

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: March 14, 2007
To: Chairman Lee Holloway, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
From: Jerome J. Heer, Director of Audits
Subject: Salary Survey of Legislative and Executive Positions

We have completed a survey of other jurisdictions as you requested to obtain salary information for legislators and the chief executive officer. The jurisdictions selected were from those we previously surveyed in two earlier salary reports. The focus of the first report, issued in April 2002, was a comparison of salary and other information of numerous top managers and elected officials from jurisdictions that responded to our survey. The second report, issued in October 2004, focused on the administrative structure and form of governance for comparable jurisdictions. It included a salary survey component for the chief executive officer and elected legislative officials. The 2004 survey included counties across the nation having approximately the same population as Milwaukee County.

Tables 1 – 3 show the salaries for each the three positions surveyed, listing the jurisdictions from the highest salary to lowest. For comparison purposes, we have also included the salary amounts from our previous reports, where applicable. Each table also shows the average salary for the position, which does not include Milwaukee County in the computation.

The survey contains a broad range of salaries for each position. The salaries may be skewed by cost of living and other economic factors. We also computed a modified average salary that excludes the five highest and lowest salaries. As shown in the following tables, the results show that the annual salaries paid to Milwaukee County's Board of Supervisors, the Board Chairman, and the County Executive position are significantly less than the average paid by other jurisdictions.

Legislators

The salary for legislators in our survey ranged from a high of \$113,338 in Ventura County (Ventura, California) to a low of \$11,400 in Marion County (Indianapolis, Indiana), with the average being \$71,906. The adjusted average after removing the five highest and lowest jurisdictions was \$81,606. Milwaukee County supervisors currently receive \$50,874 annually, placing it 14th of 19 total jurisdictions (the 18 jurisdictions surveyed plus Milwaukee County), as shown in **Table 1**.

**Table 1
 Salary Comparison
 Legislators**

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Survey Data From:</u>		
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2007</u>
Ventura County (Ventura, CA)	N/S	\$97,848	\$113,338
Fresno County (Fresno, CA)	N/S	\$84,330	\$102,989
Contra Costa County (Martinez, CA)	N/S	\$59,852	\$95,568
Sacramento County (Sacramento, CA)	N/S	\$76,712	\$94,406
Palm Beach County (West Palm Beach, FL)	N/S	\$80,508	\$91,996
Pinellas County (Clearwater, FL)	N/S	\$81,041	\$90,928
Hennepin County (Minneapolis, MN)	\$81,816	\$84,276	\$90,276
Franklin County (Columbus, OH)	\$80,925	\$81,977	\$89,955
Prince George's County (Upper Marlboro, MD)	N/S	\$70,000	\$89,000
Hamilton County (Cincinnati, OH)	\$76,200	\$77,191	\$84,703
City of Milwaukee	\$61,770	N/S	\$71,506
Wayne County (Detroit, MI)	\$66,736	N/S	\$68,676
Pima County (Tucson, AZ)	N/S	\$54,600	\$67,800
Milwaukee County	\$52,227	\$52,227	\$50,874
Du Page County (Wheaton, IL)	\$44,100	\$42,000	\$48,620
Macomb County (Mt. Clemens, MI)	\$30,491	N/S	\$34,068
Oakland County (Pontiac, MI)	\$28,615	\$30,618	\$33,448
St. Louis County (St. Louis, MO)	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$15,625
Marion County (Indianapolis, IN)	\$11,798	N/S	\$11,400
Average (excluding Milwaukee County)	\$49,495	\$66,675	\$71,906
Average not including the five highest and lowest salaries			\$81,606

N/S – Not surveyed

Source: Department of Audit surveys of noted jurisdictions from 2002, 2004 and 2007.

For nearly all jurisdictions, the salaries for legislators increased over the review periods. In contrast, Milwaukee County's legislative salaries decreased \$1,353 over this same timeframe.

Legislative Chairpersons

The salary for legislative chairpersons in our survey ranged from a high of \$115,863 in Fresno County (Fresno, California) to a low of \$13,382 in Marion County (Indianapolis, Indiana), with the average being \$80,168. The adjusted average after removing the five highest and lowest

jurisdictions was \$87,918. The chairman of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors currently receive \$71,687 annually, placing it 15th of 19 total jurisdictions, as shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2 Salary Comparison Legislative Chairperson			
<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Survey Data From:</u>		
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2007</u>
Fresno County (Fresno, CA)	N/S	\$94,871	\$115,863
Ventura County (Ventura, CA)	N/S	\$97,848	\$113,338
Du Page County (Wheaton, IL)	\$92,386	\$92,386	\$110,156
Sacramento County (Sacramento, CA)	N/S	\$76,712	\$96,326
Contra Costa County (Martinez, CA)	N/S	\$59,852	\$95,568
Prince George's County (Upper Marlboro, MD)	N/S	\$75,000	\$94,000
Palm Beach County (West Palm Beach, FL)	N/S	\$80,508	\$91,996
Pinellas County (Clearwater, FL)	N/S	\$81,041	\$90,928
Hennepin County (Minneapolis, MN)	\$81,816	\$84,276	\$90,276
Franklin County (Columbus, OH)	\$80,925	\$81,977	\$89,955
Hamilton County (Cincinnati, OH)	\$76,200	\$77,191	\$84,703
City of Milwaukee	\$69,807	N/S	\$80,810
Wayne County (Detroit, MI)	\$78,736	N/S	\$80,676
Macomb County (Mt. Clemens, MI)	\$66,042	N/S	\$73,790
Milwaukee County	\$72,960	\$72,960	\$71,687
Pima County (Tucson, AZ)	N/S	\$54,600	\$67,800
Oakland County (Pontiac, MI)	\$28,615	\$30,618	\$33,448
St. Louis County (St. Louis, MO)	\$15,625	\$15,625	\$20,000
Marion County (Indianapolis, IN)	\$12,197	N/S	\$13,382
Average (excluding Milwaukee County)	\$60,235	\$71,608	\$80,168
Average not including the five highest and lowest salaries			\$87,918
N/S – Not surveyed			
Source: Department of Audit surveys of noted jurisdictions from 2002, 2004 and 2007.			

