



Office of the City Manager
312 W. Whitewater Street, P.O. Box 178
Whitewater, Wisconsin 53190

MEMORANDUM

www.whitewater-wi.gov
Telephone: (262) 473-0104
Fax: (262) 222-5901

To: Common Council
From: John Weidl, City Manager
Date: 11/27/2023
Re: Commitment to Improvement in Compensation Evaluations

Common Council:

In light of the recent public evaluation of our staff's efforts on compensation comparisons, I acknowledge that our initial approach may not have completely aligned with the explicit and implicit expectations expressed by some members of the Common Council. For this shortfall, I extend my sincere apologies. As City Manager, it is my duty to ensure that our work aligns with the Council's expectations and also to uphold the highest standards of accuracy and relevance. In this case, our efforts fell short, and for that, I am deeply regretful.

Understanding the gravity of this responsibility, I am firmly committed to steering us back on course and rectifying the areas where we have faltered. Our staff, guided by my clear directives and supported by robust methodologies, will redouble their efforts to provide comprehensive and meaningful analysis.

To make the appropriate adjustment, staff will adopt a more detailed and thorough and incorporate an expanded metric system as detailed in an example study attached for reference. On page 44 you will see 8 metrics – equalized value, property tax levy, spending per capita, property tax rate, per capita income, operational spending, general obligation debt, and shared revenue. Our system includes those eight plus a ninth metric - population. The inclusion of population as a metric acknowledges our shared commitment to using population as an relevant factor when considering compensation. The scoring system you see attached will be recalibrated, either extending to 120 points or redefined within a 100-point scale, to ensure a nuanced and accurate reflection of each community's alignment with Whitewater.

As we proceed, we recognize the Common Council's emphasis on population as a pivotal factor in our compensation analysis. In response, we are incorporating population as a key metric, a gesture that reflects our attentiveness to the Council's perspective. While some members of the governing body have suggested focusing on communities with significantly smaller populations, our approach aims to ensure a balanced and comprehensive analysis. This method, while acknowledging the Council's input, is designed to provide a fair and realistic compensation structure, rather than one narrowly focused on cost reduction. It is our objective to align our staff's compensation not only with population considerations but also with a broader spectrum of economic and operational metrics, ensuring a result that is both equitable and reflective of the true value they bring to our community.


In closing, I wish to assure the Council of my commitment to rectify the initial approach and to guide our team towards a more refined and accurate analysis. My Chief of Staff, Taylor, has already initiated the process by twice seeking input from the governing body vis-à-vis comparable communities in addition to incorporating suggestions from department directors. This collaborative effort, combined with using the

methodology established by an industry-leading firm, will ensure that our future decisions are well-informed and guided by objective methodology.

I would be remiss and not acknowledging the respect due to staff if I did not respectfully request that the Council first communicate any concerns regarding unmet expectations to the City Manager or Chief of Staff between the time packets are distributed on the preceding Friday and our public meetings on the following Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. This approach is not intended to discourage council members from raising their concerns publicly during meetings, which I continue to fully support. Rather, it provides our staff with a valuable opportunity, and up to 24 business hours, to address and, if possible, rectify any issues in real-time. This proactive communication enhances the efficiency of our limited interaction time during council sessions, ensuring that it is used as productively as possible.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. Otherwise, please anticipate that we will revisit this item at a future Common Council meeting mid-2024.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John S. Weidl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

John S. Weidl, City Manager