

**SALARY COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
MINUTES  
February 25, 2022  
Meeting Site: Online via Blue Jeans**

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Abbott at 9:00 a.m.

**Present:**

Clark Abbott, Chair  
Dawnalyn Fujiwara, Vice-Chair  
Tambara Garrick  
Andy Ho  
Stanford Lantias  
Peter Martin  
Edwin Misaki  
Grant Nakama  
Scott Parker

**Excused:**

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**Staff:**

Christie Trenholme, Deputy Corporation Counsel  
Stacy Takahashi, Administrative Officer  
Rochelle Ines, Secretary  
LeeAnn Nomura Matsui, Secretary

**2. Public Testimony**

Jamie Becraft – Testifying for Police, Fire, and Corporation Counsel. With salary pay, you're not getting paid for your hours once you are in your position. Please take into consideration the amount of hours they work. He heard so much negative things about the Police Chief and why he doesn't deserve a pay increase because he's new. The increase should be about the position and what it takes to do that position. He knows he puts in a lot of overtime as well as the Fire Department. The SHOPO President of Maui testified that the money should go towards regular police officers' pay increase. That has nothing to do with the Chief of Police and its an arbitration decision. Please don't go with the herd mentality.

Commissioner Martin asked Mr. Becraft if he was a police officer. Mr. Becraft confirmed that he was retired from Maui County. Commissioner Martin asked if he was on the Police Commission. Mr. Becraft confirmed that he's not on the Police Commissioner but he's on a Commission. He's speaking as a citizen, not a board member. Commissioner Martin said he believes that Mr. Becraft did his research about the Police Chief's salary. Mr. Becraft said that he was only a Sergeant and as a considerably lower rank, he got paid hourly but the Police Chief isn't getting paid

for it. Mr. Becraft received overtime and the Chief doesn't. Historically, the assistant chiefs make more than the Chief and Deputy. Eight years ago, he said he was making \$172,000 and now patrolmen in the department are making \$200,000+ and working the same hours.

Chair Abbott thanked Mr. Becraft for his testimony.

Commissioner Lanius said he felt offended by the local and non-local comment being raised and the Salary Commission looks at the basis of the position and what they feel the community also sees it. He asked Mr. Becraft – how do you look at this position where an officer that is putting their lives up front for everybody, they're doing more labor and time in. Does the Chief of Police do that much work? Mr. Becraft confirmed that that he does and is on call 24/7. He also confirmed that he is not on the Police Commission.

Commissioner Ho asked Mr. Becraft how long has the salary indifference been an issue between the Chief and his subordinates? Mr. Becraft believed that it has been an issue from when he was an officer in the early 1990s. Mr. Becraft shared a story from Chief Phillips that when he was picking his Deputy, people were turning down the position because it was a pay cut. You would put in more hours but get a pay cut to advance your position.

Commissioner Misaki commented that one of the reasons why there is such a great discrepancy is because the Police Department is undermanned. Their hiring hasn't caught up which is why there's a lot of overtime hours. Can Mr. Becraft confirm that? Mr. Becraft doesn't think that will ever go away. His entire career, they were short. He was their first and only full-time recruiter. At that time, Deputy Chief assigned him to do a big push. Commissioner Misaki sees two problems – the County is behind in doing cost of living raises for Department heads and you can only hire for what is vacant at the moment.

Commissioner Martin commented that we need to take the idea of inversion off the table because sometimes people are just passionate about the job and making a difference and doesn't have to get paid higher.

Commissioner Parker wanted to acknowledge Commissioner Misaki's comment regarding position vs person, because a lot of the conversation is about the current Police Chief and should be focused on the position of the Chief of Police. He pointed out the responsibility to the entire community. He asked how they were expected to justify that the Chief salary should be the same as the City & County of Honolulu. HPD has approximately 1,800 sworn officers, and 500 civilian personnel. Their chief makes approximately \$200,000. The state Attorney General makes \$162,000. How do they rationalize that our Corporation Counsel or Prosecuting Attorney could potentially make more than the Attorney General of the State of Hawaii?

For the record, Commissioner Nakama arrived to the meeting.

Public testimony is closed.

### **3. Review and discuss information requested at February 11, 2022 meeting**

Commissioners received the letter from Budget Director Yoshimura stating the raises will come from the general fund for FY2022. Any adjustments within the funds and departments may be needed and may affect programs. If the increases are in FY2023, it could be added to the Mayor's Proposed Budget and impacts to programs and department budgets would be minimal.

**4. Information requested by Chair Abbott – Current salaries for the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, in addition to the County Council, Police Chief, and Assistant Chiefs from all four counties**

Chair Abbott was unsure how to proceed further. He was concerned about ongoing discussions for two positions and are not looking at the other 16 departments.

