



BOARD OF EDUCATION COMPENSATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – Meeting One
September 30, 2019
Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street – 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland

Attendance

Members Present:

Ting Chau
Jaye Espy
Jennifer Sawin
Mark Spradley
Jason Washington

Staff Present: Dale Tibbitts, Spec. Asst. to
the County Executive

Call to Order – Welcome and Introductions

Dale Tibbitts called the meeting to order at approximately 7:10 p.m.

Orientation – Administrative Issues

Dale Tibbitts, Special Assistant to County Executive Elrich, reviewed the administrative issues associated with the first meeting of a new committee: required forms, availability of reimbursement for travel and dependent care, required Maryland Open Meetings training, parliamentary procedure, attendance policy and the ethics law.

Chair and Vice Chair Elections

The Commissioners elected chair and vice-chair. CM Spradley nominated CM Jaye Espy. Seconded by CM Sawin. No other nominations. CM Espy was elected chair unanimously. CM Chau nominated CM Mark Spradley for vice-chair. CM Sawin seconded. No other nominations. CM Spradley was elected vice-chair unanimously.

Meetings - Date Time and Location

The Commission chose to continue meeting on Monday evenings at 7:00 at the Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe St., Rockville, MD 20850. CM Chau asked if phone call into meeting was allowed. Staff responded that yes it is allowed, but is discouraged unless that is a last resort option.

Minutes

The Commissioners requested the minutes be more detailed than less to be helpful to future commissions, other jurisdictions reviewing their work and for the general public who did not attend the meeting.

Review of Board of Education Legislative Requirements and Criteria for Evaluation of Board Compensation

The Commissioner started their discussion with a review of the legislation which created the Commission. There are 6 factors the legislation lists to consider with the ultimate goal of recommending an annual salary for the Board of Education (BOE) which will be set through state legislation. CM Spradley asked whether anyone thought the salary should be lower. No one did. Regarding a maximum salary, there was agreement that it probably should not be higher than a Councilmember, but no one was suggesting that amount. It was noted that Los Angeles has the highest paid BOE, \$125,000.

CM Spradley recommended using a formula to calculate salary because its components in a formula are more easily understandable and it would likely stay up to date over time. Also suggested for consideration was a ramp up period, a cost of living adjustment (COLA) component, staggered implementation.

CM Spradley asked what “compensation” meant. It is salary plus health insurance (which BOE members are eligible for) and anything else?

CM Spradley asked if the BOE was “representative” in terms of gender, age, employment status. Is the BOE only for people who are not concerned about the salary? He liked people who did consider the salary and working for it plus a commitment to the mission. CM Washington posed an open question: does the current compensation exclude persons with children? Is there a closed gate to anyone participating? Do we want the BOE to reflect the demographics of the County? Even though some members are from districts, they are not district representatives. CM Spradley said that the residency districts assure BOE members geographic distribution spread around the county.

CM Spradley suggested that they compare to Florida (BOE cannot be paid more than starting teacher salary) and other Maryland counties. He thought that other counties such as Howard and Prince George’s may wish to follow Montgomery County’s lead. CM Chau added that the comparison should not only be salary, but workload and responsibility. CM Spradley added that size of jurisdiction is an important consideration since the larger the school district, the larger the workload, more reports, more issues, more responsibility. CM Sawin said to compare to other similar jurisdictions.

Interviews with current and former BOE members seems to be the only way to get at workload and responsibilities plus 3 other factors listed in the law the Commission is to consider. Staff asked how to get input from potential candidates for BOE who decided not to run. CM Chau suggested that there be input on the website asking, “Did you ever consider running for the Board of Education, but didn’t? Why?” CM Spradley said that the more input they can get, it will strengthen the scientific basis of the report. It was noted that former student BOE members are off at college, but might be available via Skype, as others may be too.

Under other relevant information, CM Chau thought term limits should be discussed. If the role of the BOE is to be reflective of the changing demographics of the county, but long term career

politician incumbents are not changing. Some commissioners did not think term limits was within the scope to the legislated mission of the commission.

CM Washington asked where does the BOE pay come from – whose budget? MCPS. CM Spradley offered that 7 times \$25,000 equals \$175,000, so even if you doubled it to \$350,000, it is not a huge amount of money in the \$2.5 billion school system budget. CM Chau calculated 7 times \$100,000. She asked to see state delegate salaries.

