

**WHATCOM COUNTY COMMISSION ON
SALARIES
FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS
MINUTES**

MONDAY, April 19, 2021 -- 4:00PM

Virtual Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89729578379?pwd=RWI2SUtOdi9zSFdqa04xb1IyYy9mZz09>

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Jill Bernstein, Lance Calloway, Dewey Desler, Jim Farmer, Karen Peila, Lori Province, Beth Vonnegut, Matthew Williams

Members Absent: Tracie Gulit

Staff Present: Kara Turner, Turner HR Consulting and Commission Facilitator, Pat Elwell Commission Administrative Assistant

Guests: Whatcom County Prosecutor Eric Richey, Whatcom County Treasurer Steve Oliver

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dewey Desler called the meeting to order at 4:03PM.

B. APPROVAL OF APRIL 5, 2021 MINUTES

Commissioner Bernstein moved and Commissioner Desler seconded to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2021 meeting. The Motion passed unanimously.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

Whatcom County Treasurer Steve Oliver questioned the accuracy of the April 5, 2021 minutes. He noted that he had requested the Salary Commission that the positions of County Assessor, Auditor and Treasurer be aligned with the Administrative Services Range 440. He felt that if it was the Commission's intent to do this then the Motion that was approved and documented in the April 5 minutes did not accomplish this.

There was no further Public Comment.

The Chair opened the floor to discuss the comments presented by Whatcom County Treasurer Steve Oliver. The SCD-7, 2021 Salary Matrix for Unrepresented Employees and SCD-10 were reviewed. Discussion followed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein and Commissioner Province seconded that the 2022 annual salary for Whatcom County Assessor, Auditor and Treasurer be set at \$133,332 and for 2023 be set at \$136,532. Discussion followed. It was noted that this motion was to clarify the

action taken at the previous meeting and that the Salary Commission's intent was to align these three positions in 2022 with the top step of Range 440 (SCD-7, 2021 Salary Matrix for Unrepresented Employees, Group B – Management Salary Matrix). **The Motion passed unanimously.**

D. REVIEW OF ELECTED OFFICIALS SALARIES APPROVED (SCD-10)

Document SCD-10, WC Salary Commission Approved Salaries for Elected Officials was reviewed. The commissioners acknowledged these were the Salary numbers they had agreed to at the April 5 meeting.

E. DISCUSSION OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBER SALARY

Commissioner Bernstein shared information she had gathered:

- At least two experienced county council members indicated it takes an average of 25 to 30 hours/week to fulfill their council responsibilities.
- The hourly wage of \$38.63 at 25 hours/week roughly equals an annual salary of \$50,219.
- State legislators, who work approximately 1/3 of the year, are paid \$56,881. The speaker and majority leader are paid \$64,881

F. MOTIONS AS APPROPRIATE

Commissioner Bernstein moved and Commissioner Province seconded that Whatcom County Council Members receive an annual salary of \$56,881 for 2022. Discussion followed. It was noted that Whatcom County Council Members receive a lower compensation than the other seven Home Rule Charter counties in Washington State with Council Members.

Commissioner Province offered a friendly amendment to the motion to include a COLA of 2.4% for 2023. Discussion followed. Commissioner Bernstein accepted the friendly amendment.

The Motion restated. **Commissioner Bernstein moved and Commissioner Province seconded that Whatcom County Council Members receive an annual salary of \$56,881 for 2022 and a 2.4% COLA for 2023 for a salary of \$58,246 in 2023. The Motion carried, seven in favor and one opposed.**

G. NEXT STEPS

The Chair, Dewey Desler and Commission Facilitator Kara Turner will prepare a memo explaining the work of the commission along with specified attachments. A brief background will be provided for each decision around the designated 2022 and 2023 elected official salaries. Once finalized, the Commission Administrative Assistant, Pat Elwell, will email the document for each commissioner's signature via DocuSign. The minutes for today's meeting will also be distributed for the Commissioners approval.

The Chair made a motion and James Farmer seconded that the Commissioners express appreciation for the excellent work provided by Kara Turner and Pat Elwell in support of the Commission's mission and to Executive Satpal Singh Sidhu for his role in organizing and

assignment of Kara and Pat to support the Commission. **The Motion passed unanimously.** Commissioners expressed appreciation to Dewey Desler for his chairmanship skills.

H. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 4:55PM.

Minutes approved by the Commission via email review and acknowledgement.

**Whatcom County Commission on Salaries for Elected
Officials Whatcom County, Washington**

Dewey Desler

Dewey Desler Chair

Attest:

Patricia F. Elwell

Commission Administrative Assistant