

State Officers Compensation Commission Meeting

November 21, 2008

Commission members present:

Rick Halford
Gordon Harrison
Mike Miller
Tom McGrath
Rick Koch

Others present:

Nicki Neal, Commission Secretary
Representative Mike Doogan
Theresa Obermeyer

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. at 550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1660, Anchorage, Alaska.

The following information was provided to commission members:

- HB 417
- Salary history of Alaska's legislators
- Information on legislator per diem allowances
- *Alaska Legislature 2007 Salary and Business Expense Report*
- *Legislator Compensation 2008* prepared by the National Conference of State Legislators
- *Compensation Review for Members of the General Assembly* prepared by the Hay Group
- Commentary on Article II, Section 7 from *Alaska's Constitution: A Citizen's Guide* written by Gordon Harrison
- Current Compensation of the governor, Lt. governor and commissioners
- Current leave benefits for commissioners
- Current holidays observed by commissioners
- Salary history of the governor, Lt. governor and commissioners
- Annual salaries of state administrative officials from *The Book of Staqtas 2008*
- *Compensation Review for Constitutional Officers* prepared by the Hay Group

Representative Doogan, the primary sponsor of the original bill, HB 260, provided bill packets to each member.

Each member provided their thoughts on current compensation and their beliefs on what needs to be addressed.

Member Harrison requested that the secretary obtain compensation information for the top executives of the Alaska Railroad Corporation, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority and other relevant exempt agencies.

Representative Doogan thanked members for serving on the commission and excused himself from the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

Theresa Obermeyer informed members that she wants them to be aware of the compensation received by judges and what's going on with the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation. Ms. Obermeyer provided a hard copy of information contained on "The Obermeyer Website" regarding judges and information on salaries from the Alaska Permanent Fund Board Confirmation Committee. Ms. Obermeyer departed the meeting shortly thereafter.

Member Harrison expressed concern with missing the date (November 15, 2008) by which the commission was to prepare its preliminary findings and recommendations and stated that it may be a mistake to rush the January 29, 2009 deadline by which the commission is to make available its final report to the governor and presiding officers. Member Halford stated it is his preference to meet the January 29th deadline. Discussion occurred and the secretary was asked to seek guidance from the Department of Law regarding if missing the November 15th deadline is a fatal flaw. If not a fatal flaw, the members decided to proceed with the preparation of preliminary findings and recommendations with the intent of meeting the January 29th deadline.

Member Miller reported that he received a telephone call from Annette Kreitzer, Commissioner of the Department of Administration. Commissioner Kreitzer stated that it is the administration's preference to return commissioners to the pay structure that previously existed. Member Halford stated that this may be due to concern that increasing the pay of commissioners may take the lid off for labor negotiations.

The following schedule was established:

- Meeting December 13, 2008, 10:00 a.m. to develop preliminary findings and recommendations.
- Public hearing December 18, 2008, 9:00 a.m.
- Public hearing January 10, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
- Meeting January 10, 2009, 1:00 p.m. to finalize findings and recommendations.

The secretary was asked to check the availability of the Legislative Information Offices for these meetings/hearings.

There was consensus among members that they are willing to meet without 20 days prior notice by the chair as provided for in AS 39.23.500(c). The secretary was asked to confirm the allowance of this with the Department of Law.

Members assigned the following tasks to the secretary for completion prior to the next meeting:

- determine the average, high and low of long term per diem paid to legislators as reported in the *Alaska Legislature 2007 Salary and Business Expense Report*;
- apply CPI adjustments since 1991 to the compensation of legislators;
- run the salaries of governors, Lt. governors and commissioners of other states through the ERI geographic differential calculator;
- obtain information on compensation and relevant benefits provided to the executives of exempt corporations/authorities such as the Alaska Railroad Corporation, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation and Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority; and
- update the commission roster to include email address and telephone numbers.

The secretary is to email this information to members and provide a hard copy at the next meeting.

Discussion occurred regarding the requirements of the Open Meetings Act and the inapplicability of the Administrative Procedures Act. The secretary will seek clarification on these Acts.

Member Harrison nominated Member Halford to serve as the commission chair. Member McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.