

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Whatcom County Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials**

**Date:** February 26, 2025

**Time:** 4:00 PM PT

**Location:** Virtual Meeting

#### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 PM by Vice-Chair Foldenauer.

#### **2. Roll Call - Attendance**

Quorum confirmed. Members present:

- Rebecca Sadwick Shaddix (left after Gary Wrightson joined)
- Guy Occhiogrosso
- Gary Wrightson (joined after roll call)
- Karen Funston
- Sonya Luhm
- Ralph Foldenauer
- Vanessa Bronsema
- Tracie Gulit

Absent:

- Brennen Brown
- Daniel Darwin

#### **3. Meeting Minutes**

- The meeting minutes from the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved by all Commissioners in attendance.

#### **4. Public Comment**

No public comments were made.

#### **5. Presentation by Elected Officials**

Each invited elected official gave a brief statement, and Commissioners asked additional or clarifying questions of the elected officials. The questions were based on understanding the position and changes of the positions over time. The statements were made in the following order:

- 5.1 Councilmember Mark Stremmer
- 5.2 Steve Oliver, Treasurer
- 5.3 Rebecca Xczar, Assessor
- 5.4 Stacy Henthorn, Auditor
- 5.5 Satpal Sidhu, Executive

## **6. Old Business**

### **6.1 Discussion of request to review compensation/budget for County Charter Review Commission**

Facilitator Carroll gave a brief overview of this issue, originally this came up as a public comment from a member of the Charter Review Commission and the Salary Commission voted to discuss the item at a future meeting. After deferring the topic last meeting, Facilitator Carroll reminded Commissioners that they were sent a memo from (County Charter) Commissioner Morales, email correspondence from the Prosecuting Attorney's office and an email exchange between (County Charter) Commissioner Morales, Chair Shaddix and Facilitator Carroll. Commissioner Gulit made a motion to not have the Salary Commission take any action, nor weigh in on compensation and/or budget for the Whatcom County Charter Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wrightson. Commissioner Funston made a comment that if Commissioners felt strongly about the issue that the appropriate thing to do would be to provide feedback to the Council or the Charter Review Commission, not as a Commission but on their own. All Commissioners in attendance voted in favor of the motion, and the motion is passed.

## **7. New Business**

None.

## **8. Information Review**

### **8.1 Summary Market Data – Data reliability**

Facilitator Carroll gave a brief overview of concerns that have been raised about the data reported on this worksheet for the “other comparable counties”. This data was provided by the County HR department and the source document was in part a salary survey from the AWC (Association of Washington Cities). Some elected officials have raised concerns about the accuracy of the data. This could be a reporting error, a timing issue (effective date data) or information that is just outdated (data from 2018).

Commissioner Gulit made a comment that future commissioners may consider presentations by elected officials and discussion prior to any data collection.

Commissioner Funston made a motion to table the conversation about data needs until after the remainder of the presentations by elected officials and a discussion with Commissioners. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bronsema. All Commissioners in attendance voted in favor of the motion, and the motion is passed.

### **8.2 Commissioner Data Requests Status Updates**

Facilitator Carroll reviewed the updates to the data request. Commissioner Darwin's spreadsheet was uploaded and added as a link. An email clarification from Steve Oliver was included and the benefits information from HR staff was updated.

## **9. Next Steps**

9.1 Additional information requests (if any) – Commissioner Bronsema had questions about the calculations in Commissioners Darwin’s spreadsheet. Facilitator Carroll suggested that those questions be postponed to next meeting so Commissioner Darwin can walk through the spreadsheet.

9.2 The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 12th from 4-6 p.m.

## **7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:47 PM by Vice-Chair Foldenauer

**Prepared by:** Stacey Carroll, Facilitator

**Approval:** Approved by WC Salary Commission on March 12, 2025.