

Council Business Meeting

February 7, 2023

Agenda Item	City Council Compensation Ballot Measure Language	
From	Doug McGeary Melissa Huhtala	Acting City Attorney City Recorder
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SUMMARY

Council has requested information regarding adding an item to the May 16th Special Called Election ballot for citizens of Ashland to vote to change the compensation for the Mayor and City Councilors of the City of Ashland.

Under the current language of the Ashland City Charter, the Mayor and City Councilors annually receive \$500 and \$350 in compensation respectively for their work on behalf of the citizens of Ashland. These annual compensation amounts were set by amendment to the City Charter in 1954 which were increased from the original annual compensation amounts adopted by public vote in 1917 of \$100 and \$75 respectively. Under the current language of the City Charter adopted by public vote in 1970, a change to the Mayor and City Councilors compensation “shall be submitted to the vote of the people” of Ashland.

ACTIONS, OPTIONS & POTENTIAL MOTIONS

The City Council may wish to propose a public vote to change their compensation at the May 16th Special Called Election to be conducted across Jackson County. To include an item on a May 16th ballot, the City must submit ballot language (including caption, question and summary language) to the Jackson County Clerk before February 15th. The ballot language must be reviewed and approved by the City Attorney prior to its submittal. Finally, voters’ pamphlet measure arguments for a May 16th election are due to the Jackson County Clerk by March 20th.

For purposes of the City Council’s discussion, the City Attorney has prepared draft ballot language in case the Council determines a change of compensation should be put forward for a vote of Ashland citizens (see attached Draft Compensation Ballot Item).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

N/A

FISCAL IMPACTS

The City Recorder has been in contact with the Jackson County requesting a cost estimate for Ashland’s share of Jackson County’s Special Called Election. The County Clerk has indicated it is not possible to estimate the cost for Ashland but has informed the City Recorder that it will be a countywide election with several jurisdictions sharing the cost. Ashland will not be required to cover the full cost of an election. The best estimate of Ashland’s share of election costs is \$5,000-\$15,000. The cost will be covered by expected Administration budget ending balances (City Council, City Manager, HR, Legal, Courts, etc.). Once the actual election cost is known, the actual cost amount will be transferred to the City Recorder’s budget for expensing from Administration budgets.

The annual fiscal cost of a Mayor and Councilor compensation change, assuming it is approved by Ashland voters, will depend on the level of compensation proposed to the voters. If approved for implementation for the balance of the current fiscal year, it is anticipated that the current budget for City Council expenditures will be able to absorb an increase in compensation.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Under Oregon’s constitution, elected official cannot hold more than one lucrative public position at the same time. A lucrative office is defined by salary or other compensation beyond expenses. Also, under the state’s ethics rules, elected officials may not vote to increase their own compensation; votes to increase compensation may only apply to subsequent election holders of the voting individual’s position. A League of Oregon Cities survey on elected officials’ compensation indicates salary or stipend compensation is usually provided at either a flat annual, monthly or per meeting amount.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Draft Council Compensation Ballot Item

Notice of Measure Election

City

SEL 802

rev 01/18 ORS 250.035, 250.041,
250.275, 250.285, 254.095, 254.465

Notice		
Date of Notice	Name of City or Cities	Date of Election

Final Ballot Title The following is the final ballot title of the measure to be submitted to the city's voters. The ballot title notice has been published and the ballot title challenge process has been completed.

Caption 10 words which reasonably identifies the subject of the measure.

Question 20 words which plainly phrases the chief purpose of the measure.

Summary 175 words which concisely and impartially summarizes the measure and its major effect.

Explanatory Statement 500 words that impartially explains the measure and its effect.

If the county is producing a voters' pamphlet an explanatory statement must be drafted and attached to this form for:
→ any measure referred by the city governing body; **or**
→ any initiative or referendum, if required by local ordinance.

Explanatory Statement Attached? Yes No

Authorized City Official Not required to be notarized.

Name	Title
Mailing Address	Contact Phone

By signing this document:
→ I hereby state that I am authorized by the city to submit this Notice of Measure Election; **and**
→ I certify that notice of receipt of ballot title has been published and the ballot title challenge process for this measure completed.

Signature	Date Signed
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