

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

Monday, February 13, 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
- Deborah Henson
- Sam Hopper – Clerk
- Javier Luengo-Garrido
- Peter Whalen – Vice Chair

Board members absent

None

Minutes

Call Meeting To Order

- Meeting called to order at 5:34 p.m.
- Roll Call
 - John Bidwell: Present
 - Tara Brewster: Present
 - Felicia Corbeil: Present
 - Deb Henson: Present
 - Sam Hopper: Present
 - Javier Luengo-Garrido: Present
 - Peter Whalen: Present
- Announcement 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 30, 2023 meeting;
Tara Brewster seconded
 - John Bidwell: Yes
 - Tara Brewster: Yes
 - Felicia Corbeil: Yes
 - Deb Henson: Yes

- Sam Hopper: Yes
- Javier Luengo-Garrido: Yes
- Peter Whalen: Yes
- Minutes approved unanimously

Discussion Items

Assignment Updates Regarding Information Gathering Plan

- City's Human Resources department unable to provide information on per capita income and other data points that were included in the 2014 report but not included in the updated data received
 - Suggested it may have come from Census data
- Javier updates in conversations with local elected officials
 - Summary is that folks are underpaid and feel what they're being compensated is below what they believe would be compensation for the amount of time needed to be impactful
 - Greenfield City Council receives \$2,000 pretax with no benefits
 - When asked how many hours needed to do the work needed (read agendas and all documents prior to meetings) and to do impactful work, understand what they vote on: about 30 hours
 - Javier will write up a memo to share more information on these conversations

On-Line Survey-Working Discussion

- Include description of the charge of our advisory board and explanation on how folks can remain anonymous
- Include language for folks to consider information they share in the survey that may identify them and that submissions are subject to public record
 - Add disclaimer explaining that even if your email is displayed up top, not collecting your information
 - Note that it shows "Not shared" next to email and is a Google Form setting
 - Could consider another online form/survey option
- Survey will be going to all current and previous elected officials in Northampton
- Survey responses would be sent to Felicia as the survey has been set up in her account
 - Responses will be downloaded by Felicia and shared
- Suggestion to emphasize in email the same language that is added in the form description
- Javier shared as an example the survey from the Select Committee to Study Barriers to Serving on City Boards and Commissions
 - Used [Qualtrics](#) and received 115 responses
 - Qualtrics includes data visualizers
 - No fee - free version exists

- Language to add in form description
 - Introduction of board with member names
 - Board's charge
 - How much time survey will take
 - Contact information (Chair and Vice Chair info)
 - Privacy notice language (from Select Committee's recent survey):
 - **IMPORTANT PRIVACY NOTICE:** Because this document is being created within the scope of work of a public commission, it is a public record and therefore available to the public upon request. Although this form will not ask for your name or other personal information overtly, content such as names, positions, locations, titles, dates, demographics, etc., could suggest your identity. If you wish to remain entirely anonymous, be careful in the information you include and remember that your response cannot be deleted once submitted.
 - Suggestion that everything included in form description should also be in the email that invites folks to take the survey
- Amend first question: What elected position *do/did* you hold for the city of Northampton
- Amend question on how long position held: Add language to include folks currently in office
 - Add language defining how we're asking them to define the time, e.g., how many terms, years, months
- Amend question on pay/benefits impact to add if it's positive or negative
 - Add question after asking them to add explanation if they want
- Do we want to ask people who considered running but didn't, and if so, how do we reach them?
 - Cannot think of list that exists that would capture these folks, but instead would need to put it out to the public via Northampton's social media, Northampton listservs, etc.
 - This type of survey may be completely different questions
- Amend question about job/career held while holding elected position to have language to include uncompensated work, such as a stay-at-home parent
 - Amend to: What type of occupation (compensated or uncompensated) did you have while holding this elected position (if any)?
- Amend: Why did you end your elected position (add language inclusive to those currently in office)
- Amend: Did you feel the compensation was for the amount of your you did *as an elected official*?
- Amend all questions to be inclusive of both past and current elected officials
- Amend "Did you have any challenges attending required meetings" question to be Yes or No

- If yes, will get question to elaborate further if desired
- Amend question would you be interested in serving again
 - Make response a choice between Yes or No
 - Add second optional question to allow them to elaborate on either response
- Discussion on if we are we asking respondents in the final question to do a one-on-one with board members, attend a full board meeting, or both?
 - Board meetings may pose barriers for folks
 - People may be more comfortable meeting one-on-one
 - Off-the-record conversations with someone who may not want to be identified, and is more complicated
 - Instead, add language in description: If you are interested in speaking to the full committee, please let the Chair & Vice Chair know
- Add questions to gather demographics, including: gender, income range, ward where they live, if they have dependents, marital status, age range, race or ethnicity, education level
 - Add option that they prefer not to answer
 - Suggestion to allow all questions to be optional
 - Javier will send Select Committee to Study Barriers to Serving on City Boards and Commissions survey section on demographics to Felicia
- Add questions asking how many hours people work/worked in their role in increments of 5 hours/week from less than 5 to 40+
 - Add similar question asking about how many hours on average per week they think the role deserves to do it well
- Suggestion to add 2014 process and results to description
 - Good to include process in the charge (the board makes recommendations, next step is recommendations goes to city council)
 - Consider how to succinctly include what happened in 2014 in language that isn't leading or biased

Determine The Next Steps

- John will look at calendar and confirm meeting schedule going forward to return to every other week after February 20 meeting in order to stay in line with city's timeline of when our recommendations are needed
- Invite people to speak at a public forum specific to our charge where agenda would be the board members listening - would be a chance to reach:
 - Current and past elected officials
 - Folks who ran and didn't
 - Folks who didn't run
 - General public input
 - Would need to draft invite and select date & time to hold

Adjourn

- Peter Whalen moved to adjourn meeting, Sam Hopper seconded
 - Peter Whalen: Yes
 - Javier Luengo-Garrido: Yes
 - Sam Hopper: Yes
 - Deb Henson: Yes
 - Felicia Corbeil: Yes
 - Tara Brewster: Yes
 - John Bidwell: Yes
- Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Upcoming Meeting

February 20, 2023 @ 5:30 via Zoom