



## **Crook County Compensation Committee**

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### **CROOK COUNTY COMPENSATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 23, 2025**

**BE IT REMEMEBERED** that the Crook County Compensation Committee convened on April 23, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. in the Administration Conference room located at 203 NE Court Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754.

Board Members Present: Scott Tibbs, William “Bill” Anderson, Ronda Sneva (zoom), and Steve Brown (zoom)

Absentees:

Others Present in Person or Via Zoom: County Manager Will Van Vactor; Executive Assistant Breyanna Cupp; Executive Assistant and Communications Officer Sarah Puerner; Finance Director Christina Haron; HR Director Meghan Mckee; County Clerk Cheryl Seely; Undersheriff Bill Elliot; Sheriff John Gautney; Payroll Administrator Kathy Puckett; Administrative Manager Stephanie Wilson; Assessor Jon Soliz; and Budget Manager Jamie Berger.

**MOTION** to nominate Bill Anderson to be the chairperson of the elected officials’ compensation committee. Motion seconded by Steve Brown. No discussion. Committee Member Ronda Sneva votes Aye, Committee Member Steve Brown votes Aye, Committee Member Scott Tibbs votes Aye, and Committee Member Bill Anderson abstain. Motion carried 3-0.

Committee Members reviewed the minutes of the March 13, 2025, Meeting

**MOTION** to accept the minutes. Motion seconded by Ronda Sneva. No discussion. Committee Member Ronda Sneva votes Aye, Committee Member Steve Brown votes Aye, and Committee Member Bill Anderson votes Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

**Discussion item #1:** Review compensation information and discuss recommendations for a compensation schedule for the county elective officers mentioned in ORS 204.005:

**Discussion item #2:** Vote on the recommended compensation schedule for submission to the Crook County Budget Committee and the County governing body for approval:

#### **Details:**

Committee Member Scott Tibbs stated that he has reviewed the documents and asked what the goal and intent for today’s meeting? Christina Haron explains what the documents are and that they are from this fiscal year and were approved with the prior compensation study.

County Manager Will Van Vactor adds that the goal for staff at the meeting is to answer any questions about the information we provided and find out if there was any additional information the committee would like.

Steve Brown appreciated Will bringing up the comparisons of other counties. Steve asks questions about cost-of-living adjustments, what we are looking at and what are the input factors that the county would like the committee to consider?

Ronda Sneva agreed with Steve and his comments.

Scott Tibbs had a general question about stipends. Not pushing against them but would like to understand the individuals that get paid a stipend for sick leave when there is no sick leave for them because it's a salary position. What is the intent on the stipend amount? Christina Haron explained that due to not getting sick time it was part of the salary/stipend.

County Clerk Cheryl Seely stated that at the meeting regarding the stipend for sick time, that employees earn certifications and that in turn causes them to get an increase in salary. She explained that elected officials do all those things without that because everything must go through here. There were benefits that the employees got and, in some cases, close to the elected official but the elected officials didn't get those increases for different reasons.

Bill Anderson asked for clarity on longevity pay. Christina Haron explained that when you are employed for a certain amount of time you get an increase in your wage. The amount added to the wage depends on the length of time with the County. Elected officials don't receive longevity pay.

Sheriff John Gautney mentioned that two years ago the stipend was first brought up because the Sheriff has a set salary, but the undersheriff gets certification pay. The sheriff must maintain the same certification to stay employed. With the undersheriff getting certification pay he's moving closer to the sheriff salary, so they are compressing.

County Manager Will Van Vactor touches on statute because it touches on some of these topics being discussed. ORS 204.112 covers the elected official's compensation committee, they refer to it as county compensation board, and Will read the statute. Will reiterates that there are positions that aren't elected but do carry some of the same responsibilities.

Steve Brown brought up the Sheriff and the Commissioners' responsibilities and feels that there are meeting and travel expenses that the commissioners and other elected officials have that are covered. The committee discussed the conflict between the elected officials getting a stipend and using a county credit card for expenses. Bill Anderson asked why there is a stipend for expenses they don't incur?

County Clerk Cheryl Seely explained that having the County credit card you do have to have all your receipts and turn in monthly with the statement. She explained that the stipend was in place because of lost receipts and that the stipend was just more convenient. Will Van Vactor stated that we can gather information on all elected officials and how they are using the card and what the intent is for the stipends.

Bill Anderson asked that the committee get the information on the comp study done previously. He also asked if all the requirements in the statute that Will mentioned be

provided so that they could follow that. Cheryl Seely commented that not all elected officials are included in the comp study. Bill goes on to say that the County is much more complex than it used to be and only getting more complex and the conversation last year was about how do you look at comparisons and competitiveness across the counties.

Steve Brown stated that we are dealing with eight people, it's not that complex. Steve is interested in the non-elected staff or senior staff salary. Steve would like to hear from the county manager what the proposals are for salary changes in the proposed 25-26 cycle.

County Manager Will Van Vactor stated that through this budget process we have asked our departments to look at materials and services and we have personnel expenses that are going up and that increase isn't something we can control. We have also asked the departments to look at vacant positions and any new FTE requests with a critical eye. The total FTE reductions across the board are about 20 positions. Steve Brown made a comment about reviewing the salaries of the staff reporting to the elected officials or working alongside them.

Bill Anderson brought another issue that has come up in conversation is getting clarification from the commissioners about what their intention is going forward. The commissioners are currently full-time, and Bill is asking for clarification of their intent moving forward. Scott Tibbs asked for clarification on the change in compensation for the commissioners and if it has doubled in the last couple of years? Steve Brown explained the change in governance and made the Judge position to commissioner, so all three commissioners are paid the same.

The COLA increase was discussed by the committee and if they needed to know about any details for the elected officials. The committee members discussed the compression issue, stipends, and how the needs change. Scott Tibbs discusses that in lieu of the stipends make it part of the salary. Christina Haron explains that when the credit cards came into place the stipends stayed and were not sure how the County got here, and she also explained that each stipend is meant for something different depending on the elected official. The committee asked for clarification if there are reimbursements being made then why is the stipend in place. This is one of the pieces of information that will be gathered and provided before the next meeting.

Sheriff John Gautney clarified the stipend he receives by explaining that hotels and county vehicle fuel are paid for with the county credit card but all his meals he pays out of his pocket. Scott Tibbs asked the Sheriff if paying for meals out of his pocket was by choice and the Sheriff replied yes. Scott also asked about the certification required for his role and states that it should be a part of his salary. Stephanie Wilson explains that the association negotiates the certification amount for what level. These are not included in the salary because then compression issues happen.

The County Clerk and County Assessor clarified the certifications they hold and how the pay is calculated with that and whether the stipend included or not.

The committee members discussed credit card use and the stipend needed to be cleaned up. Ronda Sneva asked if the stipend is taxable, and Christina Haron replied that yes, it is taxable. Scott Tibbs would like the commissioners to have the opportunity to clarify the use of credit cards and stipend reimbursements. Will Van Vactor will follow up with the commissioners and what the intent is with the stipend pay.

Committee members would like information gathered that was requested before the next meeting. Will reviewed with the committee on the items that were requested for further review. The County Clerk clarified the comp study experience and doesn't feel that her office and other employees weren't fairly evaluated for the compensation change. There is now a compensation review committee to review this for county employees.

Will agrees that he can have the requested information for the committee members before the next meeting and needs about a week to do so.

The committee discussed scheduling the next compensation committee meeting. After discussion Christina Haron agreed to send out doodle poll to get everyone's availability for scheduling.

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned the meeting at 2:03pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Breyanna Cupp