



City of Tacoma
Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries

Jed Brewster, Chair
Danette Knowles
Sara Lui
Alexandria Abplanalp
Colette Babbs
Greg Amann
Judy Loveless-Morris

MINUTES
CITIZEN COMMISSION ON ELECTED SALARIES

Monday May 6, 2024
6:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Brewster called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL: Liaison Monica Rutledge

Liaison Monica Rutledge took roll call of the Commissioners in attendance.

Present: Chair Jed Brewster

Commissioners: Danette Knowles, Sara Lui, Colette Babbs, Greg Amann

Absent: Alex Abplanalp, Judy Loveless-Morris

Staff Present: Asst. Human Resources Director Kari Louie,
Commission Liaison Monica Rutledge

III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

Chair Brewster welcomed the new members to the Commission and there were brief introductions amongst the Commissioners and staff present at the meeting. Chair Brewster thanked the staff for their support.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 5, 2024 MEETING

There was a motion to approve the February 5, 2024 meeting minutes as presented.

First: Commissioner Danette Knowles

Second: Chair Jed Brewster

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

The motion passed.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no Public comments submitted.

VI. MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER CALENDAR REVIEW

Sample calendars from the Mayor and Council Members, along with an explanation on how to interpret the content, was sent to Commissioners in advance of the meeting. There was brief discussion on the information provided.

Commissioner Amann asked if the Council going full-time was a Charter Review decision. Chair Brewster replied the answer was a little unclear and thought it would require action in part from the City Council. He shared the Commission's intent to provide a communication to the Council explaining their reasons for the substantial increase that was awarded for this year, including their expectation that the Council move towards becoming full-time. Commissioner Knowles commented on the apparent discrepancy between Council members time spent on duties according to their calendars. After the vote for an increase, she had hoped to see more even and transparent detail in the calendars, Chair Brewster concurred. Commissioner Amann added this seems consistent with other jurisdictions he is familiar with. Chair Brewster recognized that some officials have more than one income, by choice or necessity. He also pointed out from the memo provided that many components of their duties are not scheduled on their calendars.

VII. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL VIDEOS/STATEMENTS

One written statement was received from Deputy Mayor Hines. There was brief discussion on his responses to preset questions.

VIII. CITY COUNCIL INTERVIEWS/SHADOWING REPORTS

There were no Council interviews or shadowing to report on at this time. There was brief discussion regarding how to coordinate Council communication going forward and it was determined best to email Liaison Monica Rutledge who will keep track and notify other Commissioners to avoid any duplication. Chair Brewster encouraged Commissioners to reach out to Council Members.

IX. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION DISCUSSION

As previously discussed in items VI & VIII.

X. MAYOR WOODARDS Q & A

Mayor Woodards will join the meeting a bit later, due to attendance at another meeting.

XI. PRELIMINARY COMPENSATION DATA OVERVIEW; KARI LOUIE, ASST. HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries

Asst. Human Resources Director Kari Louie reviewed a preliminary report of compensation data from comparable cities. A final refreshed version will be presented at the next meeting. Chair Brewster thanked the staff for their work on compiling the data. Commissioner Knowles asked if median income for comparable cities would be provided. Staff will see what information is available.

Commissioner Babbs inadvertently dropped from the meeting.

XII. BYLAWS DISCUSSION/ADOPTION

Chair Brewster gave a brief overview of the benefits to adopting bylaws for the Commission, reviewing a draft provided by Deputy City Attorney Charles Lee. He pointed out several proposed changes he made to the draft and asked for feedback from the other Commissioners. There was discussion regarding the proposed changes which consisted of 1) eliminating a duplicate paragraph regarding electronic participation, 2) adding language to protect votes based on minor deviations from set rules, which was subsequently removed and 3) setting one year terms for the roles of Chair and Vice Chair, with the option of re-nomination.

There was a motion to adopt the Bylaws as amended.

First: Commissioner Greg Amann
Second: Commissioner Danette Knowles
Ayes: 4
Nays: 0

The motion passed.

XIII. OTHER TOPICS FOR OPEN DISCUSSION

Chair Brewster suggested scheduling a special meeting prior to the Vote meeting scheduled in August. The Commissioners agreed and a special meeting will be scheduled in July, date TBD.

XIV. TOPICS FOR AUGUST 5TH 2024 MEETING AGENDA

Due to the addition of a special meeting in July, agenda topics for the next two meetings were discussed.

July meeting agenda:

- Reports on Council interviews/shadowing
- Compensation Data
- Statements received from City Council Members

August meeting agenda:

- Nomination of Chair and Vice Chair

Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries

There was a five minute recess called at 7:04pm.

Mayor Woodards joined the meeting at 7:10pm. Chair Brewster thanked the Mayor for being present at the meeting, and invited her to share with the Commission a little about the work she does. Mayor Woodards thanked the Commission for inviting her to the meeting and for their service. She mentioned her previous meeting was to review the Charter Review Committee recommendations, several of which that could affect the CCES.

