

Report

To: **Chair Fromm and Members of the Charter Commission**
Through: **Nate Burkett, City Manager**
From: **Kori Land, City Attorney**
Date: **June 9, 2022**

Council Salaries

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Charter requires the Charter Commission to review Council salaries prior to June of every even-numbered year. (City Charter §2.07 subd. 2) State law requires Council salaries to be adopted by ordinance. (Minn. Stat. §415.11 subd. 1) West St. Paul is unique in that Council salaries are identified in both West St. Paul City Charter §2.07 and City Code §30.04. Having the salaries in both locations allows for checks and balances. A Charter amendment requires a recommendation from the Charter Commission and unanimous vote by the Council. City Code amendments, on the other hand, only require a majority vote by the Council. Therefore, having the Council salaries in both the Charter and the City Code provides extra protection for the citizens. Salaries must be in an amount the Council deems “reasonable.” (Minn. Stat. §415.11 subd. 1) It is important to note that an increase would not take effect until *after* the next municipal election, in other words, January 2023. The current salaries are as follows:

Section 2.07. Salaries.

Section 2.07 Salaries. Subd. 1. For the faithful discharge of the duties of their respective offices, the elected official shall receive the following salaries: The Mayor \$9,613 for calendar year 2021 and \$9,878 for calendar year 2022; each Councilmember \$7,714 for calendar year 2021 and \$7,927 for calendar year 2022. The City Manager and all other officers and employees of the City shall receive such salaries or wages as may be fixed by the Council.

One city I represent recently made the following adjustment in their City Code regarding salaries:

“Thereafter, beginning in January of every odd-numbered year, the Mayor and Council shall receive a salary adjustment in an amount that equals the cost of living increase provided to the City’s non-union employees for the preceding two years.”

While this amendment could result in automatic adjustments, the Charter Commission should also recommend repealing the requirement that salaries be revisited prior to June of every even-numbered year.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Review and consider amending the Council salaries