

2012 Survey of Members of Council - Summary of Results

2012COC079 Attachment 1

Question 1:

On average, how many hours do you spend a week performing Councillor duties?

	# Councillors	% Councillors
a. 40-50 hrs/week	0	0
b. 50-60 hrs/week	3	25
c. 60-70 hrs/week	4	33
d. 70+ hrs/week	5	42
Total	12	100

Question 2:

What percentage of your time is spent on:

	Individual Council Members %													Avg. %
Council and Committee meetings	33.3	35.0	35.0	50.0	40.0	20.0	30.0	40.0	30.0	30.0	30.0			33.9
Council Initiatives		15.0	17.5	10.0	10.0	20.0	30.0	5.0	10.0	10.0	15.0			13.0
Representing City Council on appointed duties		10.0	17.5	6.0	20.0	20.0	10.0	5.0	10.0	10.0	10.0			10.8
Constituency matters	33.3	30.0	10.0	15.0	15.0	30.0	10.0	20.0	45.0	30.0	30.0			24.4
Official social functions		5.0	10.0	15.0	8.0	5.0	20.0	5.0	1.0	10.0	5.0			7.6
Meeting with developers, community, lobby groups		5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0			5.0	4.0	10.0	5.0			3.8
Meeting with other levels of government	33.3		5.0	1.0	1.0	5.0		1.0			5.0			4.7
Other (think time, community league functions/meetings)					1.0			14.0						1.4
Other (fundraisers, community-wide events)								5.0						0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0

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Question 3:

How much time is spent on official functions representing the City during evenings and weekends?

	# Councillors
Weeknights	
<1 night per week	
1 night per week	
2-3 nights per week	9
4-5 nights per week	3
Total	12

	# Councillors
Weekends	
<1 weekend per month	1
1 weekend per month	
2 weekends per month	1
3 weekends per month	5
4 weekends per month	4
Total	11

Comments:

- Official functions and reading
- This question is confusing. I attend tons of community meetings that have to do with my ward, or Council initiatives, or boards... I avg 2 - 3 nights per week although this increases when it's not winter. During the spring and summer months I can avg 3 - 4 nights per week. I will avg 1 weekend event every 2 weeks.

Question 4:

Has your workload been affected by the following:

Single Councillor Wards:

- Yes - easier to focus on specific geographical areas
- Workload is the same but more effective
- Yes it has been affected for the better. It's not such a large ward and we are no longer duplicating work.
- No
- I believe it has brought focus to my constituency work and reduced duplication with the ward mate.

- I am seeing a bit of reduction in that I am not having to go to some of the functions that I attended before when my ward was larger. That said, there are three neighbourhoods in my ward that are getting neighbourhood renewal which is making it very busy for me this term for meetings and issues. So because there is so much going on in my ward it's been even busier for me than last term.

- Not a lessening of workload - just easier to manage
- No
- I like the idea - Don't know if it increased work from 6 ward model
- No
- It has changed and is perhaps more efficient but the time has not decreased.

Council Initiatives:

- Yes - seniors services are city wide so significant
- Added to the workload
- Still doing the same amount maybe more as I have the same initiatives.
- Yes
- My workload has been affected by the Council Initiatives but it's work worth doing. I am Co-Chairing the CIB 2012 with the Mayor of Leduc which is on top of the communities in bloom council initiatives which encompasses Edmonton Front Yards in Bloom. I am also the Chair of Donate-A-Ride, on the Housing Initiative as well as on the AUMA Executive and the list goes on. The good news is that Council Initiatives are being supported by City Administration and it's getting easier to handle.
- Yes, lots of reading and monthly meetings
- Extra meetings and prep work, extra responsibility
- Yes - Working with sport and recreation groups to advance projects
- Some extra time on this
- No
- Yes, the initiatives certainly consume time, but I believe it is time well spent
- I don't have memory from before Initiatives, but each one is what we make of it, and I haven't signed for anything I wasn't passionate about so it is part of my workload by choice.

Standing Committees:

- Reading
- Added to the workload
- Still doing the same amount maybe more
- Yes, time spent on newly created Utilities Committee is more than I thought.
- Utility Committee was a lot of work in the first year but having the committee stand has made it easier for second year, though I suspect work is being silo'd
- The Standing Committees are the same work as before; the only difference is that now I am permanently on the Audit Committee.
- Reading and attendance
- Attendance and prep

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- Par for the course
- No
- Standing Committees certainly eat up time but save us time at Council. I try to attend all standing committee meetings as I find it an effective use of my time.

Other groups at which you represent Council:

- Community/charitable events
- Added to workload
- Capital Region Board - Committees, Planning, Advocacy, Governance, Housing; Alberta Industrial Heartland Association; MLA & MP relationships
- CUTA, AUMA
- I value the time I spend working on Capital Region Board matters and the Edmonton Public Library Board and think this kind of work is an important part of the role. I do not think the burden is equitably shared in this regard, but c'est la vie.
- Stop Marijuana Group
- Fort Edmonton Management Company, Donate-A-Ride, Edmonton Salutes
- I represent Council on a number of outside groups. Again they are time consuming but are valuable to me in being able to be connected outside of the city.

