

## **INDEPENDENT SALARY COMMISSION**

### **Public Comment Report**

Date Range: January 1, 2023-May 23, 2023

Total Public Comments received: 11

Email: 5

Public Comment Form: 4

Verbal Testimony: 2

**RAW PUBLIC COMMENTS** (attachments included at the end)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
2/28/23	I hope this commission can figure how the city can afford 12 salaries, Plus the Mayor and a city manager, how much will all these new positions cost? If the new system of city council members are not compensated, then how does the city attract qualified candidates that can work for free, pay for campaigns and be available for meetings? I am concerned that we could end up with candidates that are wealthy enough to run for election or are retired so have time to run.
2/28/23	I am concerned about the costs of compensation for so many council members.
3/16/23	I am concerned that this plan of so many members of the city council will be very expensive for the cities tax payers. I also worry that a new city manager and office will be very expensive to maintain. I worry that is council members are not compensated that only wealthy Portlanders or retired residents can participate if meetings are held during the work day. I am interested in knowing how this committee will agree on these issues.
4/11/23	To: City of Portland, Portland Salary Commission Date: April 11, 2023 Members of the Commission, My name is Devin Ruiz and I am the Movement Building Director at Next Up Action Fund. Our mission is to build political power with diverse young people to achieve a more just and equitable Oregon. We would like to share with you about our hopes for the salary commission setting a thriving wage that leads to better representation through proper compensation, and also about our use of fist to five in all organizational voting – which we hope the commission will adopt. As an organization where many leaders get their start, we aim to set an example for what it means to equitably compensate and value young people. Over the last few years, we’ve evolved a new compensation philosophy to make sure our policies truly reflect our values and ensure that staff, interns, and youth cohorts are all paid well. We strive to be a leader in our compensation practices by providing not only a living wage, but a thriving wage for staff at all levels of our organization. This means setting salaries at or above the median for comparable positions in our area and increasing our salary “floor” to ensure none of our employees earn less than what they need to live, and to attract, retain, and care for our employees. Our compensation practices are inextricably linked with our mission; a thriving wage is critically necessary to center people most impacted by racial, economic, and gender injustices, and providing a competitive wage helps to attract and retain talented staff who move our mission forward. We urge the Salary Commission to contemplate what a thriving wage would look like in the context of our new Portland government. Democracy is stronger when our government represents the diverse communities it serves, from renters to fixed-income homeowners, from immigrant small business owners to working single parents juggling childcare responsibilities. Portlanders deserve to see council members who understand their priorities because they live them every day and who will work hard to pass policies that improve their lives. We do not want to have a

	<p>compensation structure like the legislature, in which the work of policymakers is undervalued, requires extensive volunteer labor, and limits who can serve. In addition to our belief in paying young people, we know that relying on an unpaid volunteer model disproportionately impacts low-income youth, presenting an economic barrier and perpetuating a false expectation that everyone has free time to spare. We were so pleased to hear Commissioner Martinez-Alicea suggest fist to five voting as the decision making method for the Salary Commission. We adopted fist to five voting for our board of directors in 2019, understanding it as a policy change that could help us be more inclusive of our community and allow us to better understand both the decisions and perspectives at hand. At each vote we remind the group what the scale of fist to five means, so that they can vote accordingly. Five is yes, I love it - and zero is a block. If many members of the group vote below three, we scrap the decision and move another proposal. If a few members vote below three, we have a discussion in which they can share their perspectives and concerns, and we may amend the proposal to result in a higher vote. No decisions move forward with a block, but may move forward with votes of 1 or 2. Fist to five voting results in everyone’s opinions being heard and counted, with emphasis on minority opinions. This tool has been incredibly useful as we build the leadership of young people on our board, because it helps to measure and build understanding and consensus. We would be thrilled to see the Salary Commission use this decision making method. Thank you for your consideration and service, Devin Ruiz</p>
4/27/23	<p><i>Testimony via ISC Mtg:</i> Vikki Payne spoke of their support of acknowledging the full-time nature of elected positions when setting compensation and emphasized that individuals may be giving up secure union jobs to run for office.</p>
5/9/23	<p><i>Testimony via ISC Mtg:</i> Janice Thompson provided testimony and commentary aligning with the memo provided previously by the League of Women Voters.</p>



## League of Women Voters® of Portland

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To: Independent Salary Commission (ISC) April 6, 2023 c/o  
Jamey Duhamel for distribution to ISC members

From: Debbie Kaye, President League of Women Voters of Portland (LWVPDX) for the  
LWVPDX Salary Team

The LWVPDX thanks the ISC for being the inaugural group setting compensation for Portland's elected officials as of January 2025. The ISC faces a tight timeline, but we are confident that the Commission will successfully complete this vital task. The League supported Measure 26-228 due to its interconnected reforms to improve Portland governance and elections. We also agreed that it was time to end the practice of the City Council setting its own salaries and that giving this task to an independent group comprised of human resources professionals was most appropriate.

We offer the following suggestions and observations in a spirit of collaboration and hope they are useful. We also acknowledge that you may already be planning to consider these ideas. It seemed prudent, however, to send this memo early in your process.

