

PORT OF SEATTLE
MEMORANDUM

COMMISSION AGENDA

ACTION ITEM

Item No. 6a

Date of Meeting March 5, 2013

DATE: March 1, 2013

TO: Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Mary Gin Kennedy, Director of Commission Services

SUBJECT: First Reading of Resolution No. 3678: Setting the annual salary compensation of Seattle Port Commissioners at the same amount as paid to legislators in the State of Washington

ACTION REQUESTED:

Request First Reading of Resolution No. 3678: A Resolution of the Port Commission of the Port of Seattle setting the annual salary compensation of Seattle Port Commissioners at the same amount as paid to legislators in the State of Washington.

SYNOPSIS:

Port of Seattle Commissioners receive a salary of \$500 per month, which is also the salary for any port district in Washington with gross operating revenues greater than \$25 million. State law provides that a port commission may set its own compensation, but Article XXX of the Washington state constitution has been interpreted to mean that if officials fix their own salaries, they cannot benefit from a salary increase until after they are re-elected. Commissioners may also waive any and all compensation, as provided by state statute. This resolution proposes to set Port of Seattle Commissioners' salaries at \$42,106, the same salary paid to members of Washington legislature.

Port Commissioners spend many hours working on behalf of the Port. The current salary is not commensurate with the complexity of Port operations and the substantial commitment of time and effort required to fulfill the duties of the office. It is a barrier for many average citizens to seek election as Port Commissioners. This resolution is being proposed as a matter of good governance and sound public policy. Increasing the salary for Commissioners may open the door for a more diverse group of King County citizens to serve as Commissioners, and it compensates Commissioners more appropriately based on the work they do for the Port.

BACKGROUND:

The Port, a complex and thriving organization of almost 1,800 employees, is comprised of three operating divisions (Aviation, Seaport and Real Estate) managing assets worth more than \$6 billion. Annual operating revenues reached \$521.6 million in 2012 and are projected to be higher in 2013. Moreover, the Port is a major economic development engine for King County and all of Puget Sound. Its continuing viability is critical to the region's long-term prosperity, job growth and environmental health.

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Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

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Commissioners' responsibilities include representing the nearly 2 million citizens of King County; establishing broad policies, overall direction and long-term objectives of the Port; approving the annual budget; setting the annual tax levy; and selecting a Chief Executive Officer and approving his annual goals and objectives. In carrying out their responsibilities, Commissioners attend public Commission meetings each month; represent the Port at board meetings of outside organizations, such as the Highline Forum, the Trade Development Alliance and the Puget Sound Regional Council; testify in front of other legislative bodies; promote the Century Agenda to other regional governments, industry and union leaders, educational institutions and community organizations; meet with Port tenants, constituents and stakeholders; and speak at or attend Port-related community events.

This resolution is being proposed as a matter of good governance and sound public policy. Port of Seattle Commissioners spend many hours working on behalf of the Port. The current salary is not commensurate with the complexity of Port operations and the substantial commitment required to fulfill the duties of the office. The salary serves as a barrier for many average citizens to seek election as Port Commissioners. Increasing the salary for Commissioners may open the door for a more diverse group of King County citizens to seek office, and it compensates Commissioners more appropriately based on the work they do for the Port.

OTHER DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REQUEST:

- February 26, 2013, letter to "fellow citizen" from Commissioner Tom Albro.
- Resolution No. 3678

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS:

- February 26, 2013: Commissioner Albro announced at the February 26 Commission meeting that he would propose a salary increase for Port of Seattle Commissioners on March 5, 2013, and read the letter to "fellow citizen" into the record.