Again, for nearly all jurisdictions, the salaries for the legislative chairperson increased over the review periods. In contrast, Milwaukee County's board chairman's salary decreased \$1,273 over this same timeframe.

Chief Executive Officers

The salary comparisons for this position include only 16 of the 18 jurisdictions surveyed because two jurisdictions, Du Page County (Wheaton, Illinois) and Macomb County (Macomb, Michigan) no longer have a chief executive officer. Much of the responsibility for the former chief executive officer position are now handled by the chairpersons of their legislative bodies.

The salary for the chief executive officer for the remaining 16 jurisdictions ranged from a high of \$241,946 in Ventura County (Ventura, California) to a low of \$95,000 in Marion County (Indianapolis, Indiana), with the average being \$184,348. The adjusted average after removing the five highest and lowest jurisdictions was very similar, at \$183,965. The approved salary for the County Executive of Milwaukee County currently is at \$129,611 annually, placing it 16th of 17 total jurisdictions, as shown in **Table 3**. [The current County Executive returns \$60,000 of his salary to the County.]

Table 3
Salary Comparison
Chief Executive Officer

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Survey Data From:</u>		
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2007</u>
Ventura County (Ventura, CA)	N/S	\$177,170	\$241,946
Pima County (Tucson, AZ)	N/S	\$200,690	\$237,994
Palm Beach County (West Palm Beach, FL)	N/S	\$181,534	\$233,461
Sacramento County (Sacramento, CA)	N/S	\$175,833	\$226,924
Pinellas County (Clearwater, FL)	N/S	\$193,353	\$223,476
Contra Costa County (Martinez, CA)	N/S	\$204,936	\$220,000
Hamilton County (Cincinnati, OH)	\$174,404	\$189,956	\$210,000
Oakland County (Pontiac, MI)	\$157,270	\$162,023	\$177,098
Wayne County (Detroit, MI)	\$166,840	N/S	\$171,690
Hennepin County (Minneapolis, MN)	\$165,000	\$165,000	\$165,000
Prince George's County (Upper Marlboro, MD)	N/S	\$130,000	\$160,000
Fresno County (Fresno, CA)	N/S	\$142,000	\$157,040
Franklin County (Columbus, OH)	\$175,453	\$146,224	\$146,058
City of Milwaukee	\$124,291	N/S	\$143,883
St. Louis County (St. Louis, MO)	\$89,500	\$125,000	\$140,000
County of Milwaukee	\$128,820	\$129,115	\$129,611
Marion County (Indianapolis, IN)	\$95,000	N/S	\$95,000
Average (excluding Milwaukee County)	\$152,881	\$170,312	\$184,348
Average not including the five highest and lowest salaries			\$183,965

Does not include Du Page County or Macomb County. The board chairman functions as the chief executive officer of the counties.

N/S – Not surveyed

Note: The current County Executive returns \$60,000 of his salary to the County.

Source: Department of Audit surveys of noted jurisdictions from 2002, 2004 and 2007.

For nearly all jurisdictions, the salaries for the chief executive officer have increased over the review periods. The salary for the Milwaukee County Executive has remained essentially the same over this same time frame.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As we noted in our previous two reports, salary surveys of this nature can make for interesting general comparisons between different jurisdictions. However, it must be stressed that they do not take into account numerous and significant factors that may limit the ability to make meaningful direct comparisons between jurisdictions. Notwithstanding these factors, the survey information obtained for this report supports a conclusion that the authorized salaries for these three positions are significantly lower than comparable positions in the jurisdictions surveyed, and stand in need of adjustment. An example of a such an adjustment occurred recently in Contra Costa County (Martinez, California) in 2006, where an ordinance was passed that requires the salaries of supervisors and elected officials to equal as closely as possible the average of similar positions in other counties in the area.

We recommend that a similar adjustment for these positions be adopted to keep salaries in line with similarly sized counties. We noted that the City of Milwaukee's legislative salaries (\$71,505 for aldermen, \$80,010 for the Common Council Chairman) are both close to our survey average, and represent a comparable within our direct community that establishes a reasonable target for adjustment. With regard to the chief executive officer's salary, the salary of both the County Executive and the Mayor of the City of Milwaukee (\$129,611 and \$143,883, respectively) are well below our survey averages, with the County Executive's salary well below the Mayor.

Chairman Lee Holloway, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
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Please forward this report to the Committee on Personnel.

Jerome J. Heer

JH/cah

cc: Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Scott Walker, Milwaukee County Executive
Dr. Karen Jackson, Director, DAS-Division of Human Resources
Cynthia Archer, Fiscal & Budget Administrator, Department of Administrative Services
Rob Henken, Director, Department of Administrative Services
Stephen Cady, Fiscal & Budget Analyst, County Board
Delores Hervey, Chief Committee Clerk, County Board
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