



BOARD OF EDUCATION COMPENSATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – Meeting Three
October 14, 2019
Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street – 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland

Attendance

Members Present:

Ting Chau
Jennifer Sawin
Mark Spradley, Vice Chair
Jason Washington

Members Absent

Jaye Espy, Chair

Guest

Richard Madaleno, Director, Office of
Management and Budget

Staff Present:

Dale Tibbitts, Spec. Asst. to the County
Executive
Beth Gochrach, Office the County Executive

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Spradley called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

2. Roll Call

All members except Chair Espy were present.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The September 30, 2019, minutes as reformatted were confirmed as approved. The October 7, 2019 minutes were approved.

4. New Business

a. Discuss progress contained in project tracker

It was suggested that there be two surveys regarding perceptions of what criteria does or should influence Board of Education member salaries: a short 20 minute survey with either a combination of true/false, agree/disagree, or short answer questions for the general public, and then a longer survey for current and former board members which would be elaborated on during qualitative in-person interviews for selected individuals. The Commission reviewed and either revised, approved, or deleted each question on the shorter external survey. CM Chau edited the questions (attached to these minutes). It was suggested that the questions on the short survey be given a final review at the next meeting, and that questions on the longer survey be reviewed and amended.

b. Determine if alternative meeting date for Monday, November 13, 2019 should be set

Commissioners decided they could not meet on the proposed alternative date of Wednesday, November 13, and could not meet on the already-scheduled Monday, November 25.

c. Discussion with guest Richard Madaleno, Director, Office of Management and Budget.

Director Madaleno was asked to attend to answer Commissioners questions regarding how Board of Education member salaries might be determined. There was a discussion of a self-correcting or naturally changing formula that could be applied to school board member salaries, rather than coming up with a fixed dollar amount and having to re-work it in a few years. If the Commission chooses that approach, it will need to agree on a formula. It was questioned that in considering the compensation formula, whether to recommend some kind of formula that would include a performance consistent with achievement metrics coming out of the Kirwan Commission, and if the delegation would be open to that concept. The formula could consist of several components that fall under the oversight of the Board, including student enrollment, number of schools, school performance and student success, plus a general cost of living factor.

Director Madaleno said this will be a local issue with the local 32-member Montgomery County delegation. There will likely be a hearing in Rockville on the eventual proposed bill.

The Board of Education members have staggered terms with 3 seats up for election in 2020 and 4 seats in 2022. With the election in the fall there could be three new members. The Commission report will probably impact members serving in January 2021.

Board salaries are set by the legislature. Drawing on his experience in Annapolis as a State Senator, Director Madaleno said the Maryland attorney general is counsel to the general assembly and weighs in on these types of decisions. He is also a member of the Kirwan Commission which is looking at school funding formulas. There may be similar considerations for a BOE compensation funding formula. For Kirwan, one measure schools will be rated on is the percent of 10th graders who are career or college ready, meaning they can already meet 12th grade graduation goals. The goal is 65%, currently it's 35%. As performance of schools goes up, state aid increases. The Commissioners considered whether to include that measure of school performance (or similar) in any formula for setting Board salaries. Also, if an increase is recommended, should the increase be in the current Board's term or the year after? Also, should salaries increase at the beginning of a member's 4 year term or annually? State test results come out in November of the calendar year. Members are sworn in in December. There was a question about whether adjustments occur then or mid-year. Director Madaleno recommended that there could be a 35-40% increase implemented in small amounts such as 10% increments. There could also be subcategories included in the formula.

It was asked if there should be an automatic renewal every four years. Dir. Madaleno said that in smaller jurisdictions all Board salaries are set in state law and cost of living increase is built in. Del. Luedtke could answer these questions.

It was suggested using the base salary for beginning teachers. Dir. Madaleno advised against linking teacher salaries and Board salaries because the Board ratifies teachers' contracts. It would be a conflict of interest. A suggestion was made that Board salaries not be less than one half legislators' salaries, currently \$50,330. The Commissioners thought that might be a good idea. It was suggested perhaps there be a base salary and a percentage, 1%-10%, added to that based on student population growth and student performance measures.

There was discussion of comparing Montgomery County to other jurisdictions such as Howard or Prince Georges counties. Dir. Madaleno advised that no other school district in Maryland is like Montgomery County. It's not "apples to apples." It was noted that compared to other districts nationally, except possibly Fairfax County, Montgomery County was in line regarding Board salaries.

It was asked if the superintendent negotiates contracts. Dir. Madaleno clarified that the Superintendent negotiates select contracts. The Board of Education approves (or rejects) the Superintendent's negotiated contracts and sends the recommendation to the Executive and County Council. Ultimately, the County Council approves all labor contracts.

A commissioner asked if Dir. Madaleno thought it would be possible to estimate how much time a Board member spent on the job. Dir. Madaleno said it would have to be an estimate. From his own experience as an elected official, the job is 24/7. Board members may be engaged in work discussions even while at the grocery store when stopped by a constituent.

It was asked if working extra hours precludes earning money elsewhere and, if so, how much? Dir. Madaleno couldn't answer for the school board, but again, drawing on his experience he said that it's a matter of life balance. He thought it limits who will serve. He observed that it's easier if you have a supportive partner who takes on extra to care for things at home.

It was asked if districts are set up to increase participation. Dir. Madaleno said that in Prince Georges and Montgomery County when Council salary increased more people ran. It's a lifestyle choice.

There was more discussion of Board salaries, and that there may be new concerns in four years or possibly no need for another Commission study.

There was further discussion of the basis for Board salaries to consider such things as national and regional salaries, key performance indicators and what policies they feel they should be held to, and also time spent on committee service, or in civic engagement and constituent services, similar to the way in which legislator salaries are determined. It was questioned whether a standard formula was possible, and to ask Del. Luedtke.

It was suggested that the Commission decide on a template for the final report. It was suggested that the Commission look at State delegation compensation reports. CM Sawin suggested using the County delegation report as a boiler plate for the Commission's report, which Commissioners can review. It was also suggested that a decision document be included within the report. It was suggested the Commission review the interim Kirwan Commission report. The final Kirwan Commission report may not be ready by the time the Commission completes its report.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 21, 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Gochrach