



Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
City Hall Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Monday, April 17, 2023

1. Roll Call

Mayor Roe called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. Voting and Seating Order: Etten, Schroeder, Groff, Strahan, and Roe. City Manager Patrick Trudgeon and City Attorney Rachel Tierney were also present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approve Agenda

Schroeder moved, Strahan seconded, approval of the agenda as presented.

Roll Call

Ayes: Etten, Schroeder, Groff, Strahan, and Roe.

Nays: None.

4. Public Comment

Mayor Roe called for public comment by members of the audience on any non-agenda items. No one appeared to speak.

5. Recognitions, Donations, and Communications

6. Items Removed from Consent Agenda

7. Business Items

a. Discussion on Classification and Compensation Study

Assistant City Manager Rebecca Olson briefly highlighted this item as detailed in the Request for Council Action and related attachments dated April 17, 2023.

Ms. Olson introduced Ms. Leah Davis, and Mr. Michael Mooney from Abdo who gave a presentation to the City Council.

Mayor Roe asked if it was important in most cases to have really good metrics to be able to get the cross comparison between equivalent education and equivalent other skills to make sure that this is being fairly analyzed.

Ms. Davis explained the person filling out the knowledge/skills questionnaire is going to fill out the knowledge and experience they have as the minimum requirement. Part of the training with the Department Heads is to always ask themselves, as Department Heads, if they were going to replace that position, what is the minimum education that they would not even interview someone without this

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education or experience. Because if a person was interviewed with perhaps a lesser degree than what the job position states but has relevant experience or demonstrable skills in a certain area then what is listed in the job position is not actually the minimum requirement. She thought it was getting more honest about what is actually required versus preferred, and they poke at that a little bit as those job descriptions come back and also these do bubble up during the position scoring a lot of times. She also thought the current labor market has made people more flexible in reality, open to interviewing more candidates, and being more open to other sort of non-traditional experiences and skills.

Mayor Roe thought it was just a matter of making sure the City Staff builds it into the system that the City is not artificially excluding people and wanting to make sure that the requirements advertised, or all those types of things are really what the City is looking for. He wanted to make sure that the City as an organization has a system to make sure that this actually works the way it is supposed to.

Councilmember Strahan explained educational achievement has not proven to be a predictor of job success and there are many other things around that. She noted education inflation is very real.

Ms. Davis explained the job descriptions are intended to capture that and Abdo is definitely attentive to that while reviewing them. As far as making it work, it needs to be a combination of the job description and interview process. A lot of times people bring soft skills with them so flipping the recruiting and interview process on its head and getting really smart about what kinds of behavioral questions can be asked in an interview to help staff understand that the person has these sorts of intangible things that the City needs. She noted it is a little more comprehensive than the compensation study. She indicated one important thing to understand is Abdo is including all of the City's collective bargained employees in the study because the City needs to know where the market is at for those employees and those employees need to be scored with accurate job descriptions. She wanted the Council to understand that when Abdo recommends a compensation model those employees will not be included so it would be the non-organized employees that will be included in that model, but the City will have good information going into negotiations with all of the unions.

Ms. Davis continued the presentation on Project Process and Methodology and Comparable Municipalities. She asked for feedback on these areas of the presentation.

Councilmember Etten asked if there is a pre-started list of the comparable cities.

Ms. Davis explained she has pulled down some information and is working on finalizing it. She indicated Ms. Olson has been getting input from union

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representatives who are trying to compile this, but Abdo has a pretty good start on it, she did not know if it was anything she would be willing to throw out there yet.

Ms. Olson explained staff does have a list of cities that have been historically used, particularly through this past compensation study that was done in 2013 as well as for some of the City's union negotiations. Staff does have those cities that have been provided to Abdo that can be narrowed down. The focus is really on what criteria the City wants to use to find those comparable cities.

Councilmember Strahan asked why the City does not utilize County, State or other public entities in the comparable study.

Ms. Davis explained School Districts do not report the same way as cities do. There has historically been good participation from counties in the League of Minnesota Cities study, for example, but there is also the fact that the jobs do not usually match up all that well. In her experience, County hourly base pay tends to be a little lower than in a city setting so it can skew the data a little bit to include too much of that County data. Abdo can include it where it really does make sense and will.

