**Independent Salary Commission Meeting #5**

**May 23, 6:00 p.m.**

**Minutes**

**Attendance**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Commissioners Staff** | | | | | |
| Name | Present | Absent | Name | Present | Absent |
| Rut Martinez-Alicea | x |  | Jamey Duhamel | x |  |
| Abby Engers | x |  | Barb Siples | x |  |
| Rosanna Gill | x |  | Toni McCasker |  |  |
| Joni Marie Johnson | x |  | Courtney Crisp | x |  |
| Laura Sampson | x |  | Liam Sar | x |  |
| Maura Cooney | x |  | Jim LaBelle | x |  |
| Emily Medress | x |  | Other |  |  |
|  |  |  | Other |  |  |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Invited guests/speakers** | | | |
| Latricia Tillman |  |  |  |
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***Welcome & Zoom Overview***

By Jamey Duhamel, meeting facilitator, with a Zoom overview by Liam Sar

***Commission Business***

All commissioners vote to approve adoption of the May 9th meeting minutes as written.

Jamey Duhamel noted the commission received 2 new public comments.

Commissioner Gill presented the agenda to discuss Methodology, and differential pay for life experience.

Jamey Duhamel asked if there is anyone from the public in the meeting who wants to testify, none were present.

Commissioner Cooney asked whether the commission may use the Portland City Auditor provided information.

Jamey Duhamel confirmed the commission can use this information, and suggested that the commission can delay consideration of the Auditor’s report and the two new comments because they were received only earlier today.

Commissioner Johnson asked whether we know the identity of the commenter whose name and email was not attached. Commissioner asked whether the individual is from an organization, or just someone who writes well and has a lot of thoughts about these issues.

Jamey Duhamel answered that we have the name, Michael Veele, and an email, but no further information.

Jamey Duhamel presented the guiding principles from the previous meeting(s) and asked if commissioners wished to discuss; not at this time. Then invited Commissioner Engers to present on the Article that was circulated on Anti-Racism and Equity.

Commissioner Engers noted a tension between using market data and not relying on it because of the points raised by this article.

Commissioner Johnson suggested a reference to how the charter specifies that the City will not take into account part-time positions as comparisons, only full-time ones, and that it was not the commission that determined this, it was decided by the voters who voted for the charter. Commissioners Engers and Martinez expressed agreement.

Commissioner Sampson suggested a reference to local comparator cities as well as those of comparable populations, because some, such as Beaverton and Hillsboro, are smaller but still desired as references.

Jamey Duhamel introduced Barb Siples from Bureau of Human Resources.

Barb Siples presented market data showing averages of total compensation at comparable citiesand specified this is the total cost to the city of their employment

Commissioner Johnson asked for the documentation to specify that benefits are equivalent to 50% of the salary so people don’t get confused.

Barb Siples agreed, and confirmed the numbers include 50% added to base salary to include the cost of benefits.

Barb Siples presented Pay gap trends in OR and noted the slides show summaries. There is more robust data you have been provided you can look into. Racial gaps are shown, not broken out by gender. This data represents the uncontrolled pay gap. It includes all jobs. There is also controlled pay gap data that looks at the gaps within specific jobs. For example, AAPI is a very broad demographic, you can find more detailed data that will tell more nuanced stories. Also presented data on Household structure.

Jamey Duhamel noted that previously she asked if we could get this data broken down by race. We are looking into it and will provide when we have it.

Commissioner Martinez noted that jobs that are decision making positions are generally keeping women, trans, & gender nonconforming out of those roles bc they are traditionally gendered.

Barb Siples added in support of that statement that in the controlled data where the pay gap is smaller, there is also less representation by people of color.

Barb Siples presented wages that would be a living wage in Multnomah County for different family situations.

Commissioner Cooney asked why a living wage for 2 adults, 1 working is less than for 2 adults, both working? Barb Siples answered that the calculation assumes childcare costs are reduced if one adult stays home, and assumes more robust healthcare is required.

Barb Siples presented the method for selecting comparison cities: cities across the country with similar population. BHR identified closest 10, 5 slightly more, 5 slightly less, and added the regional data you requested. BHR did not find data for every city you requested, this is just those we did. We added a geographic differential, so we are comparing PDX $ to PDX $. I did add some cities from the City Auditor’s study that were not too far from the closest 10 just to provide a more robust dataset. Portland lags the comparators on Mayor and Auditor salaries, but is ahead on Council Member salaries.

Commissioner Sampson noted that for auditor there are some hidden rows, and asked to clarify whether the averages are based on the visible rows or hidden ones too. Commissioner noted what appear to be some discrepancies in the data

Barb Siples answered that averages are based only on those visible, BHR believes the discrepancies can be accounted for, and will follow up to verify that.

