



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

# AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

**MEETING DATE:** April 24, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Salary, Market, and Equity Review Project Overview

**BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

Deschutes County Commissioners provided approval for the County to hire a consultant to complete a Salary, Market, and Equity study. Staff issued an RFP, conducted first and second round interviews with a Steering Committee earlier this year with the contract being awarded to HR Answers, Inc. This matter was initially presented to the Board on April 22, 2024.

HR Answers is a Woman-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) located in Tigard, Oregon with over 35 years in business with an experienced team of human resources professionals. The team has extensive experience not only in compensation for private and public sector clients, but also in working with leadership, as well as represented and non-represented employees in its consulting assignments. The team is committed to providing organizations with exceptional consulting by utilizing varied backgrounds and decades of experience.

The Salary, Market, and Equity study for Deschutes County will include work to help the County:

- Understand the equity and competitiveness of our employee's compensation and benefits,
- Update the existing program so that the program can be competitive, sustainable, and equitable for the future, and
- Recommend a budget plan to appropriately realign employees' compensation as necessary.

This project will encompass a thorough wage review and market analysis for Non-represented and AFSCME represented employees, as well as look at internal equity and pay equity organization-wide. A compensation structure will be recommended that includes methods to easily update the wage structure as new market indicators and minimum wage changes occur; as well as recommendations for addressing employee and position equity,

advancement, and development.

HR Answers will guide the County through processes to facilitate project planning and engage County leadership on establishing comparable agencies for market salary updates, updating the County's compensation philosophy, and reviewing salary structure for competitiveness and equity. They will also complete a review of existing policies and procedures applicable to administering compensation to ensure the organization follows industry best practices.

In 2017, the Board approved use of Clackamas, Lane, Marion, and Jackson counties as our comparable labor market; as well as the County's current Compensation Philosophy statement.

Our employees enjoy a rewarding work culture that is proudly focused on providing innovative and comprehensive services to our community. Our goal is to attract, reward, and retain a talented and diverse workforce to deliver these services. We value our employees and recognize their commitment by providing them with a competitive compensation, benefits, and retirement package that is internally equitable and fiscally responsible to the citizens and taxpayers of Deschutes County.

HR Answers will present a project overview and facilitate a conversation with the Board to review our current comparable labor market and discuss any changes to be considered when defining to the comparable labor market to be used for the County's compensation survey as part of this project.

**BUDGET IMPACTS:**

None at this time.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Kathleen Hinman, Human Resources Director  
Laurie Grenya, HR Answers, Inc.