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# MEMORANDUM

**Jim Jones, Jr**  
**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**



**02 February 2007**

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**TO: Charter Review Commission**

**RE: Elected Official Salaries**

**It is my opinion that the method of determining the salaries of Elected Officials in Clallam County is highly political, not good government, and should be changed through the Charter Review process. I have attached a spreadsheet showing the 2006 salaries of the elected officials in counties of similar size, with populations between 50,000 and 80,000, and compared the average of each with the 2006 salary of the corresponding elected official in Clallam County. We are paying each position considerably less than the average of the peers in similarly sized counties, and this is not fair, equitable or justifiable in any way.**

**State Law (RCW 36.17.024) suggests that salaries for commissioners and council members might best be set by independent salary commissions set up for just that purpose, in order to insulate the executive body from possible conflict of interest concerns. It also makes sense to me that we could include the other elected official salaries in the same review work. My concern with this approach for Clallam County is that it takes too much time and money to establish and run these commissions, each year, for a county our size. I have a suggestion:**

**The State has already set up an on-going salary commission to set the salaries for the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch and Judicial Branch of state government. The salaries for Clallam County Judges are already set by this State commission. Why not ask the voters to approve a charter change which would set each of our Elected Official salaries to a specific percentage of the Superior Court Judge salary that is provided to us annually from the commission. This would provide the independent review process, each year, as suggested in the above RCW, while saving Clallam County the cost of setting one up for ourselves.**

By using the salary survey information on the attached sheet, it would be a simple matter to establish what the percentages of the State Salary-Commission-approved 2006 Superior Court Judges salary (\$128,143) should be, in order to get each position closely aligned to the average of our peers. I propose we establish the pay for each position as follows:

Elected Position	% of Judge Salary	2006 Salary	vs 2006 Average
County Commissioner	50% =	\$64,071.50 for 2006	vs \$64,539 avg.
County Sheriff	58% =	\$74,322.94 for 2006	vs \$74,332 avg.
County Auditor	48% =	\$61,508.64 for 2006	vs \$62,364 avg.
County Assessor	48% =	\$61,508.64 for 2006	vs \$62,364 avg.
County Treasurer	48% =	\$61,508.64 for 2006	vs \$62,364 avg.
County Prosecutor	77% =	\$98,670.11 for 2006	vs \$99,003 avg.

These salary levels would have increased our 2006 salary costs by \$52,684, or approximately \$6,585 for each of the eight elected officials involved, solving the under-payment problem we have right now and provide a fair, equitable and non-political adjustment each year to keep it so.



## 2006 Commissioner Salary Survey - Counties from 50,000 - 80,000

County	Population	Monthly	Annual
Grant	79100	\$ 5,154.00	\$ 61,848.00
Island	76000	\$ 5,651.00	\$ 67,812.00
Lewis	71600	\$ 5,554.00	\$ 66,648.00
Grays Harbor	69800	\$ 5,758.00	\$ 69,096.00
Chelan	69200	\$ 5,394.00	\$ 64,728.00
Franklin	60500	\$ 5,423.00	\$ 65,076.00
Walla Walla	57500	\$ 4,458.00	\$ 53,496.00
Mason	51900	\$ 5,634.00	\$ 67,608.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>66950</b>	<b>\$ 5,378.25</b>	<b>\$ 64,539.00</b>
<b>Clallam</b>	<b>66800</b>	<b>\$ 4,889.00</b>	<b>\$ 58,668.00</b>
Difference	-150	\$ (489.25)	\$ (5,871.00)

## 2006 Sheriff Salary Survey - Counties from 50,000 - 80,000

County	Population	Monthly	Annual
Grant	79100	\$ 6,127.00	\$ 73,524.00
Island	76000	\$ 5,651.00	\$ 67,812.00
Lewis	71600	\$ 5,972.00	\$ 71,664.00
Grays Harbor	69800	\$ 6,764.00	\$ 81,168.00
Chelan	69200	\$ 6,125.00	\$ 73,500.00
Franklin	60500	\$ 6,426.00	\$ 77,112.00
Walla Walla	57500	\$ 5,958.00	\$ 71,496.00
Mason	51900	\$ 6,532.00	\$ 78,384.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>66950</b>	<b>\$ 6,194.38</b>	<b>\$ 74,332.50</b>
<b>Clallam</b>	<b>66800</b>	<b>\$ 5,678.75</b>	<b>\$ 68,145.00</b>
Difference	-150	\$ (515.63)	\$ (6,187.50)

