



Minutes of the Arlington Citizens Salary Commission Zoom Meeting

City of Arlington
238 N Olympic Avenue
March 11, 2021

Commission Members Present: Carla Gastineau, Heather Logan, Mandy Kruger and Steve Maisch, VACANT

Councilmembers Present: Don Vanney, Debora Nelson, Jan Schuette, Michele Blythe, Marilyn Oertle and Jesica Stickle

Staff Present: Administrative Services Director James Trefry and Deputy City Clerk Ashleigh Scott

Commissioner Logan called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM and roll call and self-introductions of those present followed.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Maisch moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Kruger seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Logan opened public comment opened at 2:03 p.m. With no members of the public present or wanting to speak, the public comment portion closed at 2:04 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS COMMENTS

Commissioner Logan opened Elected Official comments at 2:05 p.m.

Councilmember Don Vanney – Councilmember Vanney stated this was his first year on City Council and didn't have any questions or comments at this time, but wanted to observe to gain knowledge on the process.

Councilmember Debora Nelson – Councilmember Nelson wanted to remind the Salary Commission of the letter she had sent in on March 6, 2021 for review that expressed her thoughts regarding the Elected Officials compensation. She also gave thoughts on compensation for meeting retreats and bringing back a benefits package option. Commissioner Gastineau, Logan and Kruger asked questions regarding personal impression of a benefits package, type of benefits City Council would like to see within the package and if there should be an opt in/out or a stipend available.

Councilmember Jan Schuette – Councilmember Schuette wanted to take the time to review the amount of time spent on council, regional and statewide meetings she attends on a monthly and annual basis.

Councilmember Michele Blythe – Councilmember Blythe also brought up all-day retreats as well as other long day meetings, because some are longer than regular city council meetings but get compensated less. She also suggested getting compensated monthly instead of per meeting. Councilmember Schuette mentioned a memo the City Administrator had sent out for communication regarding scheduled retreats. Commissioner Kruger asked if there is no agenda provided for a given meeting, how they get compensated. Some councilmembers stated they would take a photo of the Zoom invite and attach it to their expense reports. There was also a discussion on what other meetings councilmembers attend and who designates them to specific boards and commissions. Ultimately, Mayor Tolbert designates councilmembers to specific boards and commissions. Councilmembers also stated they attend many meetings unpaid, to gain knowledge and do research. Normally, there should only be one councilmember attending a specific meeting, but at times there are two due to interest and staying up to date on important issues. Councilmember Blythe also gave a suggestion on what a monthly compensation she would like to see and that was around \$1,400+ monthly.

Councilmember Marilyn Oertle – Councilmember Oertle also wanted to remind the Salary Commission of the letter she sent on March 9, 2021 for review. She explained webinars she participates in and that some she doesn't bill for. As other councilmembers stated previously, they attend some meetings and webinars for extra research and to stay informed and educated. Councilmember Oertle also stated that if compensation would move from per meeting to salary, they could observe over time on how many meetings, webinars and training are attended compared to prior years and the organization in keeping track of meetings attended and how city staff processes everything may come smoother. Administrative Services Director Trefry mentioned an option for regional reimbursements, and that a template monthly worksheet could be created for councilmembers for easier tracking and staying consistent.

Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Stickles – Councilmember Stickles wanted to mention that Arlington is one of the only cities left that compensate per meeting, as well as holding accountability on councilmembers to attend meetings, webinars and trainings. There was discussion brought up regarding salary in neighboring cities and whether they include benefits or not. Administrative Services Director Trefry stated there are comparables for 2019-2020 located in the Citizen Salary Commission binder that was handed out prior to the last meeting. 2021 comparables are still being collected and the information in the binder is available for councilmembers and the public to review.

Commissioner Gastineau wanted to open the discussion to councilmembers on how many hours – ballpark figure – they put in monthly towards meetings, webinars, phone calls, retreats, conferences, correspondences, travel time, emails, research, trainings, and so on.

Councilmembers all agreed that times are a little different now due to COVID-19 and without having to travel as much over the past year, they were able to attend more activities. Monthly hours ranged from (20) twenty to around (160) one hundred and sixty hours. The range

varies because it all depends on the time of the year, projects going on around the state and region, if you're new to council or participate in more/less committees and/or boards, etc. There are a lot of variables to consider and Commissioner Maisch stated we should talk to other cities regarding their councilmember's workloads to get better data and input.

The Citizen Salary Commission thanked the City Council for their participation and thoughts and closed the Elected Official comments at 3:00 p.m.

The discussion opened with reviewing 2020 and newly collected 2021 salary data from cities within Snohomish County. There was more focus on cities with populations close to that of Arlington's and gathering outside Snohomish County data as well. This data will be provided at the next Citizen salary Commission meeting on March 25, 2021.

The commissioners also had a discussion on benefit package ideas and whether other cities offer it and if they do what their options are and how they compare to their monthly salaries.

Administrative Services Director Trefry indicated that he inquired of Departments regarding requests for traffic and economic activity growth measures and will be able to share those with the Commission at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.



Heather Logan, Chair

