

MINUTES

2025 Annapolis Salary Review Commission January 31, 2025

1. Meeting type/time/location
Regular Meeting
8:31 a.m. – 10:27 a.m.
Virtual: Televised and recorded

2. Members present -
Ms. Barbara Chenault
Ms. Siena Scott
Mr. Paul Rankin, Chair
Mr. Stuart Cohen
Ms. Faye Currie
Mr. Brandon Wright

Commission staff liaison -
Ms. Tricia Hopkins; Human Resources Manager and staff support

3. Call to order/roll call. Chairman Paul Rankin called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. He welcomed all Commissioners and Ms. Hopkins and expressed appreciation for their efforts. Ms. Hopkins called the roll.

4. Public participation. Mr. Rankin inquired if there were any members of the public on the call and, if so, if they would like to make remarks to the Commission. No members of the public were on the call.

5. Minutes. Mr. Rankin asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the January 28, 2025 Commission meeting. Several members of the Commission said they had not been provided with a copy of the Minutes in advance of the meeting. Mr. Rankin suggested that since the January 28, 2025 Minutes had apparently not been distributed in time for the meeting, the Commission would instead review and approve these Minutes at the next Commission meeting, which will take place on Monday, February 3. Rankin noted that the Minutes have been prepared and will be distributed soon.

6. Commission discussion. Mr. Rankin reminded members that they are working under a tight deadline. The Commission's Final Report must be submitted to the City Council by February 4, 2025. The report must include recommendations for pay and compensation for the Mayor, City Manager and City Council members.

(a) City Manager compensation. Mr. Rankin recommended that the Commission begin by discussing pay and compensation for the City Manager. He reminded members that their work is forward-looking and that, in any event, the recommendations contained in the Final Report will be considered by the City Council.

Mr. Cohen said he believes the City Manager position should not be subject to review by this or future Salary Review Commissions. Mr. Rankin pointed out that, statutorily, this Commission has been tasked with making a recommendation on compensation for the City Manager. Ms. Scott asked Ms. Hopkins if the Compensation Study (“Study”) conducted by the City addressed this issue. Ms. Hopkins replied that it is her understanding the Study does consider this matter and will likely state that the City Manager position should be managed outside the scope of future Commissions. After discussion, the Commissioners agreed to include a recommendation in their report that the City Manager’s compensation be excluded from review by future Salary Commissions.

The Commissioners discussed a wide range of issues related to pay and compensation for the City Manager’s position, including data and information provided by Ms. Hopkins, comments made in interviews with the Commission by Alderpersons, Mayor and the City Manager, as well as some comparative salary-range data derived from a review of the International City/Council Management Association’s job site.¹

The Commission agreed to adopt in principle the following positions, subject to review at its next meeting:

- **The Commission recommends that the Annapolis City Manager’ annual direct compensation be in the range of \$250,000 to \$294,000, with the potential for annual pay scale adjustments.**
- **The City Manager’s annual direct compensation should be higher than that of his/her direct reports.**
- **The Commission urges the City Council to exclude from the purview of future Salary Review Commissions consideration of the City Managers compensation.**

(b) Mayoral compensation. Ms. Scott pointed out that the Mayor has been receiving the same compensation, i.e. approximately \$98,000, for at least eight years and possibly longer. She suggested that the base compensation for the Mayor be increased to \$120,000/yr. Ms. Chenault also believes the Mayor’s compensation level is too low and suggested an increase to \$160,000/yr.

Following discussion, Ms. Scott made the made the following motion, which was seconded by Ms. Currie:

¹ ICMA (<https://icma.org/>) has been active since 1914 and represents professional local government management executives throughout the U.S.

The Commission recommends that the Annapolis Mayor be compensated at a rate of \$120,000/yr. not including benefits.

Commissioners discussed the motion extensively. Mr. Cohen expressed interest in compensating the Mayor at a higher level, i.e. \$160,000/yr. as suggested earlier by Ms. Chenault. Several other Commissioners expressed support for the motion on the table, believing the increase, as a percentage of current compensation, was reasonable.

The motion was adopted with 4 votes in favor and 2 opposed.

(c) Aldersperson's compensation. Mr. Rankin reminded Commissioners that during the interview process, most Alderspersons, the City Manager and the Mayor remarked that pay for City Alderspersons should be increased. It was noted that every Aldersperson said they worked at least 30 hours per week on City issues, including constituent services. Several Commissioners noted that they also believe somewhat higher compensation may help attract younger persons to run for election.

Mr. Cohen made a motion that was not seconded to raise the compensation of Alderspersons to \$40,000/yr. After discussion, Ms. Scott made the following motion that was seconded by Mr. Mr. Wright:

The Commission recommends that Annapolis City Aldersperson's compensation be increased to \$32,000/yr., with an annual increase of \$2,000/yr.

After discussion, Ms. Currie offered a friendly amendment to the motion to limit the annual step increases to \$1,000/yr. Mr. Cohen opposed the friendly amendment as did several other Commissioners. Ms. Currie withdrew her friendly amendment.

The motion was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Rankin reminded Commissioners that at least one Aldersperson believes that since so much work is now done via smart phone, that the City should compensate Alderspersons for some or all of the cost of a phone. Several members noted that phone records are subject to discovery in the course of a law suit, which could mean the inadvertent release of personal information also stored on an Aldersperson's phone. Another Commissioner noted that several senior staff persons working for the City are currently provided with cell phones for business purposes.

Ms. Currie made the following motion, which was seconded by Mr. Cohen:

The Commission recommends that each Aldersperson be provided with a cell phone to be used exclusively for City business activities, and that the cost of the phone and related expenses be paid by the City.

The motion passed unanimously.

7. Next meeting. The Commission agreed to meet again on Monday, February 3, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.

8. Adjournment. By unanimous consent of the Commissioners present, the meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Paul Rankin.