## 2006 Auditor Salary Survey - Counties from 50,000 - 80,000

County	Population	Monthly	Annual
Grant	79100	\$ 5,022.00	\$ 60,264.00
Island	76000	\$ 5,086.00	\$ 61,032.00
Lewis	71600	\$ 5,276.00	\$ 63,312.00
Grays Harbor	69800	\$ 5,447.00	\$ 65,364.00
Chelan	69200	\$ 5,394.00	\$ 64,728.00
Franklin	60500	\$ 5,541.00	\$ 66,492.00
Walla Walla	57500	\$ 4,458.00	\$ 53,496.00
Mason	51900	\$ 5,352.00	\$ 64,224.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>66950</b>	<b>\$ 5,197.00</b>	<b>\$ 62,364.00</b>
<b>Clallam</b>	<b>66800</b>	<b>\$ 4,661.00</b>	<b>\$ 55,932.00</b>
Difference	-150	\$ (536.00)	\$ (6,432.00)

## 2006 Assessor Salary Survey - Counties from 50,000 - 80,000

County	Population	Monthly	Annual
Grant	79100	\$ 5,022.00	\$ 60,264.00
Island	76000	\$ 5,086.00	\$ 61,032.00
Lewis	71600	\$ 5,276.00	\$ 63,312.00
Grays Harbor	69800	\$ 5,447.00	\$ 65,364.00
Chelan	69200	\$ 5,394.00	\$ 64,728.00
Franklin	60500	\$ 5,541.00	\$ 66,492.00
Walla Walla	57500	\$ 4,458.00	\$ 53,496.00
Mason	51900	\$ 5,352.00	\$ 64,224.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>66950</b>	<b>\$ 5,197.00</b>	<b>\$ 62,364.00</b>
<b>Clallam</b>	<b>66800</b>	<b>\$ 4,661.00</b>	<b>\$ 55,932.00</b>
Difference	-150	\$ (536.00)	\$ (6,432.00)

## 2006 Treasurer Salary Survey - Counties from 50,000 - 80,000

County	Population	Monthly	Annual
Grant	79100	\$ 5,022.00	\$ 60,264.00
Island	76000	\$ 5,086.00	\$ 61,032.00
Lewis	71600	\$ 5,276.00	\$ 63,312.00
Grays Harbor	69800	\$ 5,447.00	\$ 65,364.00
Chelan	69200	\$ 5,394.00	\$ 64,728.00
Franklin	60500	\$ 5,541.00	\$ 66,492.00
Walla Walla	57500	\$ 4,458.00	\$ 53,496.00
Mason	51900	\$ 5,352.00	\$ 64,224.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>66950</b>	<b>\$ 5,197.00</b>	<b>\$ 62,364.00</b>
<b>Clallam</b>	<b>66800</b>	<b>\$ 4,661.00</b>	<b>\$ 55,932.00</b>
Difference	-150	\$ (536.00)	\$ (6,432.00)

## 2006 Prosecutor Salary Survey - Counties from 50,000 - 80,000

County	Population	Monthly	Annual
Grant	79100	\$ 9,539.00	\$ 114,468.00
Island	76000	\$ 8,010.00	\$ 96,120.00
Lewis	71600	\$ 8,296.00	\$ 99,552.00
Grays Harbor	69800	\$ 8,346.00	\$ 100,152.00
Chelan	69200	\$ 8,153.00	\$ 97,836.00
Franklin	60500	\$ 7,638.00	\$ 91,656.00
Walla Walla	57500	\$ 6,708.00	\$ 80,496.00
Mason	51900	\$ 9,312.00	\$ 111,744.00
<b>Average</b>	<b>66950</b>	<b>\$ 8,250.25</b>	<b>\$ 99,003.00</b>
<b>Clallam</b>	<b>66800</b>	<b>\$ 7,092.00</b>	<b>\$ 85,104.00</b>
Difference	-150	\$ (1,158.25)	\$ (13,899.00)

**RCW 36.17.024****County commissioner and councilmember salary commissions.**

(1) Salaries for county commissioners and councilmembers may be set by county commissioner and councilmember salary commissions established by ordinance or resolution of the county legislative authority and in conformity with this section.

