



City of Franklin

Office of the Mayor

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Fred L. Paris
Mayor

Janet P. Alexander
Clerk - Treasurer

Robert D. Schafstall
City Judge

October 3, 2008

Council members,

As you all know, my proposed salary ordinance has created some discussion in our community. Some have voiced their concerns to me, and I assume they have engaged you all in similar conversations. Some have argued that now is not the time for this increase, and others argue it is acceptable to give raises (of 4%) to employees, but question the decision to approve raises for elected officials.

Make no mistake: Increasing salaries is a decision that any legislative body should enter into with caution and consideration. You and I all know this, and I respect those who have asked about my proposal. However, I as only one of the elected leaders of the city, believe these things.

- One issue that I have been struggling with is the way Franklin positions itself in relation with similar municipalities in our area. If you look at the list of other similar cities, you will notice that the pay for mayor, clerk-treasurer and council is behind many of the others in both pay and benefits. I believe that you and I work just as hard as elected officials in these communities. I feel it is justified that we bring our salaries more closely in line with theirs.
- The positions of mayor and clerk-treasurer are responsible for an incredible amount of work. Their decisions affect the entire workforce, and I believe these positions should be paid accordingly. Several times in the past, raises were given to the work force, and not the elected officials. This has caused an unrealistic gap between city workers and the elected officials who should be viewed as the CEO and CFO of the company. If you will take time to look at the attached list, titled **2009-4% Annual Salary Increases Sorted by Highest to Lowest**, you will see it shows the ranking of city employees and elected officials. This shows total pay including longevity, which is part of the guaranteed pay package. It does not include overtime (which could move several people up the list). It also shows the 2008 pay and the proposed 2009 pay with a 4% added to the two elected officials. As noted on the list, the ranking of mayor is #8 and the three-term clerk is at #27. Now if you look at the attachment titled **2009 Annual Salaries Including the Proposed Salaries for the Mayor and Clerk Treasurer**, you will see that the mayor moves to #2 and the Clerk moves to #7. This shows that even if you agree to the request, both positions will be paid at a rate lower than the company leadership would be paid in most private pay structures.
- Following that line, the role of mayor is something that is very unique amongst elected officials in a city. While I was aware of the salary I would be paid before coming into office, I never really

understood how much of that salary would be reinvested in the community. When the mayor hosts potential business clients or attends events to better the community, he or she is often required to spend money out of his or her own pocket. There are items we cannot reasonably ask the taxpayers to cover (such as beverages before or after dinner or auctions), as they are not necessities. However, if the mayor were to refuse to entertain guests or potential businesses, support community organizations, or attend events, he or she would be viewed as being civically irresponsible. By raising the salary of the mayor's position, that individual will be more likely to engage in actions expected of his or her role.

- Another point to consider is that along with the unfunded mandate of the MS4 requirements comes increased work that will be overseen by me personally, as well as the clerk's office. It will involve setting the rates, overseeing a new department within the utility division, overseeing studies of all storm and sanitary systems, reviewing RFP's to design projects, reviewing bids, overseeing the construction and not to even mention the innumerable meetings and conferences we will need to attend. So even if you overlook the above points, this administration and all that follow will be asked to take on new and bigger leadership roles. This is why the original request was to receive the same amount to oversee the storm water utility as the elected officials receive to oversee the waste water utility. When I looked at what that salary would be, I felt it would be too high and, therefore, my request was to reduce both elected officials pay from property taxes by \$7,000, which would allow us to increase the pay of our council members a little. I believe the new utility budget could, and should, cover this request.

I suppose the main question we should ask ourselves is this: what kind of jobs do we want to create for those who follow us? Think of the kind of people we are going to attract with these pay scales we are creating. While I believe those of us around this table are all capable individuals, we need to understand that we are not going to occupy these seats forever.

As an Independent mayor, I am willing to take the risk of making this request. I believe that by bringing the salaries up to those of comparable cities, we will be able to attract individuals with ambitious visions. We will attract entrepreneurs who will see that public service can be rewarding in *all* aspects. With similarly lucrative public service jobs available to them in Franklin, these leaders will be more attracted to stay here, and will guide our community in years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred L. Paris". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mayor Fred L. Paris