

PROPOSED BY: CONSENT
SPONSORED BY: CONSENT
INTRODUCTION DATE: JULY 12, 2011

ORDINANCE NO. 2011-026

**SUBMITTING A PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT TO THE VOTERS OF
WHATCOM COUNTY TO CREATE A CITIZENS' COMMISSION
ON SALARIES FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

WHEREAS, the people of Whatcom County adopted a Home Rule Charter in 1978, setting forth the current form of county government; and

WHEREAS, in adopting the Charter for Whatcom County the duties, terms, composition, and powers of the legislative branch of county government were established; and

WHEREAS, Whatcom County Charter Section 2.20 places the responsibility of setting salaries for all county officers with the County Council; and

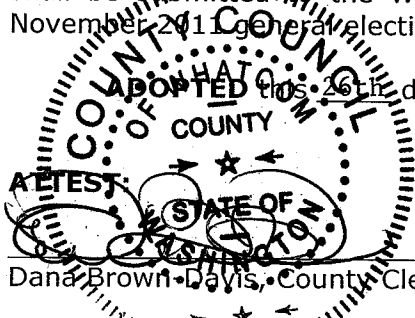
WHEREAS, RCW 36.17.024 provides that salaries for county officers can be set by an established ten-member citizens' commission; and

WHEREAS, the Whatcom County Council supports amending the county charter to a process whereby elected officials' salary rates are set by an independent commission, to eliminate the inherent conflict of an elected official setting his or her own potential future salary; and

WHEREAS, Whatcom County can establish a citizens' commission to review and set salaries for county elected officials if the people of Whatcom County vote to amend the Whatcom County Charter to allow for the creation of a citizens' salary commission.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that an amendment to the Whatcom County Charter, as outlined in "Exhibit A" to this ordinance, shall be submitted to the Whatcom County Auditor for placement on the ballot for the November 2011 General Election.

ADOPTED this 26th day of July, 2011.



ATTEST:
Dana Brown-Davis, County Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

[Signature]
Civil Deputy Prosecutor

**WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

[Signature]
Sam Crawford, Council Chair

Approved Denied

[Signature]
Pete Kremen, County Executive

Date: 7-27-11

EXHIBIT A

(ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A SALARY COMMISSION FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS)

WHATCOM COUNTY CHARTER AMENDMENT NO. 1

SALARY COMMISSION

A. PROPOSED BALLOT TITLE:

The Whatcom County Council has proposed an amendment to the Whatcom County Charter concerning establishment of an independent salary commission. This measure would establish an independent salary commission to fix the compensation of Whatcom County elected officials, subject to a referendum by the people. Should this proposal be approved?

YES.....

NO.....

B. CHARTER AMENDMENTS REQUIRED:

New Section:

Section 6.100 Salaries of Elected Officials

The county council shall establish by ordinance and in accordance with law an independent "citizens' commission on salaries for elected officials" which shall fix the salaries for the county council, executive, assessor, auditor, prosecuting attorney, sheriff and treasurer. Salary commission members shall serve two-year terms ending December 31, 2014 and every two years thereafter. Members of the salary commission shall serve without compensation, but may receive reimbursement for mileage to and from meetings and for such other expenses directly related to their service as provided by ordinance.

The salary commission shall meet biennially and shall file the salary schedule with the county council and county auditor not later than May 1. The salary schedule shall become effective January 1 of the following calendar year and incorporated into the county budget without further action of the county council, county executive or salary commission.

The salaries for the county council, executive, assessor, auditor, prosecuting attorney, sheriff and treasurer in effect on January 1, 2012 shall remain in effect until changed as provided herein.

Revised Sections:

Section 2.20 Powers

The County Council shall exercise its legislative power by adoption and enactment of ordinances or resolutions. It shall have the power:

- (a) To levy taxes, appropriate revenue and adopt budgets for the County.

(b) To establish the compensation to be paid to all County officers and employees and to provide for the reimbursement of expenses, except as provided in Section 6.100.

(c) Except as otherwise provided for herein, to establish, abolish, combine and divide by ordinance, non-elective administrative offices and executive departments and to establish their powers and responsibilities.

(d) To adopt by ordinance comprehensive plans, including improvement plans for the present and future development of the county.

The enumeration of particular legislative powers shall not be construed as limiting the legislative powers of the County Council. (Ord. 2005-075 Exh. A)

Section 3.21 Election, and Term of Office.

The County Executive shall be nominated and elected by the voters of the county, and the term of office shall be four years and until the successor is elected and qualified. (Amended by referendum 1986)

Section 3.51 Election, and Term of Office.

There is hereby created by the adoption of this Charter the office of County Assessor, County Auditor, County Treasurer and County Sheriff. These elected officers shall be nominated and elected by the voters of the county, and their terms of office shall be four years and until their successors are elected and qualified. (Ord. 2005-075 Exh. A)