

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Mayor and Council Members

From: Suzanne Mesich, City Clerk

Subject: Citizens' Commission on Public Service and Compensation Recommendation

On May 18, 2023, the Citizens' Commission on Public Service and Compensation (CCPSC) was reconvened for the purpose of amending their final recommendation solely in regard to the effective date for the proposed salary increases. The Commission's original recommendation called for an effective date of July 1, 2024. This date conflicts with provisions of the Arizona Constitution derived from article IV, Pt 2 § 17 which prohibits the compensation of any public officer be increased or diminished during their term of office.

The Commission opted for changing the effective date to December 4, 2023, the start of the new term of office. Attached is their amended recommendation which was finalized and signed by all members.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Yolanda Lozano, Chief Deputy City Clerk.

Respectfully,



Suzanne Mesich
City Clerk

SM:YL:ja

Attachment: 2023 CCPSC Amended Final Recommendation

THE CITIZENS' COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND COMPENSATION

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

May 18, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

The Citizens' Commission on Public Service and Compensation recommends that the City of Tucson's Charter be amended by adjusting the present salaries for the Mayor and Council Members as follows:

- Increase Council Members' salaries from the current salary of \$24,000 per year to be commensurate with the salary set for members of the Pima County Board of Supervisors pursuant to A.R.S. §11-419(A).
- Increase the Mayor's salary from the current salary of \$42,000 per year to be commensurate with 1.25 times the salary set for members of the Pima County Board of Supervisors pursuant to A.R.S. §11-419(A).
- Adjust Mayor and Council Member salaries in accordance with the salary adjustments outlined in A.R.S. §11-419(A).
- Implement proposed salary increase on December 4, 2023.

Example: If this recommendation were in place today, the salary for Council Members would be \$76,600 per year and the salary for the Mayor would be \$95,750 per year.

MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS AND RATIONALE

The Citizens' Commission on Public Service and Compensation is recommending these salary increases be approved based on the following premises:

1. The current salaries for the Mayor and Council are not living wages. This disincentivizes everyday Tucsonans from seeking elected positions. Offering a living wage for the Mayor and Council positions will attract Tucson citizens of all backgrounds to public service allowing for more diverse candidates to serve.
2. The Mayor and Council have not received a salary increase for more than 23 years, since the last increase approved by voters in 1999. Since 1999, the City of Tucson's budget has increased by 180% adding greater fiduciary responsibilities to the roles of Mayor and Council Members.
3. Council Members make \$24,000 or \$11.54 per hour. This is \$2.31 per hour less than the current minimum wage. These numbers assume a 40-hour work week. Many Council Members are working more than 40 hours per week making their hourly pay even less.

Final Report and Recommendation (continued)

4. Tucson lags behind the five largest cities in Arizona when it comes to compensating elected leaders, despite being the second largest city in the Arizona.
5. A salary increase for the Mayor and Council will be absorbed by the budget and will not negatively affect City services.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND RATIONALE

- Mayor and Council serve in a full-time capacity, and they should be appropriately compensated for their time.
- The Pima County Board of Supervisors currently make more than the Mayor and Council despite the City's budget being larger than the County's. The City's current budget is \$2.1 billion and the County's is \$1.9 billion.
- Mayor and Council hire staff to assist them in their duties and to help run their offices. The Mayor and Council's staff members make significantly more than the Mayor and Council Members even though they work just as hard, if not harder, than staff.
- Recently, Mayor and Council have adjusted City employee wages to account for inflation and improve the quality of life for employees. The Mayor and Council deserve the same.

Good governance is fundamental to a flourishing and harmonious community, and providing reasonable compensation for the Mayor and City Council will help entice diverse members of the Tucson community to consider taking on the duties and responsibilities of these positions, which creates a public good. While the success of our citizens is properly attributed to their efforts and talents, it cannot be denied that an efficient city government materially contributes to the health, education, safety, and constructive business environment that gives its citizens the environmental resources and opportunities they need to succeed and prosper. Unless public service pays a living wage, only those who don't need the money can afford to pursue office.

Considering workload and hours spent fulfilling legislative and constituent duties, it is important to adequately compensate Mayor and City Council for the time spent meeting community expectations. Municipal benchmark data including population, budget, consumer price index, minimum wage, and cost of living are also taken into account in our recommendation.

Additionally, the Commission's recommendation will go before Mayor and Council to be referred to the November General Election ballot. While the Mayor and Council do have to vote on the recommendation, their act of putting the Commission's recommendations on the ballot is a ministerial function to carry out the requirements of the Charter. The Mayor and Council's vote does not mean that the Mayor and Council Members are asking for a raise or had any say in the final recommendation. This recommendation was developed and finalized by the Commission, not the Mayor and Council.

BACKGROUND

In the 1993 election, the City of Tucson's Charter was amended to require establishing a seven-member volunteer Citizens' Commission on Public Service and Compensation, which is to meet every two years so that it can ". . .conduct a review of the salaries of elected city officials. Such review shall be made for the purpose of determining and recommending the appropriate salaries. . ." The Commission members are drawn from the community at large after public advertisements, are appointed by the City Manager, and must be representative of the diversity in Tucson.

This volunteer commission took office on January 15, 2023. The Commission, comprised of eligible citizens from different cultural backgrounds and professional areas, met on a regular basis for several weeks. Members participated by attending the meetings and by researching information requested of and provided by City staff members.

RESOURCES


- A. City of Tucson Mayor and Council History of Propositions related to compensating the Mayor and Council dating back to June 1948.
- B. Legislative changes to Arizona Revised Statutes § 11-419 related to compensating the Pima County Board of Supervisors.
- C. The Charter for the City of Tucson, Arizona, and specifically the chapters relating to the powers of the Mayor and Council and relating to compensating elected city officers and regarding the commission on recommending salaries for elected officers.
- D. Minutes and notes from previous Citizens' Commissions on Public Service and Compensation.
- E. Salary survey information on similarly sized cities in Arizona, and specifically requested information on comparably sized cities in other states.
- F. Tucson community profile and consumer price index information.
- G. Information on wages and salaries from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and other sources.
- H. Public input submitted via survey and public comment form

Final Report and Recommendation (continued)


Respectfully Submitted,



Alexa Scholl, Chairperson



Laura Dent



Gregory Facey



Jennifer Garcia

Virtual attendance, unable to sign

Thomas Warne



Nicolas Nieri-Lang

I agree with my colleagues that the Mayor and City Council members are deserving of a raise after 20 years without one. However, I feel the raises recommended by my colleagues on the commission are too high. Therefore, I cannot support the proposed raises placed on the ballot by the commission.

Not present to vote

Agustin Urquidi