



Office of the Independent Budget Analyst

Proposed Council Response to County Grand Jury Report

**“COMPENSATION OF CITY OF SAN DIEGO
ELECTED OFFICIALS”**

**Presentation for the
City Council
July 28, 2015
Item #334**



Overview

- The Grand Jury filed this report on February 3, 2015.
- The report discusses issues related to the current City Charter language which requires Councilmembers to approve the Mayor's and their own salaries.
- The report includes 2 findings and 2 recommendations directed to the Council for response.



Previous Actions

- An extension for City Council submission of responses was requested and granted.
 - Council is required to provide a response to the Presiding Judge by August 6, 2014.
- A proposed response was presented to the Charter Review (CR) Committee on March 5, 2015.



Previous Actions

- The CR Committee forwarded the proposed response to Council without recommendation.
- The CR Committee also requested input be provided by the Salary Setting Commission (SSC) prior to docketing the proposed Grand Jury response at the full City Council.



Previous Actions

- SSC input was discussed at their June 22, 2015 meeting, and provided to the Council in a July 13, 2015 memo.
- This memo is included in the back-up materials for this item on the City Clerk's website.



Previous Actions

- Based on prior discussions at the Charter Review and ED&IR Committees and full Council, the IBA has prepared a revised proposed response to the Grand Jury report
 - See Attachment 1 to IBA report 15-04 REV
- The revised proposed response also reflects SSC input regarding recommended Charter amendments.



Prescribed Grand Jury Responses

- For each Finding:
 - Agree
 - Disagree wholly or partially
- For each Recommendation:
 - Has been implemented
 - Has not yet been implemented, but will be
 - Requires further analysis
 - Will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable



Highlights of Findings

1. *Salaries of Councilmembers and the Mayor should be tied to an external benchmark.*

– **Partially Disagree**

Because the Council needs to further vet the issues surrounding compensation of elected officials, it cannot agree to a specific method for salary determination. See the response to Recommendation 15-02.



Highlights of Findings

2. *A Charter Review Committee should be formed by the end of March 2015 in order to meet deadlines for City Council approval for the June 2016 ballot.*

– Disagree

Although a Charter Review Committee has been formed, Council has not fully vetted the subject of elected officials' salaries. Thus, it would be premature to agree to meeting the ballot deadlines suggested in the Grand Jury report. See the response to Recommendation 15-02.



Highlights of Recommendations

15-01 *Place on the June 2016 or November 2016 ballot a proposed amendment to the City Charter [to be effective July 1, 2017]...*

– **Requires further analysis**

See response to Recommendation 15-02.



Highlights of Recommendations

15-02 *Through the newly created Charter Review Committee, fully vet the recommended Salary Setting Amendment proposed here.*

– **Requires further analysis**

The proposed response provides background on discussions at Charter Review Committee as well as Salary Setting Commission recommendations.



Highlights of Recommendations

15-02 (*Continued*)

- Salary Setting Commission (SSC) recommendation for Charter amendments is in line with the Grand Jury's recommendation:
 - Tying the Mayor and Councilmembers' salaries to an external benchmark
 - Abolishing the SSC



Highlights of Recommendations

15-02 (*Continued*)

- The SSC's recommendation for Charter amendments is also the same as a ballot proposal filed with the City Clerk by the SSC President in May of 2014 (except for the date provision).



Highlights of Recommendations

15-02 (*Continued*)

- In background material provided as part of the submitted ballot proposal, the SSC:
“recommend[ed] that this matter go to the ballot with a clear expression to the public that this is a recommendation of the San Diego Salary Setting Commission, not the City Council. It should be clear the City Council is merely advancing the Commission’s recommendation to the voters.”



Highlights of Recommendations

15-02 (*Continued*)

- Because the proposed ballot measure for Charter amendments did not move forward and subsequent discussions have not produced consensus, further dialogue is warranted.
- The Charter Review Committee will be further vetting the issue of salaries of elected officials in calendar year 2016 when a number of issues related to elected officials are planned to be addressed.



Next Steps

We request Council approval of a proposed response for submission to the Presiding Judge of the San Diego Superior Court by August 6, 2015.