

Naomi Soulard

From: Michael Jones
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2022 16:16
To: City Council
Subject: Memo regarding management salary study
Attachments: 2-25-22 salary memo to Council.pdf

Please see attached.

Michael Jones
City Manager

City of Blaine
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Blaine, WA 98230

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Please note that all emails to and from me are potentially subject to public disclosure under public records act requirements.



CITY OF BLAINE

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

435 MARTIN STREET, STE. 3000 • BLAINE, WA • 98230

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 28, 2022
To: City Council
From: Michael Jones, City Manager
Attachments: Revised Job Descriptions for City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager, Community Development Services Director, and Finance Director

Re: **Management Salary Study**

During 2021 we completed a salary comparison for City department heads and the City Manager. We used cities that fall 50% above and 50% below Blaine in population and assessed valuation. The cities included in our study lie on the east and west side of the Cascades. In salary comparisons, cities west and east of the Cascades are sometimes considered separately because of presumed (and in some cases, actual) differential salary and cost of living differentials. Using cities on both side of the Cascades creates a lower salary average than if only the west side were used. A relatively large pool of comparables helps to mitigate the impact of outliers, such as very high-paying or very low-paying cities.

We used the following cities in our comparison:¹

Duvall	Stanwood	Prosser
Chelan	Pacific	Sequim
Chehalis	Black Diamond	Sultan
Fircrest	Ocean Shores	Buckley

The study is based on salary alone and is not a detailed analysis of benefits such as vacation time, administrative time, healthcare benefit value, healthcare benefit employee contribution, deferred compensation, incidental benefits or working conditions.

We utilized 2021 salary data². The City of Blaine provided a 3.0% cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for this employee group for 2022. It is likely that other cities provided a range of COLA's. Given the inflationary environment, it is likely that numerous cities provided a COLA of more than 3.0%. To manage the time committed to data collection, we assumed a 3.0% COLA for all the comparable salaries to bring them from 2021 to 2022 values, rather than reaching out to every city and determining actual COLA adjustments. A 3.0% COLA is a conservative approach to adjusting the comparable salary data from 2021 to 2022.

Salary comparison averages for City Manager and department heads are as follows:

¹ Not all cities have comparable positions for each management job description in Blaine, so the list of comparables changes slightly for different positions here in Blaine.

² AWC Salary Study used.

	Average of Comparables³	2022 Monthly Salary
City Manager	\$12,378	\$12,298
City Clerk/Assist. to City Manager	\$7,647	\$7,287
Community Development Services Director	\$9,627	\$9,068
Finance Director	\$10,224	\$9,872
Police Chief	\$10,786	\$10,674
Public Works Director	\$9,836	\$10,030

The results of the salary study indicate that the Community Development Services Director and the City Clerk/Assistant to City Manager are underpaid compared to their peers and industry norms for cities of similar size. The City Manager, Police Chief, and Finance Director are slightly underpaid, while the Public Works Director salary is above City peers.

Blaine is a fast-growing city. The pace of development puts extra pressure on certain positions. It also makes some jobs increasingly complex. This is true of the City Clerk and Community Development Services Director jobs. Due to the salary disparity and the demands of these jobs, I propose that the City amend the contracts for Stacie Pratschner, Community Development Services Director and for Samuel Crawford, City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager. I propose that monthly salaries for each position be adjusted by \$450 to create a new 2022 monthly salary of \$7,737 for the City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager and \$9,528 for the Community Development Services Director.

In addition, to bring the contracts in alignment with the City's direction regarding implementation of the Juneteenth holiday, and awarding of administrative time, I propose that the contract amendment include the following provisions:

- Juneteenth will be implemented by creating Juneteenth as a paid holiday, and floating holidays will be reduced from two (2) to one (1) each year, and
- Administrative days be reduced from five (5) days per year to three (3) days per year.

I am forwarding contract amendments that effect these changes for City Council consideration. The contract amendments will also include revised job descriptions. In the case of the City Clerk/Assistant to City Manager, that job description change will include a change in title to Deputy City Manager/City Clerk to reflect increased job responsibility. Because the Deputy City Manager/City Clerk position will have ample opportunity for job skill growth and expanded responsibility, I am also proposing a potential 5-percent merit increase in the contract amendment. The merit increase would be subject to performance and would be at the discretion of the City Manager.

I am not proposing any salary adjustment for other positions currently. However, I am working on an organizational change that will bring information technology services and the IT personnel under the Finance Director. That will include changes to the Finance Director's job description, add responsibility, and increase the number of direct reports. When that change is enacted, I will propose a pay adjustment to reflect the added responsibility.

³ As noted, average is adjusted by 3.0% above 2021 numbers for the assumed COLA