

# City of Bloomington City Council Ad Hoc Salary Committee Elected Official Compensation Framework Summary Memorandum

To: Office of the Common Council Ad Hoc Salary Committee, City of Bloomington

From: Crowe LLP

Date: November 18, 2024

Subject: Summary of Facilitated Committee Meetings to Develop the Elected Official Compensation Framework for the Bloomington City Council

---

## Introduction

In October 2024, Crowe LLP (Crowe) was engaged by the City of Bloomington, Indiana (City) to facilitate a series of discussions to support City Council's Ad Hoc Salary Committee (Committee) in developing the Committee's strategy for elected official compensation.

In the months prior to Crowe's involvement, the City independently gathered data and began discussing potential salary adjustments for the City's elected officials: City Mayor, City Clerk, and City Councilmember. Through this process, the City Council identified a need to define its guiding principles and develop a strategy by which City Council will determine elected official compensation. The City engaged Crowe to facilitate a series of discussions among Committee members to accomplish this goal.

## Summary of Approach and Outputs

To support City Council in developing a strategy for elected official compensation, Crowe facilitated three 1-2-hour strategy sessions with the Ad Hoc Salary Committee on October 29, November 7, and November 8, 2024. The Committee was comprised of Committee Chair Sydney Zulich and Councilmembers Matthew Flaherty, Kate Rosenbarger, and Hopi Stosberg. Per Indiana Code 36-5-6-6(9), the City Clerk attended all meetings to record the proceedings.

The objective of these sessions was to iteratively discuss, debate, and develop the strategic framework which the Committee intends to recommend to the City Council. Crowe documented the Committee's agreed-upon approach in the resulting **Elected Official Compensation Framework (Framework)**, which we provide as an appendix to this memorandum. Key components of the Elected Official Compensation Framework and supporting process are explained below:

Guiding Principles: The Ad Hoc Salary Committee identified and refined Guiding Principles, or those values that guide how the City Council makes decisions regarding elected official compensation. Over the course of the first two sessions, Councilmembers and Crowe iteratively refined Guiding Principles and supporting definitions. The Committee selected five Guiding Principles to guide their decision-making: (1) *Accessibility of Public Service*, (2) *Equitable Pay*, (3) *Quality Community Service*, (4) *Informed Decisions*, (5) *Transparent and Documented Process*.

Basis of Salary Setting: After selecting the Guiding Principles, the Committee debated approaches for determining annual salaries for elected officials. With support from Crowe, the Committee first compiled a list of potential approaches for setting elected official salaries. The Committee's initial goal was to identify all feasible alternatives, even those not necessarily supported by Committee members. Then, to build consensus and gauge how well each alternative aligned with the Guiding Principles, Committee members anonymously and individually scored each alternative against each individual Guiding Principle using a

heat map visualization tool. This exercise produced a score to quantify how well each alternative aligned with Guiding Principles. Crowe compiled the heat map results from individual Committee members and created a consolidated view of all Committee member scores.

There was general consensus across the Committee about the leading alternative (that which scored the highest based on the Guiding Principles). It was discussed that the heat map was intended to be one tool, rather than the sole factor that would determine the Committee's final recommended strategy. Committee members opted to further refine the leading alternative to determine how it would be operationalized.

The Committee ultimately selected a basis for salary setting, which is documented in the Elected Official Compensation Framework. The Committee stated it intends to share this information with the larger City Council in November 2024.

Relevant Information / Data: During the Committee's sessions and refinement of the recommended basis for salary setting, Committee members identified various data points and information needed to enable the City Council to make informed decisions about compensation. Committee members discussed data needed to support decision making, and Crowe documented these inputs within the Framework. This included City Civil Pay Ranges, City Budget constraints, consultation with Bloomington elected officials, and input from Councilmembers on hours required to meet expectations.

Annual Process: Based on City input throughout the sessions, Crowe drafted a high-level timeline of annual activities to support elected official salaries in future years. These include yearly review and validation of the Framework, gathering/analyzing necessary information, and developing the City's Salary Ordinance for the following fiscal year.

## Next Steps and Considerations for Council

Crowe understands that the Committee plans to review the Framework on November 18, 2024. The Committee requested that Crowe attend this meeting to assist in answering questions and finalizing the outputs of this process.

Crowe also understands that the Ad Hoc Salary Committee will share the Committee's recommendations with the rest of City Council and make decisions on currently undecided aspects of salary setting, including the following:

1. **Confirm Mayor and City Clerk salaries within the selected ranges.** The Committee's tentative recommendation to set the Mayor's and City Clerk's salary as the midpoint of their relevant ranges was documented in the Elected Official Compensation Framework. However, finalizing this decision is a critical next step for moving forward with other open compensation decisions. Councilmember salaries are dependent on first establishing the Mayor's salary – see more below.
2. **Set Councilmember salaries at a to-be-determined percentage of the Mayor's salary.** The Committee's view is that Councilmember salaries should recognize the City Council as a coequal branch of government and reflect the part-time nature of the role (as compared to the Mayor, which is a full-time position). To help inform the appropriate percentage, Crowe understands that the Committee has administered an internal survey to Councilmembers to collect input on the hours necessary to meet expectations of the Councilmember role. Crowe understands that the Committee intends to use this information to select a reasonable data point for hours worked, which will in turn inform the percentage used to calculate Councilmember salaries.
3. **Determine whether supplemental pay should be a component of City Clerk compensation.** During strategy sessions, Committee members discussed the possibility of including a form of supplemental pay to reward professional certification attainment. If the Council chooses to pursue this route, Council should identify and document certifications which would be eligible for the additional pay, in addition to establishing the pay amount and frequency (e.g., one-time bonus, yearly supplemental pay, etc.).

4. **Determine Implementation Approach.** Depending on the nature and dollar value of compensation adjustments, City Council must determine whether to implement the full value of salary adjustments in the next fiscal year or to pursue a phased implementation approach.

Following the meeting on November 18, 2024, Crowe expects to formally close our engagement with the Committee, unless there are additional requests for support related to this effort.

Crowe thanks the City of Bloomington and Ad Hoc Salary Committee for the opportunity to support this important effort. For questions related to this memorandum, please do not hesitate to contact our team.

**Susannah Heitger**

*Engagement Principal*

[Susannah.Heitger@crowe.com](mailto:Susannah.Heitger@crowe.com)

**Shannon Madden**

*Subject Matter Advisor*

[Shannon.Madden@crowe.com](mailto:Shannon.Madden@crowe.com)

**Renaë Peden**

*Project Manager*

[Renaë.Peden@crowe.com](mailto:Renaë.Peden@crowe.com)