



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Whatcom County Council  
**From:** Jake Logan – Executive's Office  
**Subject:** Whatcom County Salary Commission  
**Date:** 12/30/2024

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Please see Whatcom County Code 2.22.040 and Ordinance 2016-026 (*Both attached – see following pages*) for the specific details and mechanisms by which this commission is formed.

## **Background and Purpose**

This is a 10-person commission whose purpose is to fix the Salaries of the County Council, County Council, Executive, Assessor, Auditor, Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, and Treasurer in accordance with the county code, county charter and state law.

Four members of this commission are appointed by the Executive and confirmed by the Council. The remaining six members are selected by lot by the county auditor from among eligible voters. The Commission meets Biennially. The Commission will study the relationship of salaries to the duties and fix salaries for the 2026 and 2027 calendar years. The Commission's operations are facilitated by a third party, see contract #202412001.

## EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

County Courthouse  
311 Grand Ave. Suite #108  
Bellingham, WA 98225



**Satpal Sidhu**  
County Executive

### Whatcom County Commission on Salaries For Elected Officials ("Salary Commission") Membership Roster – Effective December 2024 (Session in 2025)

#### At Large Positions

1. **Gary Wrightson**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]
2. **Rebecca Sadwick Shaddix (Second Term)**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]
3. **Sonya Luhm (Second Term)**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]
4. **Ralph Foldenauer**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]
5. **Brennen Brown**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]
6. **Tracie Gulit**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

#### Appointed Positions

- Business**                      **Guy Occhiogrosso**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]
- Organized Labor**           **Daniel Darwin**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]
- Legal Profession**           **Karen Funston (Second Term)**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]
- Personnel Management**   **Vanessa Bronsema (Second Term)**  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

PROPOSED BY: CLERK OF THE COUNCIL  
INTRODUCTION DATE: JUNE 28, 2016

ORDINANCE NO. 2016-026

**AMENDING WHATCOM COUNTY CODE SECTION 2.22.040, WHATCOM COUNTY  
COMMISSION ON SALARIES FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS  
(MEMBERSHIP – TERM OF OFFICE)**

**WHEREAS**, the voters of Whatcom County approved a proposed amendment to the Whatcom County Charter at the November 2011 General Election to create an independent citizens' commission to set salaries for the county executive, assessor, auditor, prosecuting attorney, sheriff, treasurer, and county council members; and

**WHEREAS**, this newly formed commission was established under Whatcom County Code Chapter 2.22 as the Whatcom County Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials (Salary Commission); and


**WHEREAS**, Whatcom County Code Section 2.22.040 outlines membership criteria for Salary Commission members and currently requires that six members be chosen by lot and of those six, two shall be selected from each of three county council district; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary to amend Whatcom County Code Section 2.22.040 in response to passage of a voter-approved amendment to the Whatcom County Charter that increased the number of council districts from three to five.


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Whatcom County Council that Whatcom County Code Section 2.22.040 is hereby amended as outlined in "Exhibit A" to this ordinance.

ADOPTED this 12th day of July, 2016.

ATTEST:

  
Dana Brown Davis, Clerk of the Council

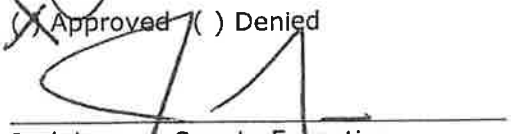
APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
Civil Deputy Prosecutor

**WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

☒ Approved ☐ Denied

  
Jack Louws, County Executive

Date: July 13, 2016

## **EXHIBIT A**

### **(ORDINANCE AMENDING WCC 2.22.040, COMMISSION ON SALARIES - MEMBERSHIP)**

#### **2.22.040 Membership – Term of office.**

(1) The commission shall consist of ten members. Six members shall be selected by lot and appointed and confirmed as provided in subsection (2) of this section. The remaining four members shall be appointed and confirmed as provided in subsection (3) of this section. The members of the commission may not include any officer, official, or employee of the county or any of their immediate family members. For the purposes of this section, "immediate family member" means parent, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, child, or dependent relative of an officer, official, or employee of the county, whether or not living in the same household.

(2) 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. 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 if a person declines appointment 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. The county auditor shall forward the names of persons selected under this subsection to the county executive who shall appoint those persons to the commission. Appointments made by the county executive shall be confirmed by the county council.

(3) Four of the ten commission members shall be selected and appointed by the county executive and confirmed by the county council. The members under this subsection shall be residents of the county and shall all have experience in personnel management. Of these four members, one member shall be selected from each of the following fields of expertise: business, professional personnel management, legal profession, and organized labor. The county council may confirm or reject appointments made under this subsection. If the council rejects an appointment the county executive shall promptly appoint another person meeting the requirements of this subsection.

(4) The members of the commission shall serve two-year terms, with their terms ending on December 31, 2014. Thereafter, all members shall serve for two years. No person may be appointed to more than two terms. Members of the commission may be removed by the county executive, with the approval of the county council, only for cause of incapacity, incompetence, neglect of duty, malfeasance in office, or for a disqualifying change of eligibility. Upon a vacancy in any position on the commission, a successor shall be appointed and confirmed to fill the unexpired term. The appointment and confirmation shall be concluded within thirty days of the date the position becomes vacant and shall be conducted in the same manner as the original appointment.