(2) Commissions established under subsection (1) of this section shall be known as the (Insert name of county) county citizens' commission on salaries for elected officials. Each commission shall consist of ten members appointed by the county commissioner or executive with the approval of the county legislative authority, or by a majority vote of the county legislative authority if there is no single county commissioner or executive, as provided in this section.

(a) Six of the ten commission members shall be selected by lot by the county auditor from among those registered voters eligible to vote at the time persons are selected for appointment to full terms on the commission under (c) of this subsection. In noncharter counties, the county auditor shall select two commission members living in each commissioner's district. The county auditor shall establish policies and procedures for conducting the selection by lot. The policies and procedures shall include, but not be limited to, those for notifying persons selected and for providing a new selection from a commissioner's district if a person selected from the district declines appointment to the commission or if, following the person's appointment, the person's position on the commission becomes vacant before the end of the person's term of office.

(b) The remaining four of the ten commission members must be residents of the county and shall be appointed by the county commissioner or executive with approval of the county legislative authority, or by a majority vote of the county legislative authority if there is no single county commissioner or executive. The persons selected under this subsection shall have had experience in the field of personnel management. Of these four members, one shall be selected from each of the following four sectors in the county: Business, professional personnel management, legal profession, and organized labor.

(c) If there is a single county commissioner or executive, the county auditor shall forward the names of persons selected under (a) of this subsection to the county commissioner or executive who shall appoint these persons to the commission.

(d) No person may be appointed to more than two terms. No member of the commission may be removed by the county commissioner or executive, or county legislative authority if there is no single county commissioner or executive, during his or her term of office unless for cause of incapacity, incompetence, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office, or for a disqualifying change of residence.

(e) The members of the commission may not include any officer, official, or employee of the county or any of their immediate family members. "Immediate family member" as used in this subsection means the parents, spouse, siblings, children, or dependent relatives of the officer, official, or employee, whether or not living in the household of the officer, official, or employee.

(f) Upon a vacancy in any position on the commission, a successor shall be selected and appointed to fill the unexpired term. The selection and appointment shall be concluded within thirty days of the date the position becomes vacant and shall be conducted in the same manner as for the original appointment.

(3) Any change in salary shall be filed by the commission with the county auditor and shall become effective and incorporated into the county budget without further action of the county legislative authority or salary commission.

(4) Salary increases established by the commission shall be effective as to county commissioners and all members of the county legislative authority, regardless of their terms of office.

(5) Salary decreases established by the commission shall become effective as to incumbent county commissioners and councilmembers at the commencement of their next subsequent terms of office.

(6) Salary increases and decreases shall be subject to referendum petition by the people of the county in the same manner as a county ordinance upon filing of such petition with the county auditor within thirty days after filing of the salary schedule. In the event of the filing of a valid referendum petition, the salary increase or decrease shall not go into effect until approved by vote of the people.

(7) Referendum measures under this section shall be submitted to the voters of the county at the next following general or municipal election occurring thirty days or more after the petition is filed, and shall be otherwise governed by the provisions of the state Constitution and laws generally applicable to referendum measures.

(8) The action fixing the salary of a county commissioner or councilmember by a commission established in conformity with this section shall supersede any other provision of state statute or county ordinance related to municipal budgets or to the fixing of salaries of county commissioners and councilmembers.

(9) Salaries for county commissioners and councilmembers established under an ordinance or resolution of the county legislative authority in existence on July 22, 2001, that substantially complies with this section shall remain in effect unless and until changed in accordance with such charter provision or ordinance.

[2001 c 73 § 5.]

#### **NOTES:**

**Findings -- Intent -- Severability -- 2001 c 73:** See notes following RCW 35.21.015.