



DATE: July 25, 2023  
TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council  
FROM: City Council Salary Review Ad-hoc Subcommittee  
SUBJECT: Report on Possible City Council Salary Adjustment

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At the February 28, 2023 City Council meeting, the Council requested staff to conduct a review of City Council salaries. At the meeting, the Mayor appointed City Council Members Dillard and Shu to an ad-hoc subcommittee to determine the process for reviewing and making recommendations regarding salaries. On March 16, 2023 the Ad-hoc Subcommittee met and provided the following recommendation:

### RECOMMENDATION

The Ad-hoc subcommittee recommends that the City Council direct the City Manager to create and select a five-member community panel (to be known as the Council Salary Adjustment Panel) to evaluate the current City Council salary as compared to other city councils in the region, and bring back a recommendation within 90 days as to whether the City Council should adjust its salary (including the Mayor) and if so, identify an appropriate methodology and amount.

### INFORMATION

As a General Law City, City Council Member salaries and related issues are governed by Government Code Section 36516.<sup>1</sup> The following reflects its basic components:

- A. The salary of council members may be increased by ordinance, but the amount of the increase shall not exceed an amount equal to 5% for each calendar year from the date of the last adjustment of the salary in effect when the ordinance is enacted. The Attorney General has opined that such increases may not be compounded over time for purposes of calculating an increase.<sup>2</sup>
- B. Any adjustment made to council salaries must be made at the next election when a council member or members begin a new term of office.

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<sup>1</sup> Government Code Section 36516 was amended effective June 29, 2023; however, those amendments do not affect the subcommittee's recommendation.

<sup>2</sup> 89 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen.159 (2006)

- C. No ordinances shall be enacted to provide future automatic increases in salary.
- D. An elected mayor may be provided with additional compensation above that received as a council member. Additional compensation may be enacted by ordinance or by a majority vote of the electorate (traditionally done by ordinance in La Mesa).

### BACKGROUND

In 2006, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 2006-2773, which set City Council salaries at \$1,000 per month and set the Mayor's salary at \$1,000 per month in addition to the amount the Mayor receives as a council member. The Ordinance became effective upon the seating of the new City Council, following the November 7, 2006 General Election.