



**CITY OF WAUWATOSA**  
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## **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Tuesday, June 28, 2011  
Back of Council Chambers

PRESENT: Alds. Donegan, Walsh, Berdan, Ewerdt -4

EXCUSED: Ald. Organ

ALSO PRESENT: B. Aldana, Asst. City Atty./HR Director; Alds. Wilke, Pantuso, Meaux

Ald. Donegan as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

### **Continued discussion of Mayoral salary and compensation for the term beginning April 2012**

The committee continued the mayoral and compensation salary discussion.

Tom Gaertner, 6829 Terrace Court, asked about the cost of benefits related to this position. Ms. Aldana noted that the insurance cost is the most expensive piece. The cost of health insurance and pension will now be shared by the employees affected by the passage of the Budget Repair bill, decreasing this benefit cost to the City. Mr. Gaertner felt a modest increase might be appropriate since the salary has been frozen for so long. He didn't want this position to become a placeholder for a professional politician to keep their state pension contributions in line. Mr. Gaertner said if the council wanted to make a substantial change by eliminating the City Administrator position and making those duties the Mayor's duties that would be a fair discussion.

Ald. Meaux agreed with Mr. Gaertner that by raising the salary could open a can of worms. He felt there are options to defray some of the costs of being mayor. He questioned what technology the mayor has to use at home when necessary. Ms. Aldana advised that the Mayor has a city issued cell phone and is reimbursed for gas mileage. Ald. Meaux said the easiest thing could be to give a modest \$5,000 raise, but the reality of this position is that it is part-time. The City Administrator carries most of the workload and is compensated accordingly.

Ald. Meaux talked about the comparisons presented of other local communities mayoral pay and didn't feel that any of the other comparable cities ran any more effectively than Wauwatosa. He felt the mayor position is more of a volunteer position and didn't feel a need to change it. He said the City should be proud, not embarrassed, that someone steps up to the plate to take on this position for the wage of \$22,000.

Ald. Nikceovich presented a document with her recommendations for the mayoral salary.

Ald. Ewerdt felt that this mayoral issue is valid to discuss noting that the salary has been frozen in time since 1984. He felt the salary should be looked at. He said that a person cannot afford to live in Wauwatosa on the mayor's salary. Ald. Ewerdt reported that he has seen how much time this mayor and the previous mayor have put into the position since he has been alderman. He said that the Chief Executive Officer position comes with a lot of responsibility and to ask someone to take this on for \$22,500 would limit the pool of candidates. Ald. Ewerdt didn't think changing the council size should be related to the mayor salary issue.

Moved by Ald. Ewerdt, seconded by Ald. Berdan  
to increase the mayor's salary to \$35,000 effective  
April 2012.

Ald. Walsh said he would not support the motion, he felt that by using the comparables presented the mayor's salary looks pretty good. He said just because it has been a busy year the salary should not be adjusted. Just like when it is a slower year the salary is not adjusted to reflect that.

Ald. Berdan noted that the only job description is that the mayor is Chief Executive Officer of the city. The job includes doing what the municipality expects of them. The feedback received from some of her constituents was that the salary is kind of low but didn't know if the timing is right to increase it. She supported the motion for a modest increase as the salary needs to be raised.

Ald. Meaux said the fundamental issue is whether the position is full-time or not. He felt there are quality people who would serve in the position for the current salary. He felt better if the position is not someone's bread and butter. The hard issues come with the job. Sometimes you get more than you bargained for but the salary shouldn't be increased just because of that.

Brian Faltnson, 2209 N. 62<sup>nd</sup> Street, said the position shouldn't be about a job. The public service part is very important, and doesn't want to see the salary raised just for someone to be able to support a family.

Ald. Ewerdt said nowhere in the statutes does it say the mayor position is part-time.

Ald. Donegan commented that he sees the position clearly as a part-time position working less than part-time hours. He noted that the City has been well served by the hours put in by this mayor and by previous mayors. He believes that the City gets a lot more from their Mayor than they pay for.

The committee discussed the hours worked by the mayors and felt that the constituents shouldn't expect our mayor to put in the kind of hours they have in the past. The citizens will have to adjust their expectations.

Vote on the motion – Ayes: 2 Noes: 2 (Donegan, Walsh)

The Chair requested that the item goes to council without a recommendation. Discussion continued.

Moved by Ald. Donegan, seconded by Ewerdt  
to increase the mayor's salary to \$30,000 effective  
April 2012.

Ald. Walsh felt that this is a service oriented position and the only reason he thought would justify an increase is if the City were hurting for potential candidates. The motion for a salary of \$30,000 would equal a raise of approximately 33%. This is not in line with what he promised his constituents when he was elected. He felt the current salary is the right salary for something less than a part-time position. Ald. Walsh noted that there has been an increase related to benefits in this position.

Vote on the motion - Ayes: 3 Noes: 1 (Walsh)

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk  
City of Wauwatosa

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