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TO: Public Ethics Commission
FROM: Suzanne Doran, Executive Director
DATE: March 5, 2026
RE: City Council Salary Adjustment as Required by City Charter Section 202, for the March 18, 2026, Regular PEC Meeting

Every two years, the Public Ethics Commission (PEC or Commission) is responsible for adjusting the City Councilmember salary level based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the preceding two years. This memo explains the rules the Commission must follow in adjusting the salary for the office of Councilmember and provides a staff recommendation for the biennial salary increase consistent with these rules.

Background

Oakland City Charter Section 202, as amended in 2022ⁱ, requires the Commission “adjust the salary for the office of Councilmember by the increase in the Consumer Price Index over the preceding two years, up to a total of five percent.” If the increase over the preceding two years is greater than five percent, the Commission has the discretion to “adjust the salary for the office of Councilmember by an amount not exceeding five percent for each year, but not more than the total CPI per year.”

The Commission last adjusted the salary for City Councilmembers by five percent in 2024, resulting in a PEC-adjusted annual salary of **\$108,802.91**. This annual salary amount is applied across 26 bi-weekly pay periods in the City of Oakland’s financial software system, but the actual salary is **\$108,802.98** due to numerical rounding in the system.ⁱⁱ The table to the right shows salary increases approved by the Commission from 2004 through 2024.ⁱⁱⁱ

Year	CPI Change (%)	PEC- Authorized Increase (%)	Adjusted Annual Salary
2024	7.5	5.0	108,802.91
2022	6.3	6.3	103,621.82
2020	7.1	7.1	97,480.55
2018	6.6	6.6	91,018.25
2016	4.7	4.7	85,382.97
2014	2.4	2.4	81,550.11
2013	2.4	2.4	79,638.78
2012	2.1	2.1	77,772.25
2011	2.8	2.8	76,172.62
2010	1.7	1.7	74,097.88
2009	0.8	0.8	72,859.28
2008	2.9	2.9	72,281.04
2007	3.3	5.0	70,243.94
2006	3.2	4.0	66,899.04
2005	2.1	2.1	64,326.08
2004	--	5.0	63,003.94

Payroll adjustments must be included in the citywide salary schedule adopted by City Council and take effect on the first payroll period after the beginning of the new fiscal year, which begins July 1.

Minimum Salary Adjustment Mandated by City Charter

The Commission is required to adjust the annual salary according to the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the preceding two years. According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward area rose 5.4 percent from December 2023 to December 2025.^{iv} Since the two-year increase exceeds five percent, the Charter requires that the annual salary for City Councilmembers be increased by at least five percent, which would result in an adjusted annual salary of **\$114,243.13**. However, to avoid rounding errors, the monthly rate is what will be reflected in the City’s upcoming salary ordinance amendment for inclusion in the updated salary schedule report.

	Monthly	Annual
Council member salary 2026	\$9,066.92	\$108,802.98
5.0% increase	\$9,520.26	\$114,243.13

Additional Salary Increase Option

When the total CPI change over the prior two years exceeds five percent, the Commission has discretion to increase the City Councilmember salary by up to five percent for each of those two years, but not more than the total CPI increase per year. Because the CPI increase exceeded five percent in this two-year period, the Commission may award a salary increase above five percent.

The CPI rose 2.4 percent between December 2023 and December 2024 and rose 3.0 percent between December 2024 and December 2025. Since neither annual increase exceeded five percent, the Commission has the discretion to award an increase up to the total CPI increase for each year, which would result in an increase of 5.4 percent and an adjusted annual salary of **\$114,678.34**.

	Monthly	Annual
Council member salary 2026	\$9,066.92	\$108,802.98
5.4% increase	\$9,556.53	\$114,678.34

As shown in the table on page one, PEC-authorized salary adjustments generally match inflation with few exceptions. Earlier adjustments above the CPI change cited parity with across-the-board salary increases negotiated for non-sworn City employees as a factor. Since the 2024 City Council salary adjustment, non-sworn represented employees and most City of Oakland department heads received a salary increase of two percent effective March 1, 2025. No negotiated salary increases for 2026 or 2027 had been agreed upon for non-sworn employees at the time of writing as the contracts will expire on June 30, 2026, and the City is presently entering bargaining with all unions.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend the Commission adopt a resolution with *one* of the two options below at its March 18, 2026, meeting:

Option A provides for a salary increase of 5.0 percent. This amount represents the minimum amount by which the Commission is required to adjust City Councilmember salaries under City Charter Section 202(c) when the increase in the Consumer Price Index exceeds five percent in the prior two years. This amount would bring Councilmembers’ total annual salary to **\$114,243.13**, as represented by the salary rate of **\$9,520.26** per month.

OR

Option B provides for a salary increase of 5.4 percent. The 5.4 percent adjustment corresponds to the sum of the per year CPI increase in each year. The 5.4 percent adjustment is the maximum increase that the Commission may adopt under City Charter Section 202(c). This amount would bring Councilmembers’ total annual salary to **\$114,678.34**, as represented by the salary rate of **\$9,556.53** per month.

Following Commission approval, Commission staff will finalize and transmit the salary adjustment resolution to the City Administrator, the Department of Human Resources (to amend the salary ordinance), and the Treasury Division - Payroll (to implement the increase).

Attachments: Draft resolution option A
Draft resolution option B

ⁱ Until 2014, PEC-authorized increases were determined annually. In 2014, the Charter was amended to set the salary every other year. The Commission was permitted to adjust the salary beyond the CPI increase up to a total of five percent per year at its discretion, and any increase over five percent had to be approved by the voters. In 2022, the salary adjustment formula was amended by Measure X to the current two-year formula.

ⁱⁱ As of February 2026, Councilmembers receive an actual annual salary of \$108,802.98. Actual salary amounts may vary slightly from the authorized annual salary due to standard payroll system calculation and rounding when annual amounts are applied across pay periods in the City of Oakland’s financial software system. Salary data provided by Anjali Saxena, Payroll Manager, Finance Department. January 29, 2026.

ⁱⁱⁱ This table reflects data from PEC staff reports and PEC-authorized salaries.

^{iv} U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA Consumer Price Index. December 2023 – December 2025. Data retrieved January 28, 2026 from <https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/CUURS49BSA0>. Inflation formula: $(CPI2 - CPI1) / CPI1 \times 100 = __\%$