Commissioner Johnson said that the City Auditor’s report emphasized that auditors roles are very different at different cities. Cities might be comparable, but their auditors not.

Barb Siples noted BHR only compared to auditors with whole-city responsibilities, and that at this point they don’t know the exact responsibilities everywhere. Noted that BHR can get that info, but it will take time, and require the commission’s direction about what you want to know.

Commissioner Johnson noted the City is noticeably off market, and that the commission wants to be sure they are comparing to those with such a comprehensive role. Commissioner suggested referring to the Auditor’s lengthy memo.

Barb Siples asked would you want BHR to use the Auditor’s list of comparables, and add pay and geographic differentials.

Commissioner Johnson stated she wants to use their info, and expressed confidence in its quality.

Commissioner Martinez agreed that we would want to know if pay gaps are explainable by different responsibilities, and asked whether the content of the job description, not just the title was used to make the matches. Barb Siples confirmed this.

Commissioner Johnson asked Jamey Duhamel to confirm that the auditors responsibilities will not change as a result of charter reform. Jamey Duhamel confirmed this.

Barb Siples presented budget data for staffing levels for Mayor, Council & Auditor, showing FTE.

Commissioner Martinez asked whether there is data on how Portland staffing levels compare to the levels at comparable cities.

Barb Siples answered that that data does not yet exist, explained that it is typically not publicly available online and requires a survey sent to the relevant cities. Stressed that this information may be spotty or not forthcoming despite BHR’s best efforts.

Commissioner Martinez thanked Barb. Stated that she noticed there is some discrepancy between staffing levels and salaries and asked the other Commissioners whether they want to consider this issue.

Commissioner Gill stated that she felt it would not be helpful to consider budget changes at Portland.

Jamey Duhamel noted that staffing and budgets have not been determined. There is not going to be any information about future offices forthcoming any time soon, and maybe not before the commission’s final recommendations are required.

Commissioner Engers asked whether other Commissioners want to keep and use this information, and how would would they apply it to their methodology.

Commissioner Medress stated that she doesn’t have an answer. Asked whether the commission is allowed to give a recommendation with caveats, such as different levels of pay if different staffing levels are provided. Commissioner clarified she does not want to offer too complex a conditional recommendation, but may want further data to know how Commission would react to different conditions.

Jamey Duhamel stated she believes yes, because the charter does not specify otherwise, but said she will talk to the city attorney about this. Suggested the commission can recommend future commissions consider these issues, because a new commission is seated in 2 years.

Commissioner Johnson clarified this is a fully benefited position as they are for non-represented positions.

Jamey Duhamel noted that benefits are not part of the salary commission’s role but that it could be good to document that commission’s decision is made based on a preference that benefits remain the same.

Commissioner Martinez asked about PTO policy. And whether the benefits include things that are particularly valuable for those who are underrepresented in elected office, such as those with multigenerational households. Noted that she feels a heavy responsibility to represent these interests as an immigrant single mother.

Jamey Duhamel noted that August meeting is fully devoted to what do you want to document along with your recommendations.

Commissioner Engers agreed commission should add this to documentation, and asked which of the numbers presented the commission wants to add.

Commissioner Sampson expressed a preference to using the 23/24 salary cost with benefits & COLA.

Commissioner Engers asked whether the salaries would be more competitive with the COLA adjustment. Commissioner Sampson confirmed, and stated it’s unknown whether under those conditions the City would be competitive at the thriving wage level.

Commissioner Engers asked whether this is the data point the commission thinks it should focus on.

Commissioner Martinez asked whether the commission needs to make a decision on a single data point or a constellation of data points.

Jamey Duhamel said the commission could be very specific if it wanted, and send criteria to BHR. Then it would receive back numbers consistent with all the criteria.

Commissioner Engers asked other commissioners whether they approve this data point, said she saw a lot of signs of approval

Jamey Duhamel announced that the guest speaker is not present yet. Noted that Commissioner Martinez was recognized by Portland Business Journal, asked her to begin her presentation

Commissioner Martinez presented her work as HR director, among other roles, at OR Food Bank. Stated her and the organizations goal is creating a transparent, predictable, pay structure that meets the needs of our community. They define their mission as dealing with all results of settler colonialism. Commissioner stated that those experiencing hunger are the best positioned to solve hunger, and the organization wants to employ those experiences to do its job best. Stated the Charter has similar goals & spirit. The quality that makes a person best for the job is not having melanin, it is a perspective, skill set, and experience in a community experiencing hunger. Different than dominant culture approach of prioritizing formal education and prizing fiscal responsibility by paying as little as possible. That approach compromises ability to recruit & retain POC. At OFB, there is an entry step, a further step for 10+ years of multicultural immersion (defined), if bilingual (defined) another step, if 10+ years using bilingual skills on the job, another step. Asked for questions.

