



# COUNTY OF ERIE CITIZENS SALARY REVIEW COMMISSION MINUTES

**October 2, 2018, 11:30 a.m. Meeting**

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Present: Chair Laurie Buonanno, Donald Allen, Owen Patrick Brady, Michael Lukasik, Jerry Newman, Louis Panzica, Tiffany Perry, William Ransom, and Christopher Stone.

Absent: None.

Support Staff: Scott Bylewski and Mark Cornell, both from Erie County Division of Budget and Management.

Non-Members Present: Brian Poliner and Ross Kosticky.

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Meeting Notes: A quorum was present and meeting called to order by Chair Buonanno at 11:34 a.m.

Motion made by C. Stone, seconded by L. Panzica to approve the minutes of September 25, 2018, with a correction made on the last page that the next meeting should be listed as October 2, 2018, and not September 25, 2018; motion carried unanimously by all members in attendance.

L. Panzica mentioned his discussions with Robert Glaser and the County Executive. Thought process discussed was 10 to 15 percent upfront with future increases tied to CSEA contract. The report should set forth that if this Commission's recommendations are denied as the last one's were, then the process is broken.

O. Brady asked the Commission whether the legislature must vote on increases every time.

C. Stone was against smaller increments, but it will require that to get approved.

D. Allen, stated that individual legislators did not want raises. Further, his recommendations were derived using 4 to 6 percent.

J. Newman indicated that using the CSEA contract and 3 percent as a substitute for cost of living has logic to it. 10 to 15 percent has logic because there is a large difference between the 1996 salaries and what the cost of living has done since then.

L. Panzica stated why would anyone take a 50 percent pay cut to run for County Sheriff if they were a municipal police chief, by way of comparison.

W. Ransom stated that the Commission must come up with a number and it must be palatable.

Chair Buonanno indicated that counties do the business of New York State; whereas, cities are a different animal.

Discussion ensued regarding county by county comparisons.

O. Brady discussed the report setting forth what the salaries should be and also what the Commission thought would pass to help get to the “should be” number.

J. Newman discussed three recommendations, that the report should mention the large disparity, that it may not be feasible to “jump up” to the actual number it should, and then hope future commissions would run with the work set forth by this one.

O. Brady mentioned looking at everything financially that has occurred since last increase in 1996 and to get to that figure over time.

T. Perry discussed her motion from the prior meeting.

Chair Buonanno mentioned that the fourth recommendation is no increase for the legislature.

J. Newman expressed it as (1) all elected officials but legislators to receive increases, (2) future commissions to follow work of this commission, and (3) what to do about legislature?

Chair Buonanno discussed increases as being 2 years, 6 years, or indefinitely going forward.

L. Panzica mentioned it being indefinite, because the current Commission may not be empaneled in 2020. Further, the increase should be 10 percent for elected officials, which would be an increase of approximately \$35,000 in total, excluding the legislature.

Commission engaged in discussion on median and mean statistics for each county comparison.

Chair Buonanno was not in favor of including any county one standard deviation above or below the mean.

T. Perry indicated she would support a salary increase supported by the majority of the commission and then had to leave at 12:31 p.m. for another meeting.

L. Panzica moved for the following increases, seconded by C. Stone as follows:

1. Elected positions to be paid as:
  - a. County Executive increased to \$118,735
  - b. Comptroller increased to \$92,705
  - c. Clerk increased to \$90,956
  - d. Sheriff increased to \$90,956
  - e. Legislature to remain at current salary
2. Subsequent annual increases to be based on the CSEA “white collar” contract.

On the question, Chair Buonanno discussed the justification that the salaries would be close to the average of other counties when filtered by median income and real estate process. L. Panzica believed increases should be 15 percent across the board. D. Allen also was in favor of 15 percent.

Motion rescinded by L. Panzica and C. Stone.

L. Panzica moved the following, seconded by W. Ransom:

1. Elected positions to be paid as:
  - a. County Executive increased to \$118,376
  - b. Comptroller increased to \$94,037
  - c. Clerk remain at \$79,092
  - d. Sheriff increased to \$90,956
  - e. Legislature to remain at current salary
2. Subsequent annual increases for the County Executive, Comptroller, Clerk, and Sheriff to be based on the CSEA "white collar" contract.

On the question, the salaries set forth in the motion bring the positions that were below the mean salaries of the comparison counties (excluding those counties one standard deviation above or below the mean) up to the mean.

Motion carried unanimously by the Commission members present.

D. Allen left the meeting at 1:06 p.m.

Chair Buonanno will draft report and send to the Commission members who expressed a desire to write report sections to review and suggest changes.

J. Newman would submit "Another Voice" column to the Buffalo News and C. Stone would write a letter to the editor.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by C. Stone, seconded by O. Brady; motion carried unanimously by all members in attendance.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:52 p.m.

Next Meeting: October 9, 2018, at 1:12 p.m.