Councilmember Schroeder wondered when talking about comparison, if Abdo was including all the other benefits as well when doing a comparative.

Ms. Davis indicated Abdo will be soliciting through the survey some benefit information with whatever can be provided. What is important to note though is that it is much more difficult to quantify, in terms of what is the market, and a number cannot always be assigned to a benefit that then can be compared to one another. What Abdo does is put together a matrix for the City that basically shows what the City is offering and then by benefit type compared to other cities. The one area where more comparative data can be captured is paid time off because it is easy to count days or hours for those kinds of things and to get a good understanding of at what point does a person have x number of hours or those types of things. Abdo will get at some of that, but base pay is what is driving the compensation structure and then the City can use that benefit data to sort of figure out the total compensation picture.

Councilmember Schroeder thought a lot of times the other benefits can be an attraction for people when looking at where they want to be in a pay range.

Councilmember Strahan wondered if most of the insurance plans for the cities are self-insured and if the comparisons were accurate.

Ms. Davis explained Abdo asks for information about the plans offered and a lot of times, Abdo will get information back about comparable cities with similar packages. She indicated Abdo does get levels of plans and information about high level benefits. She indicated she will add that to their notes.

Mayor Roe explained he wanted to get back to the comparable cities part of it, noting that Ms. Davis mentioned a population range of 20,000 - 25,000 up to 45,000 and he wondered whether it was appropriate to exclude some of those larger cities and if it is being done because those cities are higher in the ranges of compensation because those cities are more of a destination than Roseville. The next step from

Roseville is midsized or can the City get valuable information from cities like St. Louis Park, Edina, Coon Rapids, and Blaine, that are bigger than Roseville but in a lot of ways maybe seem to, on the surface, have more in common with Roseville than one might think just because their population is so much bigger. He wanted to talk a little bit about that because that may also expand the ability to make sure the City has three plus data points. If Abdo is starting to look at some of the larger cities, they also tend to have more varieties of positions that may more closely match with Roseville's. He wanted to see if it made sense to start looking at expanding the range population upwards a little bit. Clearly, he thought Bloomington may be a little different than Roseville and these other cities but there were some metro area cities that are larger than Roseville that could be added to the mix as long as Abdo does not think it is going to artificially skew things one way or the other. Maybe that is something to look at, a variety of cities.

Ms. Davis explained that is a conversation that the City should have with Abdo. The first run Abdo takes is to find the City's clear comparable, unarguable comparable. That being said, most cities have a next-door neighbor who may be much larger who, for a lot of positions, is still a competitor from a labor perspective. A lot of times what Abdo is seeing clients do is say "we notice that they might not be comparable, but do feel they are a competitor, from a labor perspective". Abdo wants the data and will be transparent about where it is included. She reviewed how Abdo will achieve that comparison.

Mayor Roe indicated he completely understood excluding smaller cities because it starts to get to a point where either the same person is wearing several hats or the city has such a small staff that it farms out certain functions, which makes it difficult to compare.

Mr. Trudgeon explained that using the criteria listed in the presentation packet, staff can come up with a list of comparable cities and can certainly share that with the Council. Staff is trying to base it on criteria versus just a feel. Staff will try to do that analysis because they want to get beyond that point so everyone agrees these are comparable cities and staff has already noted the variety and variances with all different types of cities. There is not going to be one perfect data point but if everyone can come together and agree on that, it will make the next conversation much more fruitful in order to focus on the impact, how will the City do it, implement it, what is the timeline, etc. He wanted to make sure that this does not get stuck in the area of comparing cities and not having some consensus. Staff

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could bring something back at a future date showing where this is at for further conversations.

Councilmember Groff agreed and indicated he does a different kind of comparable in his job every day. But with the comparable in his job, they look for data points, different criteria, but usually he will drop the outliers because there is a reason that happens. He is very curious to see how the information comes out but the process makes total sense to him.

