaries for elected officials established pursuant to Article XXVIII, section 1 of the state Constitution with voter approval has assured that the compensation for state and county elected officials will be fair and certain, while minimizing the dangers of midterm salary increases being used to influence those officers in the performance of their duties;

(3) The same public benefits of independent salary commissions should be extended to the setting of compensation of municipal elected officers; and

(4) This act is intended to clarify the intent of the legislature that existing state law authorizes:

(a) The establishment of independent salary commissions to set the salaries of city or town elected officials, county commissioners, and county councilmembers; and

(b) The authority of the voters of such cities, towns, and counties to review commission decisions to increase or decrease such salaries by means of referendum." [2001 c 73 § 1.]

Severability -- 2001 c 73: "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [2001 c 73 § 6.]

2008 Salary Data - Cities and Towns

JOB TITLE: Mayor and Councilmember		JOB CODE: 100 and 110
NOTE: The amount of compensation shown is set by ordinance. Some councilmembers may be given a lesser amount for their current terms of service.		
Jurisdiction	Mayor's Compensation	Councilmembers' Compensation
Cities 7,500 to 14,999		
Burlington (8,460)	\$1990/month	\$800/month
Newcastle (9,720)	\$800/month	\$700/month
Sedro-Woolley (10,030)	\$2,000/month	\$500/month
Snohomish (9,020)	\$700/month	\$450/month
Snoqualmie (9,360)	\$2500/month	\$500/month
Cities 2,500 to 7,499		
Algona (2,740)	\$800/month	\$250/month
Black Diamond (4,155)	\$1000/month	\$160/month
Brier (6,485)	\$1000/month, \$35/meeting up to 7	\$200/month \$25/meeting up to 7
Clyde Hill (2,805)	\$100/month, \$100/meeting	\$50/meeting
Duvall (5,925)	\$1500/month	\$500/month
Granite Falls (3,290)	\$1000/month	\$100/month
Medina (2,955)	No compensation	No compensation
Normandy Park (6,425)	No compensation	No compensation
North Bend (4,710)	\$1200/month	\$400/month
Pacific (6,225)	\$750/month	\$200/month
Stanwood (5,445)	\$1100/month	\$300/month
Cities 1,500 to 2,499		
Carnation (1,905)	\$400/month	\$200/month
Gold Bar (2,210)	\$300/month	\$100/month
Cities 500 to 1,499		
Concrete (845)	\$50/meeting, \$20/additional meetings, maximum \$200/month	\$30/meeting
Darrington (1,500)	\$400/month	\$35/month
La Conner (885)	\$476/month	\$25/meeting
Woodway (1,180)	No compensation	No compensation
Yarrow Point (970)	\$2500/month	No compensation
Cities under 500		
Beaux Arts Village (310)	No compensation	No compensation
Hamilton (325)	\$600/month	\$50/month
Hunts Point (475)	No Compensation	No compensation
Index (160)	No compensation	No compensation
Lyman (445)	\$100/meeting	\$25/meeting
Skykomish (210)	\$50/month	No compensation