We begin with the following overarching points:

- The League strongly recommends setting compensation levels that will open the door for a broad range of people to consider running to serve as Portland elected officials.
- Assistance from the Bureau of Human Resources is valuable, but their compensation philosophy and job assessment approach for city employees does not appear to be applicable to your discussion of salaries for elected officials. The League recommends that the ISC develop a compensation philosophy and approach specifically for elected officials.
- There are no Oregon cities comparable to Portland so comparison research should venture beyond our state to municipalities similar in size to our city.
- The record of the March 8, 2023 City Council hearing confirming the ISC, clearly indicates the Council's understanding that the job of councilors who take office in January 2025 is full-time. This has always been the position of the LWVPDX as well. In our view, the combination of administrative and legislative roles in the current commission form of government results in a more than a full-time job. What we see as falling by the wayside is time for robust response to constituent requests and needs, as well as seeking timely and meaningful public input on policy development and legislative decision making. These activities will fully replace bureau management responsibilities.
- Charter provisions are the beginning and not the end of guidelines for the review of compensation for new elected officials. The rest of this memo provides more details on this point.

Drilling deeper into the multiple facets of Measure 26-228, the charter provisions focused on the new mayor and councilors must be recognized as being just a floor, in terms of understanding the work of these future elected officials.

A major illustration of this pertains to budget development and adoption. Before Measure 26-228 the charter was silent on this topic and the current budget development process had evolved over time and involves intermingled legislative and administrative council action as outlined in an extensive Budget Manual prepared by the City Budget Office.

Appropriately, however, the Charter Review Commission did not try to fill that gap with Budget Manual details. Instead, they added two basic points:

- That the city council is the budget committee, which is inserting a term used in state law regarding municipal budgeting, and
- A May 5 deadline for a proposed mayoral budget.

That May 5 deadline is linked to the early May timeline for release of the mayor's proposed budget in the current budget development process. That budget development process, however, begins the previous fall and after 2025 the new city council will still play a significant role. In other words, these two references in the new charter related to budgeting do not mean that councilors will be passively waiting for that May 5 deadline.

Indeed, an extensive role for the new council during future budget development, and many other elements of its legislative work, is informed by the charter reforms requiring the election of a larger city council via ranked choice voting. This facilitates proportional representation by electing three new councilors from each of four new council districts. The current five-member city council translates to 132,000 residents per member compared to 55,000 residents per each of the twelve new city councilors.<sup>1</sup> Compared to the current council, which is elected on a citywide basis, this improved ratio will enable councilors to be far more responsive to constituents. Constituents will also expect that new councilors gather extensive public input so that policy development and legislative decision making are informed by community-based solutions.

A related point is that the Charter Review Commission's appropriate rejection of smaller single-seat districts and recommendation for larger multi-seat districts facilitates a balance between councilor consideration of district and citywide needs. This means that new councilors will not just be working in their own districts, but will also spend time working with councilors from other districts in committees and as a full group.

All of this reinforces the full-time nature of the new city councilor positions.

Given that the new mayor will no longer have legislative duties and will be hiring a city administrator, it could be argued that the mayor's job will not be full time. The League does not share this view.

A final point related to the Auditor: Since there is an education requirement to qualify as an Auditor candidate, it may be helpful to learn the salary range for the head of Portland's audit unit and the head of the audit division in the office of Oregon's Secretary of State. It should be noted, however, that Portland's elected Auditor has a broader range of responsibilities than either of those positions that more narrowly focus just on performance auditing.

Thank you for considering these comments and let us know if we can answer any questions.

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<sup>1</sup> Calculations are based on 660,000 Portland residents which is rounded from Portland State University's 2021 population estimate of 658,773.

# Terry J. Harris

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Portland, OR 97239

[terryjharris@gmail.com](mailto:terryjharris@gmail.com)

To: Portland Salary Commission

Re: Comments on Councilmember and Council President salaries Via: email submission

April 23, 2023

In solely my personal capacity, I am submitting some brief comments for your consideration as you begin your detailed work of salary setting. In this transition effort, your commission is probably the most on-the-nose example of flying the plane while it's still being built, and I do not envy the decision-making that it will entail. I've not followed your work very closely so far, because, ultimately, I'm confident that your best guess at a fair salary for a fair day's work will be thoughtfully considered, and I don't expect that the range of salaries you select will be unreasonable, nor come close to breaking the city's budget.

Nevertheless, in scanning your most recent "BHR Research" document responding to requests from the April 11 meeting, I am concerned that there are a couple of issues that you (and BHR) will need to consider earlier rather than later.

## 1. Salary (and staffing) for the position of "Council President"

The new charter amendments, which emphasize a new separation of legislative and executive functions, basically create a whole new legislature. Although the current city council has a nominal position of "Council President," the new city council will require much more out of the position. The charter amendments do not give much guidance as to what the roles and responsibilities of the Council President will be distinct from, and in addition to the roles and responsibilities of a generic district councilmember. It is my expectation that there will be *many* differences. But of course, there's no way for you to know what those differences will be before your deadline for a decision.