Ms. Davis indicated she agreed, if the Council is directing Abdo to expand the criteria a little bit then her recommendation would be typically to use a funnel method. She started with a pretty narrow comparable, the 25,000 to 45,000 population, so her question would be if the City wanted to expand that a little bit. She can come in objectively to determine who fits in there and apply the criteria. She asked what is a population range in the Council's mind that would seem reasonable to take that up to.

Mayor Roe indicated there are probably ten to fifteen metro area cities on the list that are between 45,000 and 90,000 that are not Bloomington so that would add ten to fifteen. He noted the only reason he is excluding Bloomington is that the city has the Mall of America. He thought Bloomington was a notch above the other cities that would be considered comparable.

Ms. Olson offered that the range is big but some of the cities that might be competitors and have some overlap would be up to the 75,000 population. Staff has seen that a little bit when doing their annual Minnesota League study to look at different positions. That is not a set number and she would throw out up to 75,000 could be potentially some of the City's competitors.

Ms. Davis stated that felt realistic to her.

Councilmember Groff thought going with a smaller population gets a little tricky as well.

Ms. Davis agreed and indicated she would not go lower than the 25,000.

Councilmember Etten indicated if the criteria is going to go up as high as 75,000, then he would want to make sure it is being tied back to some of these other pieces, the first tier or the population age percentages. He noted another thing that would drive this is the fire departments and providing health services.

The Council discussed with Abdo possible criteria for comparison between cities.

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Ms. Davis indicated her company can add a lot of things, but it is important to stay more focused than the Council probably wants to because otherwise there will be too many criteria to compare.

Ms. Davis reviewed the Abdo Position Scoring Methodology with the City Council. She asked for the City Council to start discussion on these topics and she would note any information the Council felt was needed for this study.

Ms. Olson suggested the Council think about what the next bullet point would be and what the primary employee behavior to be motivated is. Is the Council looking for Roseville to really be that destination city, does the Council want to focus on turnover in order to attract people into the City, are there some positions that, as looking at the organization as a whole, that the Council really wants to make sure the workforce does not have a large turnover or what is that come into play when thinking about the philosophy and how the Council wants to position themselves.

Mayor Roe appreciated bringing up that nuance because that was something in the compensation study being done on a non-profit board he was on. He noted one of the questions the consultant specifically asked was, you do not have to be the same in all different positions at all different levels of the organization. He thought the more range in a department or within a group of positions, the better. He stated the City may want to be more of a destination for some positions while not for others because the City may want longevity, someone who will be there awhile and has maybe one more step in their career. He thought it was important that the City thinks in those terms, noting it may be difficult for the City Council to say where certain positions should be because the Council does not know all of the details. But to the extent that the Council can try to articulate where the City wants to be in some of those variety of different areas, is where he would try to come from.

Councilmember Etten asked as the City Council looks at this, will they be looking at each position description and range and he did not think that should be happening. Ms. Davis concurred.

Councilmember Etten explained he was on the Council during the last Compensation Study and the City arrived at what looks, in this discussion, to be a bit peculiar in ninety-seven to one hundred percent of average. He wondered if a range like 95% to 105% is better because it allows for some of that nuance and then the administrative staff can see some positions that may work better at ninety-five percent and other positions sitting at one hundred five percent. He asked if that is more of the range discussion the Council should be thinking about and philosophy.

Ms. Davis explained there are a couple of things to consider. Because of the Minnesota pay equity rules, the City is not going to get to position each role

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respective to the market. These are going to have to be graded so that similarly scored positions are paid similarly with respect to the market. But where Abdo sees challenges right now, would be if there is a very high demand IT position, where there is a big supply shortage in the market for that position. If it is scored similarly to another position, it is scored similarly but there are more people so the market is lower, someone is either going to be paid above the market or below the market. So when looking at the City's desired position in the market, they are not looking by work position. They are looking at a whole and average out those variances. She asked where the Council would like to put themselves. She wondered would the Council want to be closer to the average and what that means for recruiting and retention. She also wondered if the City would be more of a destination city and if that is the goal the Council, it would likely want to consider having step one the entry level, minimum pay, and may want that to be above the minimum market average because the City is trying to attract talent from somewhere else. The City may need to be a little more competitive than the market to get them in the door without having to negotiate them at step four just to get them in. She gave an example of this to the City Council.

