

## Meeting of the Northampton Elected Officials Compensation Advisory Board (EOCAB)

Monday, January 30, 2022 • 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

[Online Zoom Meeting](#) (Meeting ID: 848 0435 0600)

### Minutes

#### Board members present

- John Bidwell – Chair
- Tara Brewster
- Felicia Corbeil
- Sam Hopper – Clerk
- Javier Luengo-Garrido

#### Board members absent

- Peter Whalen – Vice Chair

#### Minutes

##### Call Meeting To Order

- Meeting called to order at 5:33 p.m.
- Roll Call
  - John Bidwell: Present
  - Sam Hopper: Present
  - Felicia Corbeil: Present
  - Javier Luengo-Garrido: Present
    - *Tara Brewster joined meeting after roll call*
- Meeting is being video recorded

##### Public Comment

- *None - no members of the public present*

##### Approval Of Minutes From Previous Meeting(s)

- Javier Luengo-Garrido moved to approve the minutes from January 9, 2023 meeting;  
Felicia Corbeil seconded
  - John Bidwell: Yes
  - Felicia Corbeil: Yes
  - Sam Hopper: Yes
  - Javier Luengo-Garrido: Yes
- Minutes approved unanimously

## Discussion Items

### *Assignment Updates Regarding Information Gathering Plan*

- Update on compiling data based on what was discussed at last meeting
  - Sam compiled data from the Mayor's office, Northampton Human Resources, and U.S. Census Bureau data that was shared with the board including:
    - Northampton [ordinance](#) regarding compensation of elected officials - update to Addendum 1 from [2014 EOCAB report](#)
    - FY22 benchmark survey results - partial update to Addendum 2 from [2014 EOCAB report](#)
      - Benchmark survey results only available for Chief Administrative Officer (i.e., Mayor for cities)
      - No information available in the benchmark survey for city council and school committee salaries
    - We also have mayoral salaries in Massachusetts from Collins Center for Public Management at UMass Boston's survey in October 2022
    - Mayor's office shared an update to Addendum 2 from [2014 EOCAB report](#), but based off the 2014 benchmarking cities, which are not necessarily comparable today
    - Sam compiled U.S. Census Bureau data and narrowed to 20 municipalities similar to Northampton in both median household income and population
      - Of those 20, 12 have Mayor/Council forms of government, as opposed to Council/Manager or Town Meetings with a Manager and Selectboard
    - [FY22 list of Northampton employees' gross earnings](#) - update to Addendum 3 from [2014 EOCAB report](#)
      - The Mayor's salary is behind 100 other city employees (employees' city departments are listed)
    - Job descriptions for the city's elected officials are listed in the city's [Charter](#)
    - Human Resources shared an update to part-time elected officials enrolled in the Municipal Health Plan - update to the table on page 6 from [2014 EOCAB report](#)
  - Discussion on data found and what's still needed
    - Important to get salaries and part-time/full-time status for City Council and School Committees
    - Understand how much time is being put into the job
    - Will narrow list to 10 similar municipalities and only look at western Massachusetts, maybe some central Massachusetts municipalities
      - Eastern Massachusetts isn't comparable with cost of living and other price points

- Also look at cost of living - previous board looked at cost of living
  - Will use government inflation index
    - [Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator](#) referenced to in 2014 report
  - 2014 report used the following data points to benchmark similar municipalities
    - Average city population
    - Per capita income
    - Number of households
    - Median Household income
    - City budget
    - Total compensation per position
      - Sam will revisit with Northampton Human Resources to specifically ask if these data points are available
  - How many hours part-time elected officials are working
  - Have departments increased in Northampton since 2014 - additional department is additional department head for Mayor to oversee
- Next steps for data
  - Sam and Javier will decide 5-10 comparable cities to use as benchmarking
  - Javier will find salaries and part-time/full time status for city council and school committee members of the 5-10 comparable cities
  - Felicia will find cost of living information for the 5-10 comparable cities
  - Sam will ask Northampton Human Resources if there is updated info for all the data points used in the 2014 report
- Update on questionnaire to send to current and past Northampton elected officials
  - Felicia and Tara put together a Google Doc and will share with the board so it can be workshopped at the next meeting
  - Allowed to be anonymous
  - Questions include:
    - What position, how long was it held, and what years
    - Questions about pay & benefits
    - If they believe the compensation is/was fair
    - Why they sought out the position they served in
    - Reasons for stepping down from position
    - Final question asks if they have interest in meeting with a member of EOCAB to share more information
      - If yes, add name and contact info (no longer anonymous)
  - Suggestions for additional questions
    - What type of work are you doing concurrently

- Include more context, e.g., time commitment, on what a follow up conversation would be with a board member
  - Important to understand both how much time spent doing the work and how much time they believe is necessary to do the work well
  - Suggestion to invite elected officials to a meeting to share more information
- Update on conversations had with 2014 EOCAB
  - Things not understood early in process that caused confusion, including how process of the EOCAB's work unfolds
    - Clarification that EOCAB recommendations are merely recommendations
    - Any recommendations would need 2/3 of the Council to approve for them to go into effect
  - Emphasized importance of interviews with city leaders - invite people to speak at our meetings and proactively speak with folks
- Suggestion to look at number of days off as a benefit
  - Pattern of employers looking at increasing the number of days off
- City is actively seeking a 7th member for EOCAB and we should know soon if we have an additional member

### Adjourn

- Sam Hopper moved to adjourn meeting, John Bidwell seconded
  - John Bidwell: Yes
  - Tara Brewster: Yes
  - Felicia Corbeil: Yes
  - Sam Hopper: Yes
- Meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

### **Upcoming Meeting**

February 6, 2023 @ 5:30 via Zoom