My guess is that the new expanded legislature will require an active presiding officer with a more extensive legislative staff that will no longer fall under the mayor's supervision. And I would expect the new expanded legislature will operate with new committee structures, which will require additional legislative staff support. Although most of these support positions are probably permanent non-political staff, surviving the election cycles, they will all still need to report to the presiding officer under basic separation of powers principles. But there is probably some rationale for a more political "legislative director" position, more closely tied to the individual councilor serving as council president, that may or may not be permanent.

Anyway, there are probably "comparables" that could help get your salaries into the correct ballpark. Looking at the relative percentage differences between state legislators and their presiding officers, or county council members and their presiding officers could provide a reasonable way to index the President's salary to that of a district council member. Note, however, that these presiding officers are often elected separately to an at-large position, rather than elected from within the council as the charter amendments require.

## **2. Beware “shared staff” assumptions for council members.**

I understand that the size, and pay, of the council staff is relevant to the roles and responsibilities of the council members, and thus relevant to their salary. And I understand that, at this point, you will need to make assumptions about the staff structure in each council office. Ultimately though, the exact structures will remain undefined until well after you have finished your work.

Nevertheless, I’d urge caution with some of the assumptions. The “prior estimates” of 3 to 4.7 FTE staff per councilor, as the recent BHR memo describes, seems reasonable enough. However, BHR suggests that the estimates “assume that each district of 3 representatives will have some level of shared staff providing communications and business operations functions.” But I would think that the individual councilmembers, who are individually accountable to voters, would be deeply interested in how those “shared staff” are directed and supervised. Likewise, I would think that the employees would be deeply interested in specifically who is directing their work and setting their priorities. And finally, I would think that voters would be deeply interested in knowing who is responsible for the work done, or not done, in the district offices. In Baltimore, the last city to have had multimember council districts, any “shared staff” model was left to council members to devise on their own, and in most cases the model failed citizens badly.

In sum, while the councilors will be elected in multimember districts, each individual councilor remains individually accountable for their work, and their staff’s work, on behalf of their constituents. Staffing assumptions (and budgets) need to respect, and protect, these direct lines of accountability to constituents.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. Best of luck to you in your work.

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# League of Women Voters<sup>1</sup>® of Portland

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May 9, 2023

To: Independent Salary Commission (ISC) c/o Jamey Duhamel for distribution to  
ISC members

From: League of Women Voters of Portland (LWVPDX)

The LWVPDX greatly appreciates the work of the Independent Salary Commission (ISC) and continues to believe you will meet your August 1 deadline. In response to discussions at your last two meetings (April 11 and April 27) and public comments received to date we offer observations on the following:

- Charter section 2-204 and full-time elected positions
- Role of Council President and Vice President
- Fiscal responsibility considerations by the ISC

## Charter section 2-204 and full-time elected positions

It could be helpful to the public to clarify that the ISC will be recommending fulltime salaries for all of Portland's elected officials. The League's April 6 memo cited one reason from the March City Council meeting. Another reason links to charter section 2-204. This charter provision was mentioned in a public comment and merits additional explanation.

The Charter Review Commission made no changes to the following provision that has been in the charter for many years:

*Section 2-204. City Business, Time Devoted to. No official appointed or elected to elective office shall, during the official's term of service, hold any other office or position of profit, or pursue any other business or vocation, or serve on or under any committee of any political party.*

This charter section can be summarized as meaning that Portland's elected officials cannot hold second jobs or do consulting or similar work for pay.<sup>1</sup> In other words, even if the job of a Portland elected official was deemed to be a part-time position, that could be their only job. Implicitly this would limit who can run for office to people with significant financial resources or with a family situation that allows them to afford part-time employment. That dynamic would raise significant equity concerns and reinforces the ISC's focus on full-time salaries for each of Portland's elected officials.

<sup>1</sup> Given the recent resignation of Secretary of State Fagan, it is worth noting that this Portland charter provision is more rigorous than Oregon state law. An FYI is that at the state level, Oregon takes a conflict-of-interest approach that doesn't allow benefits that are only available due to the public official's position. Former Secretary of State Fagan consulted by phone with staff at the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, but did not seek written input on her consulting contract in terms of conflicts of interest or receiving a benefit due to her official position. While in office, Fagan had taught a class at Willamette University, reportedly due to her family's need for supplemental income. Oregon's Secretary of State is paid \$77,000.

The League of Women Voters of Portland:  
*To promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government.*



## Role of Council President and Vice President

Section 2-110 on Council Organization was amended in Measure 26-228 as follows with additions in yellow and omissions highlighted in red.

*At its first regular meeting each calendar year, or oftener at its option, the Council shall elect a President and Vice President by majority vote of those present. The Mayor President shall preside at all meetings of the Council. In the Mayor's absence or disability, the Vice President of the Council shall perform the duties of the Mayor President. In the absence or disability of both President and Mayor Vice President, the other members of the Council shall select one of their number to perform the duties of President during such absence.*

The final report of the Charter Review Commission included the following: *The Charter Commission does not wish to be overly prescriptive about how the city council organizes itself in the charter – and the proposed amendments state that council will establish its own rules of procedure. The Charter Commission envisions a 12-member council organizing itself into committee work, with subgroups of council members specializing in different policy areas (e.g., transportation, community safety, housing, environmental protection, etc.). Council will also elect a Council President and Vice President. The Council President will preside at all council meetings.*

As of January 2025, this charter change clarifies that either the Council President or Vice President will preside over council meetings since the Mayor will no longer be a member of the Council. In the Charter Review Commission's final report, we see no signal that additional duties for these council officers were discussed. Based on this information, the League does not see a need for a pay differential between Councilors based on serving as either the Council President or Vice President.