Director Underwood had the most current cost of living increase figures from January 2022. Nationwide – 7.5% and statewide (Honolulu urban area) – 6%. The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not publish Maui County.

Commissioner Parker asked Director Underwood to confirm whether those salaries for the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches were actually deferred by the legislature until 2023. Director Underwood didn't have the information in front of him and would provide it to the Commission. The State Salary Commission puts together a six-year plan and have increases projected out.

Director Underwood's update on collective bargaining – they are still in the process of negotiating contracts for the rank and file employees. They have only settled with one bargaining unit for the current period that was blue collars. They will be receiving a 1% bonus this year then a 14.3% over the next three years. The rest of the units are still in negotiation.

Commissioner Parker was asking if there was a way to confirm and acknowledge that the Governor and Lt. Governor were going to be subject to a 2.5% increase based on the State Salary Commission. This would also be applicable to the Executive branch up until FY2024. Director Underwood said he would confirm that information.

**5. Consideration of salaries of Department Directors, Deputy Directors, and County Auditor**

Commissioner Parker asked how large the department would be. Deputy Corporation Counsel Trenholme advised members that the Department of Agriculture (DOA) presentation was posted on the County website. Commissioner Nakama asked if there was a deadline to determine the salary by. Deputy Corporation Counsel Trenholme said that currently the salary is blank and that Mayor needed to submit his proposed budget by March 25. Commissioner Nakama asked if the amount for both the Director and Deputy Director was zero as opposed to other departments that have current salaries in the budget but no increases budgeted. Deputy Corporation Counsel Trenholme confirmed that it was.

Director Underwood made the Commission aware that the department does become effective July 1, 2022. Department of Management notified DPS that they were

starting recruitment for the positions as soon as they can and requested from the Commission the salary amount.

Commissioner Parker asked Director Underwood what the lowest paid director position is and their salary. Director Underwood said that it's Department of Transportation (DOT) at \$126,747. DOT has eight employees.

Director Underwood reported the State DOA Director's salary was \$154,812 per year. They don't have information regarding other states or counties that might be problematic to get, considering they don't really have an exact idea of what the department will be doing.

In 2019, the State Salary Commission recommended increases of 4% for the Governor and 5% for Department heads and deputies for 2019 and 2020; then 2.5% per year for 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. The first of those raises were implemented on July 1, 2019, however, the subsequent raises have been deferred.

Discussion on deferring the salary for the DOA Director. Commissioner Nakama said they can't defer the without an action plan. A decision needs to be made at the next meeting.

Commissioner Parker researched the County of Hawaii had an Agriculture Program that sounded similar to the DOA. It provides facilitative leadership to both the public and private sectors to support the sustainable development of agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and other natural resources. Activities include financial support and coordination of agriculture, research, education and marketing programs, data collection, compilation and dissemination to company policy makers, and other interested parties. Management of collaborative research and development projects. Advocacy for local farmers and commodity groups at the State and Federal levels. His recommendation is to ask Director Underwood to see what their salaries are as a starting point and begin discussions from there.

Managing Director Baz gave a brief overview of the DOA. On page 63 of the Charter describes the functions, powers and duties of the DOA and provides for a Director and Deputy. There's no real defined job description or minimum qualifications besides a Bachelors Degree. The Director must have five years of experience in the field of agriculture and in an administrative capacity, either in public service, private business or both. In addition to specific qualifications set forth by ordinance. The level of workload would be similar to the DOT. There will be a total of eight staff members. DOA will have an initial operational budget of under \$1,000,000. They will eventually move the agricultural grants out of Office of Economic Development (OED) and into DOA.

Commissioner Parker asked Managing Director Baz when the DOT was first created, what was the starting salary for the Director and Deputy Director? Is there a difference or was the salary what it is now? Managing Director Baz said that across the board increases given by the Salary Commission of the last dozen years or so has increased it. Commissioner Parker asked Director Underwood to get that information.

Commissioner Nakama wanted to clarify that the Director and Deputy Director positions for the DOA will have to go in front of Council. And as part of that process, the qualifications for the position will be vetted heavily in a public forum. Managing Director Baz confirmed that and noted that there will be a big focus on this department because it was a council initiated, community driven type of department. There would be a lot of scrutiny and expectations on this department.

Commissioner Misaki commented that when the job description was being read, it was similar to the University of Hawaii Extension Service agent. It would be helpful to compare salaries within that agency.

Commissioner Parker made a motion to get clarification on the salaries of DOT when it was first created, the salaries for Kaua'i and County of Hawai'i's research and development in writing, and CTHAR Agents.

**6. Recess meeting to Friday, March 11, 2022 at 8:30 a.m.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.