

## Comments from Mayor Thomson

at the request of the City Council Ad Hoc Salary Committee

November 18, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments as the City Council Ad Hoc Salary Committee considers options for setting salaries for elected officials, including the Mayor of the City of Bloomington.

### Considerations for Mayor's Salary

The Mayor's salary should reflect the level of responsibility required to lead and make decisions for the human and real resources of the entire city, the complexity of the job, the requirement to be on call 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, and also the impact of decisions on the community and the region. While elected officials do not fall within the standard salary grade structure, as the chief executive of the city, the mayor's salary ought to be set at the highest level of grade-related salaries, in keeping with the city's principle of meeting the market for similar positions. The philosophy used to determine salaries for elected officials should align, generally, with the philosophy for other employees.

The philosophy for determining staff salaries was based on 1) rubric factors for the position itself (not the current individual holding it) and 2) market value for similar positions. While elected officials do not "shop" for jobs in different locations, similar positions in the community and in Indiana should still be considered relevant, and cost of living incorporated into pay.

The rubric factors, to review, were:

- **Complexity**, with the highest level "Multifaceted - Work is broad in scope covering several departments within the Organization. Policy, procedure, and precedent are created and/or approved by this job. Independent judgment is required to review and approve major recommendations, establish organizational policy, and coordinate technical and administrative recommendations with organization-wide policies and procedures."
- **Experience required**
- **Education required**
- **Direction of Others/Direction of Resources**
- **Environmental Strain:** This could be physical strain or mental strain: "This fatigue is normally produced by the need to concentrate on the task being performed, to pay attention to detail, to perform a high volume of work, and/or to work under time constraints or to perform physically unpleasant or hazardous work."
- **Independent Judgment**
- **Consequence of Errors:** "Consider the extent to which an error in judgment on the employee's part is likely to be detrimental to the organization's financial, customer, or employee relations posture in the long term."
- **Frequency of External Work Relationships/External Communication:** "Consider the types and frequency of work relationships the job has responsibility for outside of the City of Bloomington organizational structure. This work might be with individuals or with entire organizations or entities."

The rubric and market benchmarks fed into the creation of the new 14 grade levels and guide how non-union, non-elected officials at the highest grade levels are compensated.

While the grade levels themselves do not apply to elected officials per the study parameters, as data on elected officials was not included in the study or in calculating those salary ranges, it may be helpful to know that for 2025, grade 14 salaries have been capped for tenure at Step 3 (\$151,410), regardless of actual tenure, to ensure that all employees at other levels will receive full benefit of the implementation in year one.

## Comments from Clerk Bolden

at the request of the City Council Ad Hoc Salary Committee

November 18, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments as the City Council Ad Hoc Salary Committee considers options for setting salaries for elected officials, including the elected City Clerk. Below I provide my comments on several of the approaches the Committee has discussed during the recent sessions that I attended in the course of my duties documenting the proceedings.

### Comments on Approaches Considered by the Committee

#### 1. Clerk Salary as a Percentage of Mayoral Salary

- An advantage is that this is an easy-to-understand approach.
- The percentage may be somewhat arbitrary. An 85% level would have the effect of aligning the City Clerk salary with most other department heads, which serves as recognition of the role as both department head and an elected official.

#### 2. Benchmarking Salaries to other Indiana Second Class Cities

- An advantage is that this is an easy-to-understand approach.
- A disadvantage is that this approach is rooted in the historic and systematic devaluation of a role predominantly filled by women.

#### 3. Salary Commensurate with Department Heads

- The preferred method would be to align the City Clerk salary with the salary range established for Civil City grade 13 department heads.
- An advantage is that this is an easy-to-understand approach and is consistent with other City employers, making it easier to defend and explain.
- It should be communicated that there is a reference to the City's salary schedule, while also indicating that this salary is for an Elected Official Role, which has distinct considerations from other City staff.
- It will be important to communicate that the City Clerk and Clerk staff are a separate branch of government, though part of the same City organization.
- Setting the Clerk salary at the midpoint of the pay range is not equitable with other City Department Heads. Some Department Heads with long tenure at the City may earn the same salary as the City Clerk, who has been with the City longer overall and in the current role.
- I suggest providing a similar longevity-based pay structure, which may enable keeping the base salary lower than a midpoint. While there may be political or perception concerns about a longevity-based approach encouraging people to continue to run for office, this may be offset by the advantage that every four years, there is an opportunity for new individuals to run for and be elected to office.

### Salary Implications Related to Clerk Staff

It is important to me that the impact on salaries for my staff be considered. I note the following:

- Clerk staff roles and job descriptions will be reviewed in the WERC process early next year.
- I remain interested in certification pay for Clerk staff. I am not in favor of providing certification pay for the City Clerk when this same form of compensation is not available to Clerk staff.