At the very least, significant time spent on differential pay research for council officers does not seem warranted. It is also worth remembering that future ISCs will meet on a regular two-year basis. This means that if a future Council decides to expand the role of the Council President and Vice President beyond presiding over Council meetings, that could be discussed by a future ISC.

We note that at its May 1 meeting the Government Transition Advisory Committee (GTAC) discussed providing direction to the Salary Commission on expanded roles for Council President and Vice President in early June. The League shares with the ISC the following four points we will be making to the GTAC.

- First, we will be reminding GTAC members that the ISC is an independent commission in the charter with full salary decision-making authority.
- The second point pertains to GTAC input on council officer roles being implemented via amendments to current city code on council procedures. There is no guarantee that GTAC suggestions will be included by the City Council in those code revisions. Additionally, Council action is not expected to occur until next fall, which is after the ISC's August 1 deadline.
- Third, the League is concerned that giving two Council members additional responsibilities or authority could result in unfortunate power dynamics between the districts they represent and other districts.
- Fourth, we will recommend that the GTAC not suggest operational code changes that should be the prerogative of the new officials that take office in January 2025. In this case, the new Council seems best suited to decide if its President or Vice President should have additional authority besides presiding over council meetings.

## Fiscal responsibility considerations by the ISC

The League has observations on the following points about the ISC discussion on fiscal responsibility.

- **ISC consideration of fiscal responsibility does not require fiscal forecasting and does not mean cost neutrality.**

In the League's view it is not a good use of the limited time of either the ISC or the City Budget Office (CBO) to get a briefing on fiscal forecasting which seemed to be suggested at your last meeting. This topic seems beyond the scope of the ISC but if interested, reading the CBO memo at the link below seems more than adequate. <https://www.portland.gov/cbo/2023-2024-budget/documents/fy-2023-24-general-fund-forecast-december-2022/download>

What might be more useful is to review the cost estimate information developed by the CBO that was provided to voters in the Measure 26-228 summary in last fall's Voters Pamphlet: annual operating costs could range from \$900,000 to \$8.7 million. In other words, voters were provided information on increased annual costs. Whenever cost neutrality is consistent with effective charter reform implementation, those steps are appropriate. Within the context of setting salaries for new elected officials, the League urges caution about an undue emphasis on cost neutrality, particularly in comparison to equity considerations.

- **ISC consideration of fiscal responsibility does not require review of staffing costs nor should those costs affect pay of elected officials. These are considerations for budgeting and that is not the charge to the ISC.**

Thanks to the Bureau of Human Resources for providing the information that only 0.4 percent of the City's fiscal year 2022-23 total budget comprised the costs of operation of council, mayor, and auditor offices. However, in the League's view, this should not be viewed as a limit or percentage that must be met in the future. In general, we see this 0.4 percentage of total City operating expenses due to functions of the council, mayor, and auditor offices as a demonstration of what a small slice of the city's budget is devoted to this function.

- **ISC consideration of fiscal responsibility needs to reflect benefits as well as costs.**

The ninth reason in the League's top ten reasons behind our support of charter reform (<https://lwvpx.org/top-ten-reasons-we-support-charter-reform/>) summarized cost estimates and considered benefits. Our conclusion was that although costs will increase, they are balanced by needed governance and voting benefits. We suggest that ISC consideration of public comments focused on how to afford a larger city council be accompanied by recognition of benefits such as improved representation and opportunities for councilors to gather community input.

Thank you for considering these comments and let us know if we can answer any questions.

Sent: Monday, May 22, 2023 12:40 PM

To: City of Portland Transition <[transition@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:transition@portlandoregon.gov)>

Subject: Comments for Salary Commission, Transition Team and GTAC

Following are some thoughts I would like to offer to the **Salary Commission**. These thoughts should be applicable to the efforts of the **Transition Team** and the **Government Transition Advisory Committee** as well:

1. I was pleased to hear during the Salary Commission's May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting that Council members are expected to be **full-time positions**. The discussion that Council members should be compensated accordingly was furthered by Metro Counselor Wang's comments and follow-on discussion; all of which I concur.
2. I would like to suggest that a clear understanding of the activities and required time commitment of Council members is clearly stated (see **Exhibit A**) as it will help:
  - a. Inform candidates of what they should expect regarding their roles/tasks and likely demands on their time.
  - b. Provide a basis for everyone understanding the rationale for how the proposed salary rate(s) were set.
3. The salary rate(s) should be set at a level that does not dissuade members of all communities (e.g., neighborhoods, BIPOCs, etc.) from running for and serving as Council members or worse, serving less than full-time (affordability to raise a family, etc).
4. I was pleased to see BHR's table of representative Council member salaries and consideration of cost of living.
  - a. The range detailed (\$49,596-\$229,137) was significantly broad. While the table appeared to consider cost of living (geo diff?) it's unclear what might be the other factors (e.g., full/part-time nature) driving those city's salaries. Having lived in Los Angeles, I can state that Council members are more than full-time positions.
  - b. As another data point for your deliberations, California's Controller maintains a database of all local public employee salaries in the state (<https://publicpay.ca.gov>). Following is a table of Council and Mayor salaries for cities with > 400,000 in population (top 9 cities):

