ORDINANCE NO. 2022-12-034

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM AMENDING BELLINGHAM MUNCIPAL CODE (BMC) SECTION 2.16.050 A. TO ADJUST THE SALARY FOR THE MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE.

WHEREAS, the Bellingham Municipal Court was established in accordance with Chapter 3.50 RCW, which provides a municipal court structure that may be used by cities with populations of 400,000 or less;

WHEREAS, BMC Chapter 2.16 was adopted to establish the City of Bellingham's municipal court under Chapter 3.50 RCW;

WHEREAS, RCW 3.50.080 requires that the salaries of municipal court judges be set by ordinance and that all costs of operating a municipal court be paid from funds of the City;

WHEREAS, through BMC Section 2.16.050 A., effective January 1, 2002, the City Council established the salary for the municipal court judge at $94,548 per year plus any increase, annually or otherwise, in accordance with the City's E plan salary schedule;

WHEREAS, the City's municipal court judge is currently paid a salary of $171,072 per year;

WHEREAS, the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials has established a salary schedule that sets the annual salary paid to district court judges in the State of Washington at $193,447, effective July 1, 2022;

WHEREAS, if a city's municipal court judges are elected, and if the city pays its municipal court judge a salary that is at a rate between 95% and 100% of the salary paid to district court judges, the state may reimburse the city a portion of the salary paid to the municipal court judges to be deposited into a trial court improvement account and used to help fund improvements to court staffing, programs, facilities, and services;

WHEREAS, the City desires to pay its municipal court judge at the same rate as district court judges and receive the state reimbursement;

WHEREAS, this change will increase the municipal court judge's annual salary from $171,072 to $193,447 a year, a $22,375 increase; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the salary schedule established by the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials, effective July 1, 2023, the salary for the municipal court judge will increase to $206,988, an increase of $13,551.

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM DOES ORDAIN:

SECTION 1. BMC Section 2.16.050 A. is amended as follows:

A. Effective January 1, 2023, t~~T~~he salary for the municipal court judge~~, effective January 1, 2022,~~ shall be an amount equal to the salary of district court judges as set by the Washington

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Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials. Future adjustments to the Bellingham municipal court judge salary required by this section shall be effective on a date commensurate with the effective date of adjustments to the salaries of district court judges made by the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials. ~~$94, 548 per year plus any increase, annually or otherwise, in accordance with the E plan salary schedule.~~

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall take effect on January 1, 2023 and apply prospectively.

PASSED by the Council this 12th day of December, 2022.

Council President

APPROVED by me this 27 day of December, 2022.

Mayor

ATTEST:
Finance Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Office of the City Attorney

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