CM Espy began to list the activities that BOE are expected to do and speculate about whether that could be accomplished in 20 hours per week – packet reading time, training, time, public meetings, individual research. Is the student member scholarship fair because the student member is expected to do the same? CM Washington said that the responsibility and gravity of decisions is equal on the student member. CM Spradley did not think it was fair - \$5000. What is room and board at UMD? Certainly more that \$5000.

CM Sawin asked for information on subordinate staff salary – Chief of Staff and administration who are directly under the BOE. CM Spradley wondered whether BOE members would like a higher salary or more staff support for the same money. CM Washington said he was shocked that individual BOE members did not have their own staff. CM Chau said that left on the superintendent as the sole source of information.

Looking ahead to interviews with current and former BOE members and unsuccessful BOE candidates about why they ran and the relationship compensation played in their decision. To be fair and to be able to compare responses, the Commission thought a standard set of questions should be asked each person interviewed. To start, 4 of the 6 factors listed in the law: 1. How would you describe the scope of responsibilities as a BOE member? 2. What education, skills and abilities are necessary to perform the duties of BOE? 3. What the time requirements to perform the duties of BOE? 4. What is the volume and workload of a BOE member? 5. Do you think you have/had adequate staff support? 6. What is the range you think is appropriate for BOE salary?

The Commissioners had some data requests:

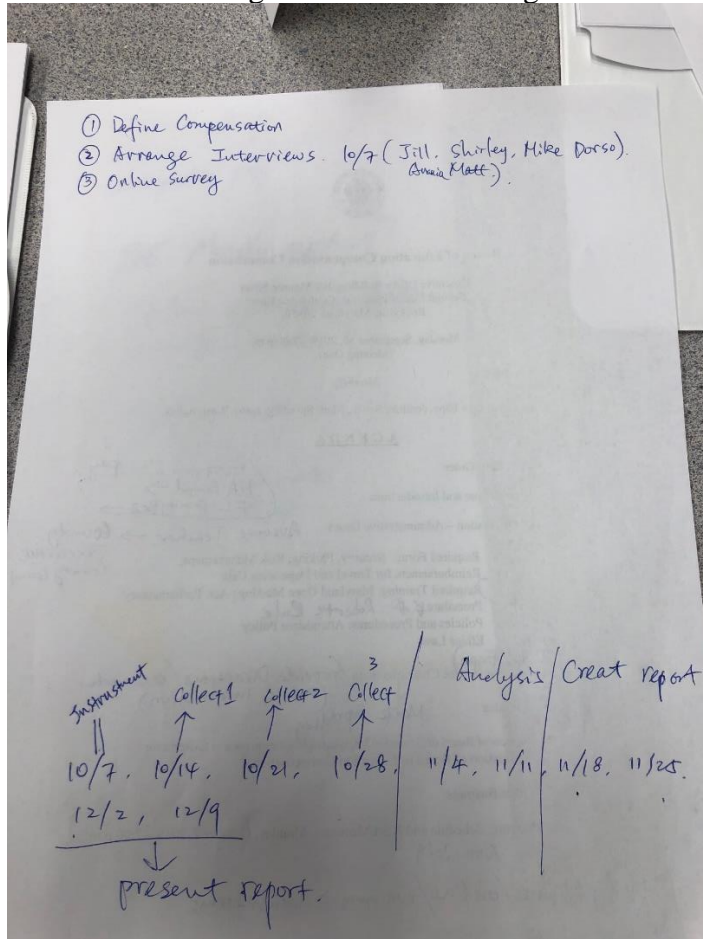
For all Maryland counties

- # of students
- # schools
- Median income, plus 1st and 3rd quartile income
- School system budget, capital and operating
- BOE direct staff and their salaries
- Teacher salary chart

Montgomery County

- Are there identified funds for community engagement?
- In addition the regular BOE meetings, what other meetings do BOE members attend
- Is there a list of school systems that are consider peers to which we are compared
- How many, if any, BOE members use the benefits (insurance) in their compensation package

The Commission agreed on the following timeline.



Submitted by Dale Tibbitts