**Total Wages (excl benefits) of Comparable California Elected Officials**  
Includes only cities with Population > 400,000

CA Rank	POP	CITY	Council			Mayor		
			AVG	MIN	MAX	AVG	MIN	MAX
1	3,849,297	Los Angeles	207,028	108,712	218,734	283,827	283,827	283,827
2	1,381,611	San Diego	133,318	128,552	144,491	218,678	218,678	218,678
3	983,489	San Jose	114,823	2,487	141,972	176,375	176,375	176,375
4	815,201	San Francisco	124,447	10,690	147,947	353,802	353,802	353,802
5	544,510	Fresno	73,916	3,175	90,455	70,280	5,500	135,060
6	525,041	Sacramento	69,899	392	97,483	137,496	137,496	137,496
7	456,062	Long Beach	45,564	45,069	46,282	163,073	163,073	163,073
8	433,823	Oakland	83,818	8,049	104,461	203,611	203,611	203,611
9	407,615	Bakersfield	10,901	9,386	14,936	29,097	29,097	29,097
		AVG	106,579	392	218,734	170,652	5,500	353,802

5. **Exhibit B** provides some background on the City of Dallas (which I am more familiar) re its Council Committee structure, the number of various kinds of meetings and number of pages of agenda/briefing materials supporting those meetings, and finally the number of memos the City Manager and his direct reports send to Council providing information and responding to their questions. With the split of the executive and legislative branches of government I suggest these factors will place a significant burden on their time if they are going to be effective.

Happy to provide further background.

**Exhibit A: COUNCIL MEMBER ACTIVITIES**

The Transition Team and Government Transition Advisory Committee need to envision how the executive and legislative

branches will operate internally and with each other now that they are being split apart. At a high level:

1. How will the Council be structured (e.g., committees) and how will legislation, policy, etc. progress from ideation (see next point) through public reviews, hearings, etc. (one or more committees and Council) and final approval by Council.
2. How/where will the programs, budget, policy, etc. be ideated, proposed, reviewed, etc. between both branches of government.
3. Having observed the FY2024 budget process and given the budget is such a significant priority setting and policy document, I expect significant reimagining of the process, schedule, meetings, and documents/flows will be required with the separation of the executive and legislative functions.

With the above as context, a partial list of probable Council members activities include:

1. Meeting with residents and stakeholders (e.g., businesses, developers, etc) in and out of City Hall to understand their issues, needs, priorities and proposals.
2. Meetings with staff, other Council members (groups less than quorum), residents and stakeholders regarding forming policy and priority positions, decisions on matters coming before Council, etc.
3. Reviewing and becoming familiar with Council and committee briefing and agenda materials prior to meetings AND participating in those meetings.
4. Participating in/representing city in local, regional, state and national meetings/bodies.

One metric for time commitment is number of Council meetings. The first table below summarizes the number of Portland Council meetings over the last 2.5 years. The second is a count of items by type for 2023 YTD agendas:

**Number of Council Meetings, by type, Jan 2021 through April 2023**

Meeting Type	2021					2022					2023			Grand
	1	2	3	4	T	1	2	3	4	T	1	2	T	Total
Council Executive Session			3	3	6	4	3	5	2	14	5	1	6	26
Council Listening Session							4			4	1	2	3	7
Council Meeting	18	29	20	16	83	20	34	16	24	94	22	10	32	209
Council Work Session	10	5	4	7	26	10	7	2	8	27	7	3	10	63
Meeting						1				1	1		1	2
Public Hearing (Council Present)		1			1		1			1		2	2	4
Public Meeting							1			1				1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>312</b>

**Number of Agenda Items, by type, Jan-April 2023 only**

Type	#
Communications	83
Consent	94
Regular	107
Time Certain	62
4/5ths	5
Executive Order	2
Suspension	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>354</b>

Source: data sourced from <https://www.portland.gov/council/agenda/all>

### Exhibit B: ONE EXAMPLES – DALLAS, TX

Following is some background information for the City of Dallas which has a Council/Manager form of government.

1. Mayor (\$80,000) and 14 Council members (\$60,000).

Mayor is relatively weak, serving as one of 15 members of the Council, with no veto. Serves as the presiding officer. Works through influence management. The one power he/she has is to, at will, create committees (see point 2) and assign their members. Each has their pet interests so can reward/punish member as he/she sees fit.

2. City Manager (\$443,000) and 7 Deputy/Assistant City Managers (\$219,000-\$292,000)

All staff (other than City Attorney, City Auditor and City Secretary) report to the City Manager. The City Manager and his/her Deputy/Assistant City Managers work with Council, Committee chairs to understand priorities and then bring matters as needed to the Council and its committees. Much of discussion/review is supposed to occur “in public” at

Council and Committee briefings and if necessary during Council agenda (voting) meetings.

