



MEMORANDUM

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

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To: Ald. Milele A. Coggs
From: Mary E. Turk – Legislative Fiscal Analyst
Date: November 30, 2011
Subject: Update on Council Member Salaries

The following is in response to your request for information regarding changes in council member salaries from salary data collected in May of this year. Cities were contacted on November 28 and 29 beginning with cities of comparable size. They were asked if salaries had changed since May or if there were plans to change them in the near future. The results from the cities that responded are presented below. Included in parentheses is the cities' size ranking based on the 2010 Census. Milwaukee's rank is 19.

Austin (16) – Austin makes adjustments to salaries annually as part of the budget process. Most recently, in 2011, there was a 2% increase. A decision for 2012 has not yet been reached. Note that the salary reported in the data table collected in May was incorrect. The present salary for a council member is \$64,043, not \$57,736.

Boston (22) – Boston reports no recent or anticipated salary changes.

Cincinnati (54) – Cincinnati reports no recent or anticipated salary changes.

Denver (25) – Denver is in the beginning of a new term. Before the most recent term began in July of 2011, the Council had frozen the salaries for 2011-12 and 2012-2013, and increased the salaries by 3.3% in the 3rd and 4th years of the term. By charter, the salaries of elected officials are limited to the cumulative increase in CPI or the mean salary increase based on a local survey, whichever is lower. The CPI in the previous term was the lower of these 2 at 6.6%. Therefore, the cumulative increases in the 2011-2015 term were limited to 6.6%, which they split between the last 2 years of the following term.

Detroit (10) – Detroit reports no recent or anticipated salary changes.

Fresno (37) – Fresno reports no recent or anticipated salary changes.

Kansas City (36) – Kansas City council members are part-time employees. Their last increase in salary was in 2010. By charter, salary increases are capped at 4% and voted on annually. There was no increase in 2011, and there has been no decision

made yet for 2012. Note that the salary reported in the data table collected in May was incorrect. The present salary for a council member is \$61,569, not \$64,032.

Las Vegas (32) – Las Vegas has had a significant increase of 46.5% since May, from \$49,665 to \$72,742. This was a one-time adjustment made to get the salaries in line with what was being received by representatives at the county level. The next term will begin in July of 2013.

Minneapolis (48) – Minneapolis' council received a 2.5% increase in 2011, the middle of a term (2010 – 2013). The increases during the term are determined by the average percentage increase for all collective bargaining agreements approved by the council in the preceding year. Note that the salary reported in the data table collected in May was incorrect. The present salary for a council member is \$80,354, not \$74,616.

Pittsburgh (52) – Pittsburgh council members have annual increases that are the same as other city employees. There was a 2% increase in 2011, and there is a 2% increase planned for 2012.

San Diego (7) – San Diego reports no recent or anticipated salary changes.

Washington, DC (21) – DC reports no recent or anticipated salary changes.

Please contact me at x8680 if you have additional questions regarding this matter.

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