Commissioner Engers asked for the definitions, Commissioner Martinez added definitions to chat.

Commissioner Johnson asked about how this works in a non-mission-driven organization, and how the implementation changed over time. Commissioner Martinez noted research shows multilingual people have better problem solving skills because of neural pathways related to language. Multicultural experience leads to the skill of adapatability. Commissioner Martinez answered that the structure became less complex with use.

Commissioner Johnson asked whether would the candidates status be evaluated when they start running or after, and what political issues could arise from public knowledge of the pay differential. Commissioner Martinez expressed a preference for assessing the steps after election.

Jamey Duhamel asked about the Commissioners interest level in the issue and suggested bringing in expertise from elections office or city attorney. Noted that the guest speaker is here but we’re 4 minutes from the end, and only commissioners can decide to extend the meeting or ask her to come back.Commissioners agreed to extend 15 minutes. Commissioner Martinez introduced Latricia Tillman.

Latricia Tillman stated it is important we have well paid staff to serve our increasingly diverse constituent. Why are we updating out bilingual pay? Part of it is about recognizing it as a skill, and an ability to provide services to a diverse community. Policy had never been updated. Had a minimum threshold and a flat rate. Nobody had talked to the bilingual staff about the policy. Little knowledge of appropriate role of bilingual staff vs being a translator & interpreter. Bilingual people assigned to be translators and interpreters. Managers hadn’t been trained in how to deploy such staff. Bilingual staff told they would be legally liable for mistakes as individual. Workload not adjusted. Looking at a percentage differential instead of flat rate. Higher salaries may mean higher responsibilities and greater consequences from getting it wrong. Yet also complex because lower level customer service people may use the skills much more frequently. A balance. Testing is a challenge. Initially used a testing company where lots of native speakers were not passing. This was a problem. A question of bias in the test. Lots of anxiety. Country Spanish vs University Spanish. Want a system that is equitable, respectful, and rejecting English centric biases in our systems.

Commissioner Martinez noted that at OR food bank, a position is evaluated differently if it MUST be bilingual. Emphasized that the idea is to value skillsets that come along with bilingualism, separate from the use of two languages on the job, which is very uncommon at present. Asked what City’s current bilingual pay policy is.

Barb Siples confirmed city has a language pay differential. For use of the language, or just the potential to use the language. The language must be used on the job and somehow improve performance, but it does not have to be intrinsically necessary to the job. Differential is $1/hour, on all hours of pay.

Jamey Duhamel thanked Latricia and Commissioner Martinez, and explained next meeting will be hybrid after the holiday.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.**

Minutes submitted by Jim LaBelle

**Meeting Q&A**

No responses

**Meeting Chat**

00:15:31 Commissioner Cooney: 👍

00:15:31 Commissioner Engers: 5

00:15:33 Commissioner Sampson: 5

00:15:34 Commissioner Gill: 5

00:15:35 Commissioner Johnson: 5

00:15:37 Commissioner Martinez: abstained as I wasn't in attendance

00:16:56 Commissioner Martinez: Thank you for your flexibility

00:27:25 Commissioner Sampson: small typo - change coast to cost on the 4th point

00:34:22 Commissioner Martinez: I was just about to ask that. Thank you Commissioner Johnson.

00:46:30 Commissioner Cooney: Thank you!

01:03:29 Commissioner Cooney: Auditor email did provide some data for that office on pages 17 and 18 if that is helpful.

01:03:52 Commissioner Johnson: thank you

01:20:12 Commissioner Martinez: agreed

01:21:29 Jamey Duhamel: Time check, 5 minutes left for this discussion

01:24:45 Commissioner Cooney: 👍

01:25:14 Commissioner Medress: 👍🏻

01:47:29 Commissioner Martinez: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1n5FZoonmZAqDWhTSfBErnMSYJx737tKHdnm4wZAygkA/edit?usp=sharing

01:59:40 Commissioner Cooney: So a differential for bringing certain skills and experiences to the table?

02:03:24 Commissioner Engers: Happy to extend - thank you for joining us!

02:03:32 Commissioner Medress: I'm so sorry everyone--already extending bedtime for kiddos so need to leave right at 8

02:03:33 Commissioner Cooney: 👍 Happy to extend, thank you for coming!

02:03:47 Commissioner Gill: I can extend 15 minutes

02:14:52 Jamey Duhamel: You have probably already connected these dots, but this reminds me of the experience we heard from Teresa Alonso-Leon about being a bi-lingual elected and the additional labor and representation she and her staff needed to provide.

02:15:11 Commissioner Cooney: Yes, Jamey, so true!

02:15:57 Commissioner Engers: 💯

02:17:46 Commissioner Martinez: We don't use a test at OFB. We have a set of questions based on the definition of Minimal Professional Proficiency

02:26:02 Commissioner Cooney: Thank you both so very much!