Councilmember Strahan wondered if Abdo took into consideration turnover rates or vacancy rates when making those decisions. She stated when it came down to her, the City does want to be competitive but then if there is indication of a twenty percent increase in the entry level rate, that is a huge budget impact.

Ms. Davis explained to keep in mind the Council said the City would like to be at the upper quartile of the average so that is not twenty-five percent in pay increases. It means if the range is ten dollars an hour and there is a ten percent increase to the range, even if the position is twenty to thirty dollars an hour, it would usually be only a couple of dollars more.

Ms. Olson gave an example of an increase in pay range if the City were to raise the minimum base. She reviewed the turnover rate with the City Council.

Councilmember Etten asked what it is that the City Council being asked to set because he was unclear what the City Council is supposed to do.

Mr. Trudgeon explained what is being discussed now is what does the City want to be as an organization and the pay philosophy for the overall market, not looking at the individual ones. He indicated the City needs to land on a number, whatever that number may be, and not necessarily one hundred percent. Then, from there, they will have an idea within the compensation plan so the Council can make decisions. He thought what the City is trying to do is to hit that overarching philosophy; what is the goal that the City wants to try to hit and then the City can start to look at individual job and decide what the starting pay rate should be and still have a maximum range.

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Councilmember Etten asked how much decision making the Council will have in this or will the decisions be made by staff regarding where positions should be in the pay range. He also asked if the Council was being asked to decide on the small range where the City wants to target for the overall picture and most of the rest of this is good to know about but the Council will not be making those decisions.

Mayor Roe asked what the timeframe would be that the council is supposed to take into account .

Ms. Olson stated when the Council thinks about the big/small picture of what staff is looking for is competitiveness, position in the market, that type of thing. She noted the City's compensation system is one structure so when it is said that the City wants to be one hundred percent of the average, that is where the consultants come in and show the Council and staff what it will look like for those positions.

Ms. Davis explained the City has been doing a good job maintaining its existing study and structure for a long time but the market is more volatile than it has been in a while. Everyone is talking about recession and how can the City adjust more frequently than the City has historically, and she thought that is an important thing to consider. She noted Abdo is having a lot of cities say they are doing the study today and are going to monitor COLA's in their comparable group but are going to anticipate that they are going to need a full market study, not a full compensation study but just a more detailed survey, more frequently as the City moves forward so that we can really guide, based on the Council's philosophy about where the City wants to be in the market.

Mayor Roe asked if the better policy guidance is to say the City wants to be plus or minus something around average as an organization. He wanted to make sure what the Council does is meaningful.

Mr. Trudgeon thought the Council needed to deal with what was before them now and then have more frequent conversations about the market. He noted that when the City did the last wage adjustment in 2013, the City was at about 95.4 percent and the study called for a 4.6 percent increase. In the end, a 3.26 percent was approved which got them a little past 98 percent at that time, ten years ago. He would suspect the City is lower than that now. He did not know, but the study will tell them the results when it comes back to the Council. He thought the Council needed to focus on the here and now and what needed to be done today, relatively speaking, and adjust to get to a spot where the City is competitive and not at a disadvantage. He did not know what that number was but if the Council wanted it to be average, that would be one hundred percent and then in the future the Council would have to look at what the market is doing. He did think the City had something that needed to be solved today, relatively speaking, so the City is at least competitive in today's world, not disregarding the future, but he thought the City had a lot of catch up to do.

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Mayor Roe stated it seemed that if the City's philosophy was to try to be at average, and at parity with the union employees, and the City still wants to be there.

Councilmember Strahan indicated there was not really discussion about banding and she thought that was an important part of the compensation study and part of what Abdo expected, but she was not sure how that works.

Councilmember Groff explained that on a higher philosophical level, he was thinking about what makes people want to come to work. He does not want someone to come to work just to fill the day; he wants to make sure the employee is at work because that employee wants to be there. Part of that is pay but part of it is also the culture and that it is a pleasant place to work. He did think this needed to be increased and maybe it is 95 to 100 or 97 to 103 but there needed to be something over that average mark so that there is some flexibility. He stated the Council needed to give those tools to the administration in order to do this.