- Eight Council committees; generally, seven members per committee with each member serving on four committees:

Dallas, TX

District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Economic Development														
Environment & Sustainability														
Govt Performance & Financial Mgmt														
Housing & Homelessness Solutions														
Public Safety														
Quality of Life, Arts & Culture														
Transportation & Infrastructure														
Workforce, Education & Ezquity														

- During 2021, Council agenda/briefing meetings averaged 1,900 pages/month and Committees (collectively) 749 pages/month of documents that need to be reviewed and understood.

Council Meeting Type	No. Meet	Agenda Pages				
		Total	Avg/Meet	Max	Min	Per Month
<b>CITY COUNCIL</b>						
Council Agenda	19	19,634	1,033	1,652	583	1,785
Council Briefing	18	1,631	91	183	14	148
<b>COUNCIL COMMITTEES</b>						
Environment & Sustainability	12	804	67	134	25	73
Economic Development	12	1,071	89	134	31	97
Govt Performance & Financial Mgmt	10	1,700	170	317	4	155
Housing & Homelessness	12	1,291	108	189	53	117
Public Safety	11	1,021	93	149	57	93
Quality of Life, Arts & Culture	9	419	47	77	13	38
Transportation & Infrastructure	12	1,064	89	156	13	97
Workforce, Education & Equity	11	862	78	136	46	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>29,497</b>	<b>1,864</b>			<b>2,682</b>

- The City Manager and his Deputy/Assistant City Managers communicate information/responses to Council through "Council Memos" – the following table summarizes the number of memos (one to manage pages in length) for FY2022-2024 (to date) by month:

YEAR	MONTH												TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
2020										46	21	26	93
2021	39	34	24	39	41	37	35	47	40	45	22	35	438
2022	33	30	27	44	40	41	32	42	63	40	25	41	458
2023	32	38	39	37	9								160
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>1149</b>
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>37</b>

=== END ===

TO: Salary Commissioner Abby Engers  
Salary Commissioner Rosanna Gill  
Salary Commissioner Rut Martinez-Alicea  
Salary Commissioner Joni Marie Johnson  
Salary Commissioner Laura Sampson  
Salary Commissioner Maura Cooney  
Salary Commissioner Emily Medress

CC: Jamey Duhamel, Strategic Engagement and Project Delivery Coordinator  
Barbara Siples, Classification & Compensation Manager

FROM: Office of the Auditor

DATE: May 18, 2023

SUBJECT: Background on Portland City Auditor



P O R T L A N D  
CITY AUDITOR  
Simone Rede

### Summary

Portland's City Auditor plays a leading role in promoting accountability and transparency and is elected by, and accountable to, the people of Portland. The City benefits when the Auditor is highly qualified and deeply committed to public service. Given the uniqueness of the City Auditor's Office, both within the City of Portland and the auditing profession, the Office of the Auditor offers this memo for the Commission's consideration while setting the City Auditor's salary.

The Auditor's Office appreciates the Commission's thoughtful consideration of the next City Auditor's salary. This memo provides background to support the Commission and suggests factors the Commissioners might consider during their process. Elements include:

- History and overview of the City Auditor and Auditor's Office
- Comparisons between the Auditor's Office and offices at peer jurisdictions
- Potential impacts of Auditor salary on role and recruitment
- Qualifications and limitations on outside employment
- Assessment of current salary in comparison to Auditor's Office employees
- Classification comparisons for three comparable position types

Page 1 of 8





## Auditor's Office Overview

Portland has had a City Auditor since 1868, and the position has been elected by voters since 1891. As an elected official in Portland's government, the Auditor is functionally independent of City Council and accountable only to the public. The mission of the Auditor's Office is to promote open and accountable government by providing independent and impartial reviews, access to public information, and services for City government and the public.

The Auditor's Office has thirty-eight employees working in four divisions, with a total budget of \$10.3 million. Two divisions have oversight and accountability responsibilities: Audit Services and the Ombudsman. Archives and Records Management oversees the Portland Archives and Records Center and helps City offices and bureaus meet government records retention requirements. Operations Management provides administrative support across all Auditor's Office divisions and oversees the Council Clerk/Contracts, City Elections, and the Lobbyist and Political Consultants Registration Programs, which are Citywide responsibilities.

In 2017, voters approved a charter amendment that enhanced the independence of the Auditor's Office, granting it authority over its own human resource and procurement functions. The Auditor's Office is also supporting the City's transition to a new form of government, particularly through the implementation of ranked-choice voting, public education, and supporting changes to the Council size and structure through its Council Clerk function.

## Auditor's Office Comparisons

The City of Portland Auditor's Office is unique because it holds a variety of functions—including Council Clerk, code/contracts, elections administration, campaign finance and lobbying enforcement, and archives and records management—that are, in many other jurisdictions, assigned to other offices. Furthermore, the Auditor's Office, because of the Auditor's unique Charter authority, conducts much of its own human resources and procurement functions. Accordingly, Portland's Auditor's Office is significantly larger, both in the number of staff and the size of its budget, than nearly all its peer cities (Table 1). Cities for comparison were identified using the list of peer cities being used by the Charter Transition Team, outlined in the March 21, 2023 Programmatic Assessment Guidance document. Beaverton, OR was excluded because it does not employ internal auditors. Two additions were made – Denver and San Jose – based on cities with comparable population.

