

**Compensation Policy Committee**  
**April 18, 2022, 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.**  
**Approved Meeting Minutes**

Members in attendance: Councilmember Susan Gutowsky; Councilmember Shirley Peel; Councilmember Julie Pignataro, Chair

Staff in attendance: Kelly DiMartino, Interim City Manager; Kyle Stannert, Deputy City Manager; Teresa Roche, Human Resources; Carrie Daggett, City Attorney; Kelley Vodden, Director of Compensation, Benefits, and Wellness; Melanie Clark, Executive Administrative Assistant; Wendy Bricher Finance Analyst; Steve Engemoen, Senior Compensation Analyst

Presenter in attendance: Brian Wilkerson, hrQ

The Compensation Policy Committee (Committee) meeting was held on April 18, 2022, virtually through a Zoom webinar.

**Agenda**

- **Call Meeting to Order**
- **Approve Minutes from March 21, 2022**
- **Discussion Items:**
  - **Review hrQ Presentation on Updated Analysis on Council Pay and Benefits**
  - **Decide on the next steps**
- **Adjournment**

**Next Meeting: May 24, 2022, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

The meeting began at 3.36 p.m.

Councilmember Shirley Peel moved to approve the minutes from March 21, 2022. Councilmember Julie Pignataro seconded the motion. Approval was 3-0.

**Bottom line:** The committee appreciated the analysis and asked for additional information. They wanted time to reflect on what they believe the subsequent right actions are for Council to consider, and the topic is on the May meeting.

Brian Wilkerson shared the results of the City Council Compensation and Benefits Benchmark Study. The comparison survey included peer cities as well as front-range cities.

Brian shared annual compensation comparisons for the Mayor. He explained that there was no correlation found between a city's population or area size to the number of Councilmembers. Colorado Springs was not included due to the different form of government.

Councilmember Pignataro asked why they chose the median instead of the mean data. She stated that it would be helpful to see everything. Brian explained that the statisticians felt the median was a more accurate reflection of the data.; however, he will gladly update the slides.

Councilmember Pignataro did not see the number of constituents per Councilmember in the data. Brian shared that they did not find consistent data or a typical pattern identified.

Brian shared that Fort Collins has the lowest compensation level for City Council among the peer cities in the study, and two cities along the front range are lower than Fort Collins. The survey also showed that four cities report a higher salary for the Mayor Pro Tem than other Councilmembers. Fort Collins is also unique in that community members must vote on changes to how the salaries are considered for Council compensation. Councilmember Gutowsky had asked earlier what the current method was, and Teresa researched this. She shared that Charter Article II Section 3 provides an annual compensation adjustment for the Mayor and Council based on changes to the Consumer Price Index Urban (CPI-U) and shared she has the salary data from 2011 through 2022 if anyone is interested.

The survey found that Fort Collins is in alignment with expense reimbursements.

Participation in benefits was available in five peer cities and three Front Range cities. In almost all cases, the elected officials did not take advantage of the benefits. Additionally, other benefits beyond the employee offerings were not found.

Councilmember Pignataro asked about the cost of healthcare for City employees. She asked if any of the benefits allowed for an expanded family or if it was only for the individual. Brian stated that from what he could remember, they offered to the Councilmember only, and the trend was they paid the entire cost of the premium.

Councilmember Susan Gutowsky believed that it would be awkward if the benefit totaled their full compensation and that it would end once their term ended. Teresa shared under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) that health coverage starts from the date the covered employee's health insurance ends and, depending on the type of qualifying event, may last for 18 months, 29 months, or 36 months.

Brian shared they found that discussions about pay often triggered broader conversations in the community regarding Council duties and accountabilities. He explained that the responsibilities of the Mayor and City Council are most often outlined in the City Charter and noted several cities have gone to the effort of expanding on those outlines and have listed specific duties, requirements, and expectations of the roles in either job descriptions, a manual or brochure.

Teresa explained that Brian had shared a couple of position descriptions he received as part of having these conversations and is happy to share these if there was interest.

Councilmember Gutowsky believes that it would be helpful to have an expanded list of duties for future Councilmembers and will be asking that Council do this. Brian shared that most who went through this

process felt like it was a worthwhile exercise and found conversations with members of the public were helpful.

Councilmember Shirley Peel asked what led to the decision in November 2010 for the Colorado Springs community to vote to change the form of our city government from a council-manager form of government to a council-mayor structure. Brian shared that he believes the population size may have had something to do with it, though Kyle Stannert explained he was not aware of the population being a trigger that led to this change by the voters.

Teresa asked the committee members what they wanted to consider with this information.

Councilmember Pignataro stated that she is interested in getting a more diverse Council in the future and was hoping the survey would bring forward more concrete conclusions. She is not sure where she wants to go from here.

Councilmember Peel shared that she went into this with the idea of making it feasible for more people to be able to serve on the Council. She is disappointed by the results. Councilmember Peel feels that it has highlighted the need to have a job description to point out the time it takes and the expectations.

Councilmember Peel shared that Colorado Springs is an interesting idea and wondered at what point we need a stronger Mayor form of government. She feels that being on Council is a full-time job.

Councilmember Pignataro stated they might want to consider when other communities have transitioned to a strong mayor form of government.

Councilmember Gutowsky is not supportive of the idea of benefits and is uncomfortable with the assumptions that if more pay or benefits were offered, it would bring more diversity to Council and who is running. She believes that knowing Councilmembers' requirements and letting people know they can make it work would be a draw for people. She would like to consider making the campaign process shorter and lowering costs.

Councilmember Pignataro clarified that she did not mean to imply that benefits would draw diversity to the Council. She was coming from her personal experience with being on Council.

Councilmember Gutowsky wants to be sure their salary is not such that the community expects full-time work from Councilmembers.

Councilmember Pignataro would like to touch base on this again in May.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.