

ULSTER COUNTY PERIODIC COMPENSATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

244 Fair St., P.O. Box 1800, Kingston, New York 12402
Telephone: 845-340-3800

Richard A. Gerentine, Chair
Leon “Butch” Dener
Louis Klein
Kathleen Mihm



ULSTER COUNTY PERIODIC COMPENSATION REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE COMPENSATION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

The 2021 Ulster County Periodic Compensation Review Committee (hereafter “the Committee”) was appointed to conduct a biannual “review the salaries of all elected officials of the County of Ulster” for whom the Ulster County legislature has the power to fix compensation, as required by of Article XXIV of the Ulster County Charter. Those officials are: the County Executive, the County Clerk, the Comptroller, the Sheriff, and all Legislators. As in the past, the Committee took its charge to review “salaries” as including consideration of total compensation packages provided these officials.

The Committee was constituted, as the charter required, by multiple appointing authorities. The Committee was chaired by Richard A. Gerentine. Other members were Leon “Butch” Dener, Louis Klein, and Kathleen Mihm. The Committee was supported by a secretarial staff member from the County Executive’s Office.

I. Background, Review Process, Standards and Data

The Committee was created by the charter because political factors mitigated against objective, fair, regular review of salaries for county elected officials. This contrasts with regular annual or biannual salary reviews routinely conducted for managers in county government and undertaken for the county workforce in the course of labor negotiations. Historically, pre-charter the result was long periods of avoidance or neglect of the compensation issue for elected officials, followed by infrequent, highly controversial large percentage increases (40%). In fact, out of conformance with this Committee's recommendations, such a large percentage increase for its own members was the chosen path of the legislature in 2016.

The Committee met on December 8, 2021, January 19, 2022, February 16, 2022, and February 24, 2022. All meetings were open to the public. In accord with a charter requirement that "the Committee shall hold at least one public hearing and shall otherwise provide ample opportunity for public comment" (County Charter, Article XXXIV, §C-110), a public hearing was properly noticed and conducted on March 14, 2022, and arrangement for comments via email were made through PCRC@co.ulster.ny.us.

The Committee reestablished that, this year as in past years, it was not engaged in a performance review. Its purpose was to focus upon equitable compensation for each elected position within its purview, and not on the record of any current incumbent in each position.

For comparative purposes, in the course of its work the Committee considered salaries for offices with the same or similar titles and duties in counties within the Mid-Hudson region and others in New York State with similar population and/workforce size and geographic expanse. The Committee also looked at the elapsed time since the last salary adjustment; negotiated contractual increases provided county employees since that time and the effects of inflation on buying power.

Data for Ulster County was obtained through the Ulster County Comptroller's Office which included information gathered from the County's Personnel Finance Department. The Committee also reviewed data compiled by the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC).

Public officials holding offices for which compensation was under review were sent correspondence inviting them to address the Committee in person or submit written information or opinions regarding their position and current salary to the Committee, as well as to provide any comparisons, including compensation and duties performed, with counterparts in other counties. The Comptroller, the County Clerk and the Sherriff submitted written materials for the Committee's consideration, and each also met with the Committee. Written material was also provided by four Ulster County Legislators, one of whom also met with the Committee.

All information upon which the Committee based its recommendations is available in the files of the Committee, provided as attachments to this report and available on the Ulster County website and through the Offices of the County Executive and/or the County Legislature. Detailed minutes provide background on the use of this data in the deliberations of the Committee, and support for its recommendations.

The Committee respectfully requests that the Legislature review Resolution #72 (March 2018). The intent of that resolution is to address the inequality amongst employees regarding continuous service and should allow the existing personnel in that office at the time of March 20, 2018 to be able to have their existing years of service counted.

Members of the Committee are mindful that the review process is advisory to the County Legislature and County Executive; the Committee's recommendations have no direct force of law.

II. Results of Review

A. County Executive

B. County Comptroller

C. County Clerk

D. County Sheriff

As set forth below, the Periodic Compensation Review Committee recommends a \$15,000.00/annum salary increase for each of the above four elected officials to be paid out over two years: \$7500.00 in 2022 and \$7500.00 in 2023.

Position	Current	2022 Recommended	2023 Recommended
County Executive	\$133,572.00	\$141,072.00	\$148,572.00
County Comptroller	\$101,709.00	\$109,209.00	\$116,709.00
County Clerk	\$101,709.00	\$109,209.00	\$116,709.00
County Sheriff	\$101,709.00	\$109,209.00	\$116,709.00

It has been 14 years since the County Executive’s last raise. The increase recommended by The Committee represents a .08% increase per year.

It has been 14 years since the County Comptroller’s last raise. The increase recommended by The Committee represents a 1.05% increase per year.

It has been 18 years since the County Clerk’s last raise. The increase recommended by The Committee represents a .08% increase per year.

It has been 14 years since the County Sheriff’s last raise. The increase recommended by The Committee represents a 1.05% increase per year.

E. County Legislature and Legislative Leadership

The Legislature gave its members a \$4,000.00/annum increase in compensation in 2016 (40% increase), and legislative leaders received an additional increase. As set forth below, the Periodic Compensation Review Committee recommends a \$2000.00/annum salary increase for each of the Legislators (excluding the Legislative Chair) to be paid out over two years: \$1000.00 in 2022 and \$1000.00 in 2023. It is recommended that the Legislative Chair receive a

\$2500.00/annum salary increase to be paid out over two years: \$1250.00 in 2022 and \$1250.00 in 2023.

Position	Current	2022 Recommended	2023 Recommended
Legislative Chair	\$23,500.00	\$24,750.00	\$26,000.00
Legislative Majority	\$16,000.00	\$17,000.00	\$18,000.00
Legislative Minority	\$16,000.00	\$17,000.00	\$18,000.00
Legislative Member	\$14,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$16,000.00

Conclusion

Should the Legislature decide that the distributions of compensation over two years (2022 and 2023) as described herein is not advisable, The Committee recommends the distributions set forth herein be made in full over 2023 and as part of the County’s 2023 budget process.

The recommendations set forth herein are unanimous among The Committee members.

All members of the Periodic Compensation Review Committee are honored and pleased to have been given the opportunity to work on a matter of such importance to the people and the Government of Ulster County. The Committee is available to further inform the County Executive and the Legislature as they deliberate on these recommendations.

Dated: Kingston, New York
March 23, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

/Richard A. Gerentine/, Chairperson

/Leon “Butch” Dener/, Member

/Louis Klein/, Member

/Kathleen Mihm/, Member