

**FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
ELECTED OFFICIALS SALARY REVIEW COMMITTEE  
December 19, 2013**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- Pat Kahm, Professional Resource Management, Inc.
- Joe Edwards, former Lancaster County Commissioner
- Gerry Dimon, former Vice President of Human Resources for Ameritas
- Jim Gordon, Attorney, DeMars Gordon Law Firm, Member of the Lancaster County Budget Monitoring Committee, and Chair of this Elected Officials Salary Review Committee.
- Steve Eicher, former Pfizer Human Resource Department Director
- Sam Seever, former Vice President of Legal Services for MDS Pharma Services
- Peggy Chantry, Bryan East Compensation Coordinator

**SUPPORT STAFF**

Facilitator - Kerry P. Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer

Professional Consultant - Doug McDaniel, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources Director

Administrative Support - Angela Zocholl, County Records Specialist

**INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to NEB. REV. STAT. §23-1114 (Reissue 2012), the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners is required to set salaries for all County elected officials prior to January 15, 2014, a year in which a general election is held. Salaries shall be effective January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2018. The Elected Officials Salary Review Committee was established by the County Board to provide recommendations regarding appropriate salaries for County elected officials. The Committee is comprised of citizens with expertise in governmental, business, legal and personnel matters.

**PROCESS**

The Committee met a total of four times. All incumbent elected officials were asked to submit to the Committee written information containing a summary of their duties, how their duties have changed during the last four years, and what they believe is a fair salary for their position. Each elected official met with the Committee to discuss this information. Doug McDaniel, the Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources Director, provided information and consultation to the Committee.

The Committee also reviewed the following materials and reports in formulating its recommendations:

1. 2015-2018 Minimum Salary Recommendations for County Officials, Nebraska Association of County Officials (October 2013)
2. Final Report and Recommendations from the Elected Officials Salary Review Committee, dated December 17, 2009
3. Lancaster County Board Resolution No. R-09-0107, Setting Salaries for County Elected Officials for 2011-2014 Term
4. Elected Officials Salary and Benefit Survey, Lincoln/Lancaster County Personnel Department for 2013
5. Lancaster County Elected Officials Salaries for 1999 through 2013
6. Budget and Employee Information for County Elected Officials
7. Reports from County Elected Officials regarding duties, changes in duties, and salary recommendations
8. Lancaster County Director Salary Information for 2012-2013
9. Lancaster County Board Committee Assignments for 2013
10. Lancaster County Organizational Chart
11. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index (CPI)- All Urban Consumers, Mid-West Region, January through August 2013.

### **SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

After meeting with the elected officials and reviewing the materials presented to the Committee, an extensive discussion was conducted to determine salary recommendations for Lancaster County elected officials. The following factors and principles were considered by the Committee in formulating its recommendations: comparability, consistency with past elected official salary increases, whether there were any major changes in duties, consistency with salary increases for County employees, and what is in the best interests of County taxpayers.

First, the question of comparability was addressed. The Committee acknowledged the importance of paying Lancaster County elected officials comparably to similarly situated elected officials in other counties. At the same time, the Committee was reluctant to place too much emphasis on a comparison to statistical averages. While comparability can give an indication of what a fair salary would be, the Committee noted that the higher salaries in larger counties in the array [See Item 4

in the list of documents presented to the Committee], are not necessarily reflective of what would be a fair salary in Lancaster County. Accordingly, comparability served as a general guide to the Committee, but was not the determinative factor in the formulation of the Committee's recommendations.

The Committee also examined how salaries for County elected officials have been set in the past. In this regard, the Committee placed importance on making recommendations which are not only consistent with past recommendations from the Salary Review Committee, but also consistent with how the Lancaster County Board has set salaries in the past.

Another factor used by the Committee was whether there have been any major changes to the duties performed by elected officials. After meeting with each elected official and examining the written materials presented in conjunction with those meetings, the Committee found no major changes to the duties of any County elected official.

Next, the Committee looked at salary increases for other Lancaster County employees. It was noted that over the past several years the average salary increase for County employees has been approximately two percent.

Finally, the interests of the taxpayers who pay the salaries of County elected officials were considered. The Committee sought a balance in matching comparable salaries in other jurisdictions, the need to establish salaries which attract qualified candidates, adequate compensation for the work performed, and the goal of keeping property taxes as low as possible. The Committee also took into consideration that qualified candidates often seek elected positions more out of a sense of public service and duty, rather than for economic remuneration.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the foregoing analysis, the Elected Officials Salary Review Committee hereby makes the following salary recommendations to the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners for the 2015 - 2018 term:

For 2015, each Lancaster County Elected Official should receive a two percent increase. For 2016-2018, each elected official should receive an annual salary increase based on the following formula. If the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all Urban Consumers Midwest Region, as published for the November immediately preceding each January for 2016 through 2018 is:

- (A) Not less than 1.5% and not greater than 2.5% – then each elected official should receive a 2% salary increase;
- (B) Less than 1.5% – then the salary increase should be 2%, minus 50% of the amount by which the CPI is less than 1.5%; and
- (C) More than 2.5% – then the salary increase should be 2%, plus 50% of the amount by which the CPI exceeds 2.5%.

## RECOMMENDED SALARIES

OFFICIAL	2015	2016 - 2018
County Attorney	\$143,268	Annual increases effective January 1, based on the following formula. If the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all Urban Consumers Midwest Region, as published for the November immediately preceding each January for 2016 through 2018 is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Not less than 1.5% and not greater than 2.5%, each elected official should receive a 2% salary increase;</li> <li>(B) Less than 1.5%, the salary increase should be 2%, minus 50% of the amount by which the CPI is less than 1.5%; and</li> <li>(C) More than 2.5%, the salary increase should be 2%, plus 50% of the amount by which the CPI exceeds 2.5%.</li> </ul>
Public Defender	\$143,268	
Assessor/Reg of Deeds	\$120,051	
Engineer	\$113,382	
Sheriff	\$116,056	
County Treasurer	\$84,659	
County Clerk	\$80,751	
District Court Clerk	\$84,653	
Commissioners	\$40,376	

Respectfully submitted this 19th day of December, 2013, on behalf of the Lancaster County Elected Officials Salary Review Committee.

James E. Gordon

James E. Gordon, Chair