Chair Brewster asked about her responsibilities as Mayor. She replied that there are perceived and actual responsibilities. One of her main responsibilities revolves around managing the Council and their work. In her role, she also serves as the 'Face of the City' for all types of events locally, regionally and nationally. She also maintains relationships with key stakeholders. She is on duty 24/7 and is proud of her work and loves the job.

Chair Brewster asked how she spends her time in a typical month. Mayor Woodards replied that Tuesdays are typical with Study Sessions and Council meetings. She meets with Council Members individually once per month and the City Manager once per week, and serves on multiple Boards and Commissions. She also meets individually with a variety of constituents. She briefly explained details from her calendar and how it's not always reflective of actual time spent.

Chair Brewster asked in what way the Mayor makes the greatest difference in bettering Tacoma's community. She stated the City is hosting a 'Pathways for Green Jobs' summit through partnerships she formed while President for the National League of Cities. She also describes an upcoming meeting, funded by the state due to work being done around workforce, which will include experts, developers and business owners to create a new vision of downtown Tacoma. In addition, she will serve on a Board through the EPA, which is funding grants to reduce green house gasses by retro fitting of homes. She feels the greatest differences she makes comes from leveraging relationships which lead to opportunities for the City of Tacoma.

Chair Brewster asked the Mayor to describe her role with the different positions within the City's Council-Manager structure of government. Mayor Woodards stated that she is the first point of contact for elected officials and the community, making sure they are meeting the needs and expectations of the community. The City Manager is the first point of contact for the administrative process and internal staff and oversees the day to day City operations. Another part in her Mayoral role is ensuring that they are passing legislation and resolutions that help guide the City Manager and staff to carry out the expectations of the community. Mayor Woodards meets every other month with the TPU Director and Board Chair to communicate issues and stay connected. It is also the responsibility of the Mayor to carry out the evaluations of the City Manager and TPU Director. The Council is also responsible for confirmation of several City Dept. Directors. She maintains a close working relationship with the City Manager.

Chair Brewster asked her about her relationship with the Council and her involvement in setting the agenda. Mayor Woodards replied that she sets the agenda. In our form of government, she has one vote like every other Council Member. She meets with each Council Member individually and is often able to consolidate ideas and serve as coach

Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries

bringing Council Members closer together on divisive topics. As the Chair of the Council, it is also the Mayor's responsibility to work with staff to design the process for the review of the Charter Review recommendations and get amendments to the ballot. Mayor Woodards also explained that it is her job to run the Council meetings, which is becoming harder due to disrespectful comments at times during meetings.

Chair Brewster asked the Mayor to describe her key regional responsibilities. The Mayor cited multiple boards and commissions which she currently holds leadership roles. She further explained how those roles lead to relationships and resources for the City of Tacoma. Mayor Woodards explained that even in our current Council-Manager form of government, she is required to attend meetings with other elected officials and have knowledge of the City's day to day operations.

Chair Brewster asked the Mayor to describe the personal monetary contributions she makes in fulfillment of her role. She explained that well over 10% of her income goes back into the community. She attends a wide variety of events and feels it is important for the Mayor to be present, and also contribute to the cause, even though there is not a budget for her donations.

Chair Brewster asked Mayor Woodards which Mayor's in other communities that she sees as peers. She described how regardless of the form of City government, she likens herself to most Mayors in the country. She further described relating to cities of similar size, several of which include Stockton CA, Columbia SC, Birmingham AL, and Spokane WA. She stated that the City of Tacoma is the 104th largest city in the country, and we are required to think like larger peer cities, such as Seattle.

Commissioners Amann and Knowles thanked the Mayor for the information and for her time. Mayor Woodards expressed her gratitude to the Commissioners for their considerations for increases over the last several years, pointing out that inflation effects everyone. She requested they keep parity between the Council and Mayor pay and increases.

Chair Brewster asked the Mayor what the process is for the Charter designating the Council as full time. Mayor Woodards replied that the Charter Review Committee had just turned over their recommendations to the Council. Between then and mid-July they will determine which recommendations will be placed on a ballot for community vote in November. If the full-time Council status were to make it to the ballot, and be approved, the changes would likely take effect January 1st, 2025. Mayor Woodards asked the Commission to take that into account when they make a salary decision.

Chair Brewster commented that there has been prior discussion on provisional increases. Commissioner Amann requested additional detail on the compensation data, to include which City Councils are considered full-time.

Chair Brewster reviewed a final detail regarding adoption of the Commission Bylaws. There was discussion about holding the election of the Commission Chair and Vice Chair at the annual August meeting, rather than in November, to align with the terms which end on September 30th.

Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries

There was a motion to amend the Bylaws to hold elections of the Chair and Vice Chair at the annual August meetings.

First: Chair Jed Brewster
Second: Commissioner Danette Knowles
Ayes: 4
Nays: 0

The motion passed.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting.

First: Chair Jed Brewster
Second: Commissioner Danette Knowles
Ayes: 4
Nays: 0

The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01p.m.