



TO : Mayor and City Commission
FROM : Linda W. Cox, City Clerk
RE : Election Reform and Compensation Issues
DATE : July 12, 2021

City Commission Compensation

City Commission compensation is set by City Code, Sec. 2-19. Compensation was changed via Ordinance H-171 in 1981, J-458 in 1998 and K-291 specifically discussed and approved as part of the 2005 budget. In October, 2016, the City Commission began receiving increases consistent with that of city employees. Most recently as of April, 2021, the City Commission received an 8% increase as part of the effort to bring employees up to the new minimum wage. It has been my long-standing position that because city commission compensation is set by ordinance, it should only be changed by ordinance rather than the procedure adopted in 2016. Some jurisdictions have included cost of living adjustments consistent with CPI as an automatic method to address compensation. However, because compensation is used to establish the election filing fees, it needs to be clearly stated in the Code. **Accordingly, specific clarification should be codified as desired by the City Commission.**

City Code Section 2-21 clearly calls for the city commission to receive an annual car allowance as set in the annual budget each year. This amount is also considered compensation when establishing the election filing fees.

City Code Section 2-263 addresses the eligibility of elected officials to elect in writing to participate in the City's retirement plan.

The eligibility of the elected officials to participate in the City's health insurance benefit plan is not addressed in the code. **Accordingly, specific clarification should be codified as desired by the City Commission.**

Candidate Eligibility and Length of Residency

City Charter Section 63 sets forth eligibility and residency requirements for the Mayor and City Commission, as "any qualified elector of the city who has resided or will have continuously resided therein for a period of two (2) years prior to the date of the election for which the elector becomes a candidate." Subsequent to the last election and the ensuing litigation, I have proposed an ordinance that specifically states the documentation necessary to validate residency and demonstrate eligibility in order for the Clerk, serving as the election official, to qualify a candidate for office and have their name placed on the ballot.

Any change to the length of residency would require a charter amendment.



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Absences and Remote Participation

City Code Section 2-48 addresses absences by a commissioner. Remote participation is not addressed in the code. Because of on-going questions and inquiries, clarification would be helpful in order for the public to clearly understand our practice, procedure and conditions under which remote participation is accommodated.

cc: Nicholas Mimms, City Manager
Pete Sweeney, City Attorney