

# **Charter Review Commission**



**City Council Compensation & Term Length Subcommittee  
Preliminary Findings and Recommendations  
April 25, 2024**

# Agenda

---



- Charge on Compensation & Index
- Research
- Analysis
- Conclusions
- Recommendation: Compensation
- Recommendation: Index

# City Council Compensation and Term Length



## Charge: Compensation

---

Whether City Council members should be compensated on indexed terms that more accurately reflect the city's cost of living and lower barriers to participation in City government

### Chair:

- Luisa Casso

### Members:

- Josh Baugh
- Mike Frisbie
- Martha Martinez-Flores
- Dwayne Robinson

# Research

---

- Reviewed charters and salary levels of other cities
- Interviewed former council members
- Analyzed compensation data & evolution of role of council member
- Discussed whether and how to index compensation
- Received input from compensation SME on data sets, analysis, and business case
- Considered public input

# Analysis



Subcommittee setup six step analytical process to answer charge:

- Step 1: Conduct a compensation review of comparable cities
- Step 2: Develop description for council role: Duties, Roles, Responsibilities, Attributes, and Time Commitments
- Step 3: Match council role with similar private/public sector job roles
- Step 4: Research other strategies and consult with Subject Matter Expert
- Step 5: Develop options to **re-baseline** 2015 compensation to 2025
- Step 6: Identify repeatable, reliable, direct data set for compensation increase

# Conclusions

---



## Subcommittee Background Assumptions:

- 2015 Commission determined Council position was to be compensated
- Applied 2015 San Antonio Area Median Income as the benchmark to establish council pay
- Did not include mechanism to adjust pay on a repeatable basis (cost-of-living)
- 2024 Commission is charged with reviewing and recommending a process change

# Conclusions



- **Council positions are a compensated public service position**
  - It is a full-time position (on average requires 40 to 60 hours per week)
  - Requires evenings and weekends
  - Council members have access to certain benefits
- **Council compensation is not based on “hours worked”**
  - In HR terms the council position is an exempt position (no overtime is paid)
  - Based on authority and decision-making authority
  - Acknowledge council role as a valuable, professional position

# Conclusions



- **Council compensation should be aligned to their responsibilities, duties, attributes**
  - Council role is like an executive or management level job
    - Approval authority
    - Policy setting
    - City Manager oversight
    - Strategic and Financial planning
    - Project prioritization approval
    - Constituent issue management
- **Council districts are unique/different** – different expectations for a council member
- **A similar “executive/management” position in the private sector would pay \$120k - \$140K**



# Recommendation: Compensation

## Bureau of Labor Statistics: Median Income for Management and Professional Occupations in San Antonio-New Braunfels MSA

- Occupations with similar attributes as Mayor and City Council
- 2023 Median salary: \$81,763

## Recommendation for compensation

- City Council: \$80,000
- Mayor: \$95,000 (+\$15,000 from Council compensation)

# Recommendation: Index

---

**INDEX:** City of San Antonio wage increase percentage provided to civilian employees annually

*Option: Index to the annual Bureau of Labor Statistics survey for professional manager/director-level salaries in the San Antonio MSA.*

**Index philosophy:** If the city budget is healthy then the workforce and the city leaders could afford a wage increase. But if the workforce does not receive a raise, neither should the elected officials.

**Note:** This proposal would go into effect after the next municipal election.

# Recommendation: Index Annual Wage Increases for COSA Civilian Employees



Each year during the annual budget process, the City of San Antonio determines a percentage increase for civilian employees based on a number of factors, including the overall economic health of the City.

Under this recommendation, the Mayor and City Council would receive the same percentage increase that civilian employees receive.

Elected officials receive same increase as civilian employees, connecting their compensation to the overall health of the city budget

In years that civilian employees don't receive an increase, neither would the City Council.

# Support for Compensation Recommendation



## A case to change the status quo...

- Recognize the value and complexity of the council/mayor position
- Affirm that council role is a compensated public service role
- Enable council members to focus full-time on their council responsibilities
- This recommendation a move in the right direction, but not the full step as indicated
- Allow council members to sustain themselves during their time of service
- Attract candidate to serve for four-to-eight-year terms
- Proposed changes are modest, appropriate backed by market analysis
- Positions San Antonio for future growth

# Q & A

# Next Steps



- Commission Feedback
- Further discussion on previously identified unanswered questions



**Thank You**  
**End of Presentation**