*Table 1. Auditor office size and budget of Portland and other cities*

City	Office size (FTE)	Office budget (FY 2022-23)
Denver, CO	83	\$12.7 million
Baltimore, MD	45	\$5.3 million
Portland, OR	38	10.3 million
Austin, TX	29	\$4.6 million
San Diego, CA	22	\$4.6 million
Detroit, MI	16	\$4.0 million
San Jose, CA	14	\$3.5 million
Tulsa, OK	12	\$1.5 million
Charlotte, NC	11	\$1.6 million
Minneapolis, MN*	11	\$1.8 million
Sacramento, CA	10	\$1.7 million
Seattle, WA	10	\$2.1 million
Anaheim, CA*	7	\$1.7 million

*\*Cities with an Audit Director/Manager instead of a City Auditor Source: Auditor's Office analysis of city budget documents.*

## Impacts of Salary

The Auditor's Office identifies the following impacts of an appropriately set salary for its elected representative:

- Draws highly-skilled and competent candidates at the peak of their careers
- Compensates the Auditor at a value commensurate to the level and caliber of duties performed
- Sets expectations of public service and maintains trust with electors

### **Qualifications**

The auditor is the City's only elected representative that requires professional certification necessary to maintain a higher standard of conduct. These qualifications ensure that the City Auditor can effectively perform their duties and responsibilities. Portland's City Auditor is also the Chief Audit Executive. The term also includes titles such as general auditor, head of internal audit, chief internal auditor, internal audit director, and inspector general.

The qualifications to hold the elected Auditor's office are outlined in the City's Charter, [Section 2-502](#):

"There shall be an Auditor of the City of Portland who shall possess the same qualifications required of a Commissioner, and in addition, shall at the time of filing a declaration of candidacy, or a nominating petition for the office of Auditor be a Certified Public Accountant, Certified Internal Auditor, or Certified Management Accountant and remain certified as such throughout the term of office, if elected."

The requirements for the qualifying certifications are as follows:

- Certified Public Accountant: Four-year bachelor's degree and additional credits; CPA exam.
- Certified Internal Auditor: Associate's degree or seven years of verified experience; CIA exam.
- Certified Management Accountant: Four-year bachelor's degree, two years of experience, and CMA exam.

### **Limitations on Outside Employment**

City Charter, [Section 2-204](#) prohibits all elected officials from outside employment. This prohibition eliminates the potential for the Auditor to supplement their salary with outside income (such as from part-time teaching obligations), a common practice for elected officials in other local, state, and federal positions. This prohibition is especially important for the City Auditor to reduce the risk of conflicts of interest or impairment to impartiality. The Auditor's Office monitors outside employment not only for the City Auditor, but also for Audit Services staff to ensure alignment with generally accepted government auditing standards from the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

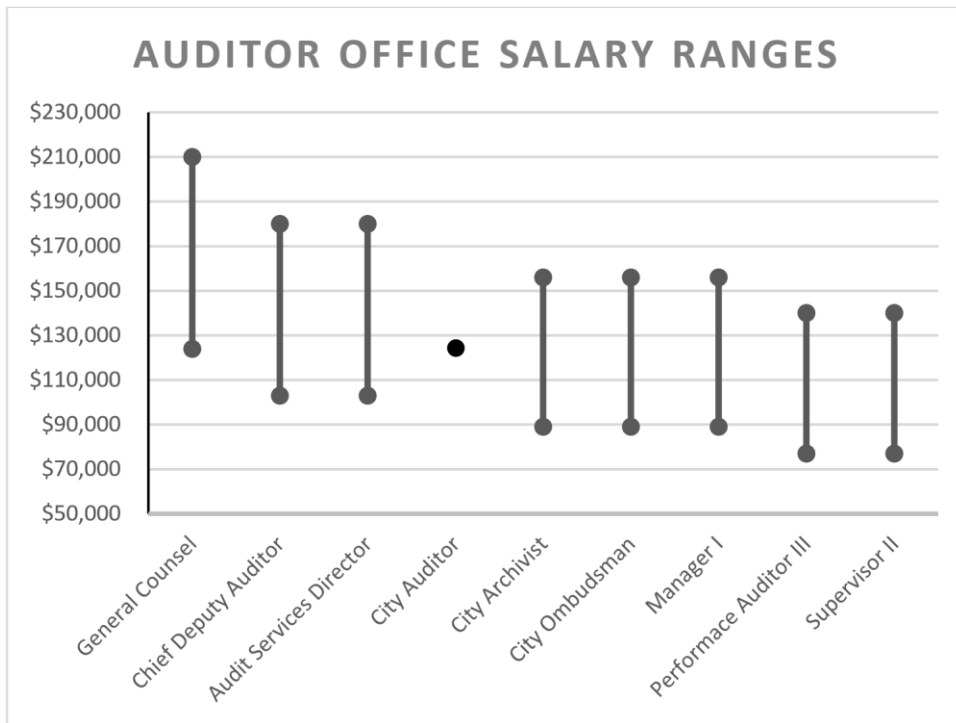
### **Current Salary**

The Auditor's salary is set by the City's Charter, [Section 2-504](#), which currently sets the Auditor's salary at the same rate as a City Commissioner. Effective [July 1, 2022](#), this rate is \$125,694 annually.

