

The 2021 Wicomico County Compensation and Allowance Commission met on November 8, 2021 at 7:30 a.m. via Zoom.

Members Present: Dr. Memo Diriker, Chairman; Victor H. Laws, III, Vice-Chairman; Michelle Chesnik, Sue A. Cooper, PhD; Mary Mengason, Sharon A. Morris, and Mark Rudnick. John Aukward, Andrew M. Bauer, Victoria Miele, and Michelle Wright were absent.

Staff Present: Laura Hurley, Recording Secretary

Dr. Diriker called the meeting to order and announced that the meeting is being recorded and that this is just an introductory meeting. He said they will go over what the Commission will be doing and talk about when they are going to be done, and when the next meeting is going to be. He said this is his fourth time serving on the Compensation and Allowance Commission.

Dr. Diriker said the charge of the Commission is to look at what the compensation and allowances are, not only for Wicomico County, but in other Maryland counties, as well as some private industry settings, to come up with recommendations with regards to what the compensation should be for the County Executive, Sheriff, and County Council President and County Councilmembers.

Dr. Diriker said there was a question about the Board of Education, and they have not done that before because prior to this there was not an elected Board of Education. He clarified, they might do that, he just does not know yet as he does not have the information in front of him to know if they can do that fairly quickly or not. He said, since that is not part of the Charter, if the Council wants the Commission to do that, they will not have to stick with the November timeline for that, so he is not terribly worried about the time it might take to do the comparisons.

Dr. Diriker said the charge now is to make recommendations regarding the compensation and allowances, pension plans, etc. to the County Council before the end of this month. He said, given that they have done this before and they have almost 95 percent of the information, it is not going to take a lot of time.

Dr. Diriker said the next meeting is scheduled for this coming Friday, at which time he will be able to share with everyone a spreadsheet. He said originally the meeting was scheduled for 7:30 a.m., but because some of the members are not able to attend at 7:30 a.m., he is going to tentatively set it for 8:30 a.m., but he will send everybody an email. He said, if need be, he will split the meeting into two meetings and meet with those who could not meet at the given time so that they can continue the deliberation. He said the final meeting will be in person and it will also have a zoom component for those who do not want to take the risk. He said, at that meeting they usually go over the recommendation letter and the final decisions. He said right now they are in the process of collecting the data, most of which has been collected, and then the analysis mode. He said by Friday, he should be able to share a spreadsheet.

Mr. Rudnick said, in the past, the meetings have been in person. He then asked if there is a packet of multiple pages, and can they stop by the Council Office or Dr. Diriker's office to pick it up, to which Dr. Diriker responded, Mrs. Hurley is going to send everything electronically sometime today. He said he has already looked at the information and they are large documents, but it is not books and books length.

Ms. Morris said some Compensation and Allowance Commissions have included the Sheriff and others have not. She then asked if there has been a Resolution that has included other elected officials because there are other parts of the county government where county dollars are also included in the elected process. Dr. Diriker responded, the past three Commissions he has served on looked at the salaries for the Sheriff, County Executive, Council President, Council Vice President, and County Councilmembers. He said they have not done the State's Attorney, but other counties do that now, and they have not done the Board of Education members, but he thinks there is a request for the Commission to do that. Ms. Morris said her question was leading to the other areas where they have Orphans Court and Board of Elections, so she was curious.

Dr. Diriker said, in the information Laura will be sending out is the language of the Charter that designates the Commission's charge. He said, in addition to that, of course, the Council can ask for other information, and the only other one outside that charge that they have asked for so far, at least one of them has asked for, is the Board of Education members, but if they ask the Commission about the others, they will look into it. He said they are going to stick to what the charge says, and then if the Council asks for other things, they can convene later to look at those.


Mrs. Hurley thanked everyone for participating in the process. Dr. Diriker also thanked everyone, especially those who he volunteered to join the Commission.

Dr. Diriker said the next meeting will be next Friday at 8:30 a.m. and the major agenda item will be to go over the spreadsheet he will be bringing to the meeting, and maybe Mary and Sharon will be able to share something at the next meeting. He said he will send out an email to confirm the 8:30 a.m. timeframe.

Ms. Mengason said she can print off the information for Mr. Rudnick if he wants to come by Avery Hall to pick it up.

There was no further discussion.

  
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Dr. Memo Diriker, Chairman

  
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Laura Hurley, Recording Secretary