Mayor Roe thought it should be fairly easy to figure out. He explained the Council does have the option to adjust and implement at a higher or lower percentage. He thought it made sense to look at what the recommendation is at the current policy and then the Council can make a decision on the policy.

Mr. Trudgeon stated if the Council can look at what the City wants to be as an organization and what the City wants to do, the Council can look at options when it gets down to implementation. The Council should decide where the average should be and then discussion can begin where in actuality the City should end up at. He asked if staff were to bring back one hundred percent, would that be a good starting point and from there, the Council can have discussion around higher or lower implementation.

Mayor Roe asked if there was any objection to coming at one hundred percent to start with.

Councilmember Schroeder thought the City would want to come in at where the policy is now because that is an easier comparison and would be the starting point with the idea that more than likely the Council would have to go up. She had a feeling that the numbers were going to be quite large even staying at the current policy. She would like to see if the policy were left where it is, what would it look like thinking the City may still need to go to one hundred. She would like to see both because she thought the City would end up having to go to one hundred with the market.

Ms. Davis explained they are talking strategy so it is not how much is the Council going to approve when this is brought back to them. It is just big picture in a perfect world, where would the City like to be and then Abdo can bring the results back to

the Council, what it would look like and some ways that the City could phase that in.

There was discussion regarding pay steps and how these are handled for each employee.

Ms. Davis noted she is going to bring back ninety-eight percent, one hundred percent and one hundred two percent for the Council to start discussion on.

The City Council thought that was a good starting point.

Mayor Roe explained he wanted to touch on a couple of things, one was the performance based compensation, which was dealt with a little bit in 2013 although not funded. He thought the challenge and the conversations the Council has had about that in the past, both from a staff and Council perspective, is that as a public sector

employer, how do they deal with two things that are sometimes a factor. One is internal equity and the perception of “it wasn’t fair that someone got performance pay”. Then there is the perception on the part of the taxpayers whether that is an appropriate use of public funds to reward somebody in the public sector. He thought at the time in 2013 it was easier to not deal with it but it was a legitimate question that the Council and staff needed to work through. The other piece of it was talking about longevity pay and he did not think the City did anything along those lines.

Ms. Olson indicated the City did not.

Mr. Trudgeon explained except for union contracts.

Mayor Roe thought it would be interesting to see what a model might look like if the City applied that on the non-union side of things.

Ms. Davis explained there are a hundred different variations on performance pay, exceptional service pay, longevity pay, and her recommendation would be to identify the challenge the City is trying to solve first before starting to look at scenarios.

Councilmember Strahan indicated performance based merit increases are not really best practice at this point, especially from a DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) impact, because of the subjective rating scales. She would be inclined to believe that these should be separate from the performance reviews and should not be connected to pay. She explained the City continues to struggle with its DEI impact and she thought it would be good to take it out of there or not consider adding it.

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Mayor Roe thought that was one of the reasons it was not put into place at that time in 2013. He asked if there was anything else that needed to be discussed by the Council or staff.

The Council and Abdo did not have anything else to go over.

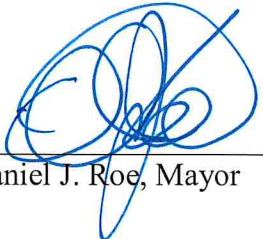
Mayor Roe thanked Abdo for coming and making the presentation.

- 8. Council Direction on Councilmember Initiated Agenda Items**
- 9. Approve Minutes**
- 10. Approve Consent Agenda**
- 11. Future Agenda Review, Communications, Reports, and Announcements – Council and City Manager**
City Manager Patrick Trudgeon reviewed the April 24, 2023 City Council meeting, May 8, 2023 City Council meeting, and May 15, 2023 EDA and City Council meeting.
- 12. Adjourn**
Strahan moved, Schroeder seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:01 p.m.

Roll Call

Ayes: Etten, Schroeder, Groff, Strahan, and Roe.

Nays: None.



Daniel J. Roe, Mayor

ATTEST:



Patrick J. Trudgeon, City Manager