For reference, the following graph shows the [salary ranges](#) for the Auditor's direct reports and other high-grade positions in the Auditor's Office. Currently, the Auditor earns below the midpoint salary of three direct reports – General Counsel, Chief Deputy Auditor, and Audit Services Director – and only slightly more than the midpoint salary of its remaining two direct reports (the City Archivist and City Ombudsman) and other positions in the Office.



## AUDITOR OFFICE SALARY RANGES



### Classification Comparisons

Because of the unique role Portland’s Auditor plays, and the scope and size of the office the Auditor manages, a variety of comparisons could help determine the compensation for the auditor, including salaries of: peer city auditors, audit directors from private and public sectors, and City of Portland bureau directors.

#### Peer city auditors

A natural comparison point is to review the salaries of comparable positions elsewhere. While there are unique factors at play, namely the size and scope of Portland’s Auditor Office and the fact that the Auditor is elected rather than appointed (which is uncommon among peers), these points of comparison are still useful. An elected auditor is accountable to voters. Being elected jurisdiction-wide gives auditors greater respect than officials elected by district. Table 2 provides staffing and salary information from peer cities. Additional data may be relevant.

Table 2. Portland and peer city auditor salaries (most recent year available)

City	Office size (FTE)	Office budget	Auditor Salary	Appointed vs. elected
Denver, CO	83	\$12.7 million	\$ 163,000	Elected
Baltimore, MD	45	\$5.3 million	\$ 161,000	Appointed
Portland, OR	38	10.3 million	\$ 126,000	Elected
Austin, TX	29	\$4.6 million	\$ 175,000	Appointed
San Diego, CA	22	\$4.6 million	\$ 235,000	Appointed
Detroit, MI	16	\$4.0 million	\$ 147,000	Appointed
San Jose, CA	14	\$3.5 million	\$ 224,000	Appointed
Tulsa, OK	12	\$1.5 million	\$ 73,500	Elected
Charlotte, NC	11	\$1.6 million	\$ 178,500	Appointed
Minneapolis, MN*	11	\$1.8 million	\$ 147,000	Appointed

Sacramento, CA	10	\$1.7 million	\$ 195,000	Appointed
Seattle, WA	10	\$2.1 million	\$ 199,000	Appointed
Anaheim, CA*	7	\$1.7 million	\$ 157,000	Appointed

\*Cities with an Audit Director/Manager instead of a City Auditor

Source: Auditor's Office analysis of city budget documents, pay scale and class compensation plans, and publicly available salary information.

## Audit Directors

Another approach would be to consider salaries among a likely pool of candidates – audit directors in the public and private sectors. These professionals, who have the experience to guide an audit team, develop an office strategy, and supervise employees, are well-positioned to run for City Auditor. The salary of the City Auditor position as it compares to these professionals may impact the City's ability to draw talented and qualified professionals. As depicted in the graph above, the salary range for the City's Audit Service Director was roughly \$103,000-\$180,000 as of July 1, 2022. Additional data may be requested from professional organizations like [the Institute of Internal Auditors Portland Chapter](#).

## City of Portland bureau directors

Another approach is to consider the commensurate value of the duties performed. Accordingly, considering the compensation of office and bureau directors might provide another helpful point of reference. In addition to being an elected official responsible for the City's accountability and transparency functions, the Auditor also plays a role like that of other City office or bureau directors.

Specifically, the Auditor: manages four separate divisions with a wide array of functions; makes human resources, budget, and procurement decisions; responds to media inquiries; and performs other comparable duties. [Salary ranges for City directors](#), excluding unique roles like Fire and Police Chief, as of July 1, 2022, were approximately:

- Director I: \$124,000 - \$210,000
- Director II: \$145,000 - \$231,000
- Director III: \$163,000 - \$261,000

For reference, the Auditor's Office currently is the 14<sup>th</sup> largest office or bureau, by number of employees, of the City's 22 offices or bureaus, excluding and Mayor's and Commissioners' Offices (Table 3).

Table 3. City of Portland Bureaus and Offices (excluding Mayor's and Commissioners' Offices) by number of employees.

Bureau or Office	FTE (FY 2022/23)
Portland Police Bureau	1251.91
Portland Bureau of Transportation	1043.7
Office of Management and Finance	938.8
Portland Fire & Rescue	784.9
Portland Parks & Recreation	765.6
Bureau of Environmental Services	636
Portland Water Bureau	631.55
Bureau of Development Services	397.8
Bureau of Emergency Communications	170.5
Bureau of Planning & Sustainability	125.7
Office of City Attorney	82.7
Portland Housing Bureau	80
Office of Community and Civic Life	44.6
Office of the City Auditor	38
Portland Bureau of Emergency Management	24.9

Office of Equity & Human Rights	24
City Budget Office	21
Bureau of Fire & Police Disability & Retirement	17
Office of Government Relations	15
Independent Police Review	14
Office for Community Technology	12
Portland Children's Levy	6.7