

State Officers Compensation Commission Meeting

November 4, 2019, 1 p.m.
550 w. 7th Ave., 1st Floor, Suite 106
Meeting Minutes

Members:

Scott Cunningham, Chairperson
Johnny Ellis
Richard Strutz
Mike Miller

Others present:

Kate Sheehan, Department of Administration, Secretary
Brook Riley, Department of Administration (telephonic)
James Brooks, Anchorage Daily News (telephonic)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Director Sheehan called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

II. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Members Ellis, Miller, and Cunningham were present.
Mr. Ellis nominated Mr. Cunningham and he respectfully declined the nomination as he lives in Kenai. Director Sheehan explained the role of the Chair. Mr. Cunningham inquired as to how many people were on the board. There was discussion as to which member fulfilled the various role representations on the board and when their current terms end. Mr. Cunningham accepted the Chair position for one year after discussion. Moved and approved unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: *Mr. Cunningham moved to approve meeting agenda.*
APPROVED: Moved and approved unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: *Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the minutes from the January 9th, 2018 meeting.*
APPROVED: Moved and approved unanimously.

V. Overview of Available Material/Information; Preliminary Findings and Recommendations

DISCUSSION:

Director Sheehan introduced the documents for historical reference that were included in the meeting packet. She explained that these were to give the members an idea of the findings from other states for historical and

practical reference. She briefly mentioned the findings from the last meeting, that it was determined that there would be no per diem for legislators if they are travelling within 50 miles of their residence. Director Sheehan continued to explain the reference documents that were included in the packet. Mr. Cunningham inquired about how the per diem was handled when the legislature split up between Wasilla and Juneau during the 2019 legislative special session, Director Sheehan stated that she would check with Legislative Affairs for the answer to that question.

Discussion was held pertaining to the compensation document that includes the total salary of all Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, and Directors for each department for calendar year 2018. Mr. Cunningham asked Mr. Ellis if the commission should go through the salaries line by line to determine if adjustments should be made to legislators' base salaries and subsequently remove or adjust their per diem payments. It was determined that they should review each salary at a later time, and that the purview of this inquiry would only include the review of the salaries of Exempt employees such as Commissioners, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, the Legislature, and the Attorney General.

Director Sheehan explained that the Governor and Lieutenant Governor's salaries were adjusted in 2011 from \$125,000 to \$145,000, and from \$100,000 to \$115,000, respectively. Mr. Ellis proposed that the salaries of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor do not get addressed until an election year and that they only focus on the salaries of the Legislature and Commissioners. Mr. Ellis expressed his opinion that the salaries of both groups should go up. Mr. Miller went on to make statements about obtaining quality employees, that we must pay more in order to attract better qualified individuals, but that we don't need a salary increase to attract people to run for Governor nor Lieutenant Governor. The Commission agreed to begin the process of determining the amounts and timeline for legislator and commissioner's wage increases considering multiple factors, including a consideration of potentially removing the per diem allocation and raising salaries. Director Sheehan posed a clarifying question to Mr. Cunningham as to the timeline of when the commission wants to present recommendations, he stated that they would have none for the coming year, but would include a statement in this year's preliminary report that they intend to put forth recommendations on Commissioner's salaries as well as those of the legislature for the upcoming 2021 legislative session. Director Sheehan reminded the commission that their discussion must be kept to the confines of public hearings and that they must hold another meeting in 2019 for public comment.

VI. SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARINGS AND FINAL MEETING

Public testimony, as well as the final meeting was scheduled for Friday, December 6th at 11:30 a.m. telephonically.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting adjourned at 2:13 p.m.