

Salary Survey Discussion

December 15, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Fund

Present via zoom: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Jackson, Graham Gowing, Joe Bassetti, Jonathan Meyer, Suzette Smith, JL James, Katie Conradi, Katie, Nissell, Lindsey Pollock, Megan Eastman, Daleyn Coleman, Meja Handlen, Michelle Sauter, Chris Panush, Dean Sabin, Vance Jacobson, Michelle Sabin, Steve Wohld, SC Kennedy, Sean Swope, Becky Butler

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Lewis County manager Erik Martin briefed that the last salary survey was in 2007. Then there was a recession. The County stayed within budget and therefore had to make smaller decisions in compensation. Because of this, we needed to figure where we stand with the market. In 2019, majority of the collective bargaining agreements to perform a salary survey. There is still work to do, but we do have some results requiring some fee back from the Board based on timelines and budget.

Vance Jacobson is the managing partner of JB Reward Systems from Bainbridge Island, Washington. They bring extensive experience. Their firm provides models for compensation review. The County has challenges recruiting skilled staff due to turnover and the 'best' candidates starting at the top of their salary range. The goal is to create a competitive goal and construct salary ranges that set a path for the County's target. Lewis County is noticeably below the median average. The formula is supposed to calculate the ranges and should be set up to accommodate county growth and have pay scales to encourage development. In order to develop a salary plan, JB Reward Systems uses the following plan:

- Study organization and rank jobs
- Collect market information and plot information
- Compute market trend
- Develop salary ranges

This model should offer flexibility to recruit and give more opportunities for salary growth. They feel the model they are working on will be sustainable. The cost for the conversion to be at the median salary market would cost \$580,000 or \$62,000 monthly for salary only if following the road map. Benefits and retirement would be additional costs. This would enable the county to meet the competitive target of median-average paying jobs by the end of 2022. After the target is met, the next step becomes maintenance to the model and have supportive cost of living raises. They provide feedback to departments and to staff to assure internal pay equity. Communication is delivered in two phases and they provide support for the new transition. With the commitments already in place through 2022, step increases will be implemented in the system as well. The changes in the salary grid will provide raises and/or growth for those currently maxed out.

Chris Panush wanted to extend his thanks for the work that Vance did. The next steps will include reaching out to the offices to have a completed target date of April 2021. Commissioner Jackson appreciated having a framework to move forward with. Commissioner Jackson said his main goal would

be to improve retention. Commissioner Stamper said that this would provide the County an opportunity to pay wages competitive to other counties. Commissioner Stamper would like to move forward to complete the salary study so he could see the implications to the 2021 budget. Commissioner Stamper and Commissioner Jackson asked for more refinement of figures.

Meeting ended 11:07 a.m.