Other:

- Public Hearings seem to take up more and more time

Question 5:

One third of the Mayor and Councillor's salary and allowances is tax exempt, as allowed by the Municipal Government Act and the federal Income Tax Act. Your current salary of \$87,955 is one third tax exempt. Would you prefer to receive a fully taxable amount of \$102,731? (Please note that this would then also apply to all allowances which are currently one third tax exempt).

	# Councillors
Yes	2
No	10
Total	12

Comments:

- No pension provision

- Remaining tax exemption means more of my salary coming out of property taxes.
- In principle I would prefer transparency and comparability to conventional earnings, but I'm not convinced that's worth a six-figure wealth transfer from Edmonton property tax payers to Ottawa and the Leg. just to prove that point. Perhaps the equivalency could be publicly reported more clearly.
- I would be fine with getting rid of the 3rd tax free as long as the amount the Councillors are paid stays basically the same as what they are getting now. I know that this is what the City of Calgary did.
- It eliminates Federal Income Tax and saves Edmonton (taxpayers) money
- If other politicians went that way (i.e. Fed. Prov.), I'd go along.
- This is not hugely important to me one way or the other. Ironically, getting rid of the tax exempt portion would cost the city money while giving no benefit or disadvantage to us.

Question 6:

In the past, some Members of Council have requested to not receive their individual annual increase, and to change the allocation of this increase. Have you previously requested to not receive your entitled increase?

	# Councillors
Yes	6
No	6
Total	12

Comments:

- Current compensation levels do not reflect the responsibilities and liabilities of position. The fact that no pension or comparable contribution is punitive and deters good candidates from seeking office.
- Value of the work performed and no pension benefit
- I believe that the Council compensation is still low for the amount and level of work required.
- Political pressure felt when other Council members were doing the same.
- Partly politics: the Mayor set the (negative) tone on this several times, made it very awkward for members of Council. Partly optics: the annual snapshot spikes high some years and becomes a football - so a trailing two or three year average would smooth out the negative-attention-grabbing spikes.
- I have chosen in the past to not accept my annual increase. My reasons were basically due to timing and a feeling that the amount of the increase was not in step with what folks out in other jobs were getting paid. I have debated in my mind whether having Council salaries tied to the Alberta Average Weekly wage earnings is the best measure or not. One issue with it is that the year end for this measurement is September instead of a calendar year. On the other hand, if you tied us to the rate of inflation and inflation starts climbing Council could see massive increases with this measurement.
- In my first year as a Councillor, I gave up my increase as it came after 2 - 5 months on the job and I was uncomfortable accepting it.
- The annual increase was designed to stop annual debate on Council salaries (Change equal to AB Average Weekly Wage)

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- Agreed with request by Mayor to set an example in 2010.
- We are paid enough.
- I believe we should stay out of these decisions. It is much better for this to be decided by an independent committee than by us.

Would you wish to do so in the future?

	# Councillors
Yes	1
No	6
Did not specify	5
Total	12

Comments:

- Yes, fair compensation for the position
- I'd like to hope that Council, on your advice, can settle on an annual COLA/market adjustment that lends itself less to political silliness - but that ultimately lies in our court!
- Would rather have a system that works
- It would be best if increases were based on Edmonton's CPI not AB weekly wage.
- No decision
- Now I know the demands of this work and I feel (the increase) is warranted.

Question 7:

Are there other key factors you wish the Independent Council Compensation Committee to consider?

- The current pension program offered by AUMA for elected officials should be incorporated in benefits program with comparable pension contributions to senior management levels in City.
- Pension
- I believe the vehicle compensation should be looked at as I have the biggest ward and it is the furthest away so I do spend a lot in vehicle travel.
- Pension plan
- Building on my observations in section 6, I would suggest a blended 2-year trailing average of two factors, weighted equally: a market factor (like the earnings index) and an inflation factor like CPI would be fair and defensible.
So: $((\text{year X CPI}) + (\text{year X+1 CPI})) / 2 + ((\text{year X earnings index}) + (\text{year X+1 earnings index})) / 2 = \text{delta pay}$. Lacks the virtue of being easy to explain. But I think it would be equitable and stable, which are the principles I would recommend aiming for.

- The previous compensation committee decided on a significant salary increase and determined the measurement for increases which has been in place since their recommendations were accepted. I did not end up voting in favour of the recommendations and the reason is that I felt the committee needed to look at some sort of pension system. Presently there is a transition allowance but there is no pension. I would not be in favour of an expensive pension plan but I do feel that for those City Councillors like Ron Hayter and Terry Cavanagh who served our city for many years and yet left with no major retirement was not fair. The challenge of not having a better transition allowance or pension system is that when a Councillor leaves the position, it can be punishing for them financially. I hope that the Committee looks at this more closely.
- Find a measure that fits Edmonton - not the Province
- Far more important to me than salary is the issue of a pension. Inability to provide for retirement may push some people out earlier than they should and then later make it very difficult for others to retire when they should.
- Pension
- Pension
- Visioning sessions and meetings to plan meetings or set policy should be reduced so we can do core work of Councillor - especially helping constituents.
- Let the annual salary adjustment occur as the required review and leave everything else alone.