

Thursday, November 14, 2024, Meeting Minutes
Red Lion Hotel, 221 N Lincoln St, Port Angeles, WA 98362
TEAMS – Meeting ID: 295 220 528 906, Passcode: zj9QC5

The meeting of the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials was brought to order by Jon, Chair, at 6:00 p.m.

Jon read a land acknowledgement, stating the Commissioners are meeting in the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary land of the Elwha Klallam, Jamestown S'Klallam, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Skokomish, Quinault, Hoh, Quileute, and Makah Tribes of Peoples. The Commission acknowledges and respects the Indigenous individuals and communities who live on this land now, and those who were forcibly removed from their homelands. In offering this land acknowledgement, the Commission affirms Indigenous sovereignty.

Commission Members Present:

Andrea, Vice Chair – via TEAMS
Carli – via TEAMS
Debbie
Ellen – via TEAMS
Jason
Jon, Chair
Kirby
Kirsten– via TEAMS
Lancer
Linda
Melody

Sarah– via TEAMS
Steve
Stu

Commission Members Excused:

Erik, Vice Chair
Nicholas

Commission Members Unexcused:

Sue

Staff Present:

Teri Wright, Executive Director
Lindsay Matthews, Executive Assistant

Teri took roll call.

Jon read the meeting opening statement.

Lindsay went over meeting folders and their contents.

Steve moved to approve the October 9 and 10, 2024, meeting minutes. Lancer seconded.
The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Public Testimony

Jon welcomed Judge Kristin Ballinger who attended virtually via TEAMS. Judge Ballinger introduced herself, she is a King County Superior Court Judge. She thanked the Commissioners for their work on the commission. She wrote an email to the Commissioners and asked that the Commissioners to increase the salary of the Judiciary by 6.75% in addition to a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). She spoke about recruitment, retention, and resigning issues in King County due to salary. She explained some of the types of cases they see in Superior Court and the impact they have on the community. She asked that Commissioners read the email she sent in that was given to them. She asked if there is any other information that Commissioners need to please let them know and they will get it to them.

Jon thanked Judge Kristin Ballinger for her testimony.

Commissioners moved into a work session. Commissioners talked briefly about the preliminary economic and revenue forecast. Teri spoke briefly about the letters from the Judiciary, Kirstin Ballinger, and Heidi Green, and input from the public. Jon opened the floor for any discussion, thoughts, or ideas.

Sarah asked Teri to talk about the 5% differential in the Judiciary. Teri explained that the Judiciary had asked for a 5% differential way back, and each salary setting session the Commissioners get to decide to continue to use the differential or not, and this session the Commissioners decided to keep the differential. The way the differential was calculated was adding the salary increase to the highest court then removing the 5% for each court under that. The courts have mentioned that they are not happy with the differential or how the differential was calculated.

Kristen Ferrera was in attendance and spoke to the 5% differential. She said the Judiciary wanted to make sure the differential was intended and to share that the Judiciary would prefer a bottom-up approach to the differential instead of the top down. She also mentioned that the Judiciary is fine with no differential.

Jon suggested that the Commissioners look at the bottom-up approach to the differential. Commissioners agreed they would like to see the difference. Jon mentioned he agrees the differential is a good idea to keep.

Jon welcomed Judge Karl Williams who attended virtually via TEAMS. Judge Williams is a Pierce County District Court Judge, he is also the president of the District and Municipal court Judges Association. He thanked the Commissioners for holding space for the differential. He shared his outlook, that from an equity standpoint it shows that the lower courts are as valuable to the community as the other Judges positions.

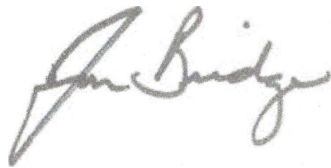
Jon thanked Judge Karl Williams for his testimony.

Teri shared that she would show Commissioners bottom up differential and no differential just so they can see the differences.

Jon asked if there was any other business that needed to be discussed prior to adjournment.

Linda moved to adjourn the meeting; Kirsten seconded.

The meeting was adjourned by Jon at 6:33 p.m.



Jon, Chair

12/11/2024

Date