

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

TO: CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
FROM: SUE GALLAGHER, CITY ATTORNEY
ROB JACKSON ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY
SUBJECT: COUNCIL COMPENSATION – POTENTIAL CHARTER
AMENDMENT

RECOMMENDATION

The City Attorney recommends that the Charter Review Committee provide direction to staff regarding a potential amendment to the City Charter to address Council compensation.

In particular, staff seeks direction on the following:

- a. Threshold question: Does the Committee wish to recommend to Council that Council consider an amendment to the Charter to allow for increased Council compensation?
 - b. If so:
 1. What is an appropriate formula (or method of calculation) for determining Council compensation?
 2. Does the Committee recommend a particular salary range?
 3. What is an appropriate administrative process for setting Council compensation?
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item will provide the Committee with an opportunity to further discuss options for Council member compensation. To assist the Committee in that discussion, staff has prepared three charts for comparison:

1. Chart of Comparable Cities

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This chart identifies the current compensation of Council members in comparable cities. The list, which includes eleven cities and the County of Sonoma, is the same list currently used by the City of Santa Rosa in evaluating its employee salaries. (It should be noted, however, that this list of cities is expected to be reviewed in the near future to ensure the list continues to provide the most appropriate comparisons).

To the extent available at this time, the list includes information on each city's council member compensation and method of calculation.

2. Chart of North Bay Cities

This chart identifies the current compensation for Council members in cities in Sonoma County, northern Marin County and the City of Napa. All of the cities on this list are significantly smaller in population than Santa Rosa, and thus may be of minimal comparative value. Due to the cities' proximity to Santa Rosa, however, staff felt it appropriate to provide this data.

To the extent available at this time, the list also includes information on each city's council member compensation and method of calculation.

3. Chart of Select Northern California Cities

This third chart was originally provided to the Committee at its last meeting. The chart includes a variety of northern California cities with a range of approaches to Council compensation. The chart has been updated and expanded to provide additional information regarding methods of salary calculation, where available.

Staff has also attached, for the Committee's consideration, the ballot materials from City of Berkeley Measure JJ, approved by the Berkeley voters in 2020. The Measure provided for a substantial increase in compensation for both the Berkeley Mayor and its Council members. The Measure passed with over 64% of the vote. To staff's knowledge, this is the most recent ballot measure to provide an increase in Council compensation in the region. The ballot materials may be helpful as the Committee shapes its direction to staff regarding the drafting of a potential ballot measure for Santa Rosa.

After the Committee has had a chance to hear from the public and to discuss among itself the options for Santa Rosa Council compensation, staff will request direction on next steps. If the Committee wishes to proceed with a proposed Charter amendment regarding Council compensation, staff will begin preparation of a draft amendment for the Committee's consideration at a later date.

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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Chart of Comparable Cities
- Attachment 2 – Chart of North Bay Cities
- Attachment 3 – Chart of Select Northern California Cities
- Attachment 4 – Ballot materials from Berkeley's Measure JJ (Approved in 2020)
- Attachment 5 – Measure M (City of Santa Rosa 2012)

CONTACT

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