Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: 02/25/2014
Prepared By/Phone Number: Todd L. Osburn, 854-2744
Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Leslie Browder, 854-9106 LB
Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Samuel T. Biscoe Dom

AGENDA LANGUAGE: CONSIDER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION REGARDING PROPOSED COMPENSATION POLICY ITEMS, INCLUDING:

A. COMMIT PROPOSED COMPENSATION POLICY TO COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR REVIEW FOR CONSISTENCY WITH TRAVIS COUNTY CODE;

B. APPROVE SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES DOCUMENT FOR DISTRIBUTION TO TRAVIS COUNTY EMPLOYEES; AND

C. SET PUBLIC HEARING AT A LATER DATE TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO COMPENSATION POLICY.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:
Please see attached back-up memo.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:
HRMD recommends approval of items A-C.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:
Please see attached back-up memo.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:
NA.

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:
Debbie Maynor, Human Resources Management Department, 854-9170 DM
Leslie Browder, Planning & Budget Office, 854-9106.
County Attorney's Office, 854-9415
County Auditor's Office, 854-9125

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to Cheryl Aker in the County Judge's office, Cheryl.Aker@co.travis.tx.us **by Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.

Human Resources Management Department

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BACK-UP MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 14, 2014

TO: Samuel T. Biscoe, County Judge
Ron Davis, Commissioner, Precinct 1
Bruce Todd, Commissioner, Precinct 2
Gerald Daugherty, Commissioner, Precinct 3
Margaret Gomez, Commissioner, Precinct 4

FROM: Debbie Maynor, Human Resources Management Director

VIA: Leslie Browder, County Executive, Planning & Budget

SUBJECT: Compensation Policy

Proposed Motion

HRMD is asking Commissioners Court to consider and take appropriate action regarding action items related to potential changes to the County's Compensation Policy. Specifically, HRMD seeks approval of the following:

A. COMMIT PROPOSED COMPENSATION POLICY TO COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR REVIEW FOR CONSISTENCY WITH TRAVIS COUNTY CODE;

B. APPROVE SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES DOCUMENT FOR DISTRIBUTION TO TRAVIS COUNTY EMPLOYEES; AND

C. SET PUBLIC HEARING AT A LATER DATE TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO COMPENSATION POLICY.

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A. Introduction

As a result of extensive review of Travis County's classification and compensation policy, contained in Travis County Code Chapter 10, the Compensation Committee has recommended substantial revisions to many provisions contained therein. Per its charge, the Committee only addressed the sections related to classification and compensation, specifically sections 10.024 through 10.034, and Subchapters A and B. In addition to specific policy changes, the Committee recommends reorganizing the items related to classification and compensation so that subjects are better organized, making the chapter easier to use and understand.

On December 10, 2013, Commissioners Court received a presentation on key changes to the Compensation Policy. Based on Court feedback, HRMD has prepared a brief primer of key changes for County employees to review prior to a public hearing to receive comments concerning these changes. HRMD is requesting Court approval for posting the key changes document and the setting of a public hearing on a later date. Additionally, HRMD is asking that in the interim that the policy be sent to the County Attorney's Office for review. This review will ensure consistency with the remainder of the Travis County Code in both format and content.

B. Issues and Opportunities

The compensation system in Travis County has evolved over time and has emerged as a result of both deliberate design and unintended consequences. Commissioners Court established the Compensation Committee to examine the County's compensation system and provide input on critical compensation issues.

The Compensation Committee sought to review the existing system and build upon strengths while addressing weaknesses. The Committee structure helped build consensus in a number of potentially controversial areas.

While the Committee has proposed a substantial number of changes, the heart of the changes resides in Subchapter A. This subchapter outlines a system wherein all positions will undergo a complete classification and compensation analysis every fourth year. In the intervening years, benchmark studies will be conducted so that adjustments can be made as the market shifts. The policy also reflects a return to an emphasis on performance-based pay as the primary method for moving employees through their respective pay ranges while establishing a framework for reviewing and establish approved career ladders. The policy also calls for reconvening the Compensation Committee to make compensation allocation recommendation on an annual basis.

Key Changes of Proposed Compensation Policy

Area	Change	What it means
Timing of Market Studies	Comprehensive market studies will take place every four years instead of over a three-year cycle.	Implementation of comprehensive market studies is done in the same year. This reduces past inconsistency caused by changes in budget conditions over multiple years.
Market Study Implementation	Provides for a set formula for implementing market studies (3.5% x # grades moved x midpoint of new grade).	Provides consistency of implementation and eases compression of past implementations.
Benchmark Studies	Requires study of key jobs in years in between comprehensive studies.	Helps track market movement and reduces need for "catch-up" in years comprehensive study conducted.
Performance-based Pay	Calls for annual increases, when funded, to be based on performance evaluations rather than across-the-board (COLA).	Employees who meet expectations will receive a set percentage increase and those who exceed expectations will be eligible to receive additional increases.
Career Ladders	Calls for review of existing career ladders and provides process for establishing new ones.	Better defines which jobs should be on a career ladder.
Promotion Pay	Requires a minimum 5% increase per grade for promotions. Current policy does not require a promotion increase.	Ensures employees will receive a pay increase for performing more advanced duties and responsibilities that come with a promotion.
Salary Adjustments	Requires salary adjustments greater than 10% go before Court as non-routine instead of required review of increases at midpoint + 10%	Changes the focus from where the employee is within the range to the percentage of increase.
Job Descriptions	Allows Human Resources to make adjustments to job descriptions (with department approval) without having to be approved by Commissioners Court.	Will speed up the process for making necessary changes to job descriptions.
Compensation Committee	Compensation Committee will meet early in the budget process to make recommendations for the following budget year.	Provides Commissioners with a broader perspective regarding compensation options in time for budgeting purposes.