

KIRKLAND SALARY COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

Tuesday, September 27, 2011

1. CALL TO ORDER

On September 27, 2011, the Kirkland Salary Commission held a meeting in the City Council Chamber at Kirkland City Hall, 123 Fifth Avenue. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Bea L. Nahon, Commission Chair.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Commission Members present were: Tina McDade, Bea L. Nahon, and Anna Rising. Staff members present were: Kathi Anderson, City Clerk, Tracey Dunlap, Director, Finance & Administration, Bill Kolden, Acting Director, Human Resources, and Robin Jenkinson, City Attorney.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Santos Contreras explained that he had worked in human resources at Boeing for a number of years before retiring and that he was concerned that some members of the City Council were receiving different pay than others. He described this as an inequity. The same job should have the same compensation.

Mr. Contreras complimented the Salary Commission for the data posted on its web-age. He stated that having looked at the data for the comparable cities and he could not justify increasing the Council compensation. Mr. Contreras observed that the City Council appeared to be in good stead across comparable cities in the Puget Sound and maybe even a little higher. Mr. Contreras recommended that Salary Commission make the salaries of all of the members of the Council the same.

Commission Chair Nahon thanked Mr. Contreras for his comments. She then asked the City Attorney for an explanation as to why the City Council Members were receiving different amounts of compensation. City Attorney Robin Jenkinson explained that at its September 2009 meeting, the Salary Commission passed a resolution reducing the salaries of the Council Members by 3.4 percent. This was the same percentage by which the salaries of most City employees had been reduced through furloughs. Ms. Jenkinson stated that under the state constitution, state law, and, accordingly, the Kirkland Municipal Code, a salary decrease for a sitting Council Member could be effective only after the next term of office begins. For this reason, the Council Members ended up with different salaries. Ms. Jenkinson further explained that if the Commission made no change to the salaries, following the next election, the salaries would once again be equal.

4. COMMISSION BUSINESS

a. Approval of September 28, 2011, Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve the September 28, 2011, Meeting Minutes. Moved by Commission Member Rising, seconded by Commission Member McDade.

Vote to Approve the September 28, 2011, Meeting Minutes. (Approved)

b. Notice of Meeting

Commission Chair Nahon pointed out that notice of the meeting had been provided through the City's home page, the City's neighborhood listserv, the City's calendar, K-GOV, the *Seattle Times*, *Kirkland Views*, *Kirkland Reporter*, *Kirkland Patch*, and *Everest Neighborhood Newsletter*.

c. Code of Conduct

Each of the Commission Members received and signed the Code of Conduct provided by the City Council.

d. Review Mayor and City Council Compensation Information

Commission Chair Nahon stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review the compensation paid to the Mayor and the City Council. She noted that the Commission had the opportunity to review the data provided by staff. Commission Chair Nahon then asked the other Commission Members for their comments.

Commission Member Rising said that in looking over the salary comparisons, the City Council Members are compensated a little more than in some of the comparable cities. She noted that of the five people who had written the Commission, three were not in favor of increasing the salaries of the Council Members. Two to three of those commenting were teachers who felt their workload had increased and their pay had been cut. One person wrote, "You could not pay me enough to take that job," or words to that effect. Commission Member Rising agreed that while Council Member compensation is very low for what the job requires, she could not justify raising their salaries in this economy, especially with staff furloughs and cuts occurring.

The City Attorney reminded the Commission that an additional email had been received on September 27, 2011, and was before them on the dais. Finance & Administration Director Tracey Dunlap explained that the employee furloughs had occurred in 2010 and there were no furloughs in 2011. In response to questions, Ms. Dunlap further explained that while the City had identified 16 employees for layoff at the end of 2010, reductions were bridged with annexation positions and 13 of the individuals filled annexation positions.

Commission Member McDade stated that she agreed with Commission Member Rising. She had reviewed the comments and did not see a vast change in the economic situation. Commission Member McDade concluded that she favored leaving the salaries as they were.

Commission Chair Nahon said she concurred with the other Commission Members. While some comments had been received that the City had nearly doubled in size with annexation, she noted that the teachers whose classrooms had doubled had not received pay increases. Commission Chair Nahon added that she had initially been concerned about the City's growth in size, but when she looked at the similarly sized cities of Federal Way and Kent, the Council salaries were very close.

Commission Chair Nahon said she considered restoring the pay cut that the Commission had made, but noted \$37 per month is not much. She pointed out that Council Members do not take the job for compensation or glory, but to serve. Raising the compensation even \$37 per month would be perceived negatively by those who took the time to contribute to the process.

Commission Chair Nahon confirmed with the City Attorney that the compensation of Council positions up for election would be reduced at the beginning of the new terms. She further confirmed that as the Commission was not changing the Council compensation no formal action on the part of the Commission was required.

Commission Chair Nahon announced that this would be her last Salary Commission. She explained that she was one of the initial members of the Salary Commission and had completed her term. She thanked the Commissioners, City staff and public and said that it had been pleasure working with the Commission.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The September 27, 2011, meeting of the Kirkland Salary Commission adjourned at 5:46 p.m.