

Meeting Minutes

Whatcom County Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials

Date: March 12, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM PT

Location: Virtual Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM by Chair Shaddix

2. Roll Call - Attendance

Quorum confirmed. Members present:

- Rebecca Sadwick Shaddix
- Guy Occhiogrosso
- Gary Wrightson
- Karen Funston
- Sonya Luhm
- Ralph Foldenauer
- Vanessa Bronsema
- Tracie Gult
- Daniel Darwin

Absent:

- Brennen Brown

3. Meeting Minutes

- The meeting minutes from the February 26th meeting were approved with one Commissioner abstaining.

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 Eric Richey, Prosecuting Attorney

5.2 Eric Scanlon, Councilmember

6. Old Business

None.

7. New Business

None.

8. Information Review

- 8.1 Summary Market Data – Data reliability
- 8.2 Commissioner Data Requests Status Updates

Commissioner Darwin reviewed his excel file that shows year over year increases for the salaries of the elected officials. He also calculated some averages. Chair Shaddix did some quick google searching to find average cost of living increases in the last year as context for the data provided in the excel file. The Commissioners had more conversations about how to think about this data in the context of decision making going forward.

Commissioners had discussion about the validity of comparing salaries to other counties. Commissioners had discussions about the county budget and how much that should weigh in their decisions. It was confirmed that the Commission is not constrained by a budget number. Commissioners had discussion about the unique nature of the position being an elected position and with very few specific qualifications. Setting salaries based on qualifications may be difficult if the qualifications of the person change.

After some discussion, Commissioners agreed that trying to establish performance based compensation and/or setting salaries based on hours or piece work (per meeting rate) is not something that makes sense.

Facilitator Carroll shared some best practices in terms of setting salaries, which includes looking at 1) external comparable data 2) internal alignment with salaries within the organization (including those supervised and supervised by) and 3) budget limitations. She suggested that Commissioners think about data they would want to consider for each position and come prepared to discuss that at the next meeting so she can gather the appropriate information.

9. Next Steps

- 9.1 Additional information requests (if any) – None
- 9.2 The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 2025 from 4-6 p.m.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:57 PM by Chair Shaddix

Prepared by: Stacey Carroll, Facilitator

Approval: Approved by Salary Commission on March 26, 2025