

City Council Takes A Closer Look At City Salaries

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

The City of Kodiak is taking a closer look at salaries this fall to see if Kodiak is competitive with the national workforce. Lori Messer is a Senior Consultant for Fox Lawson and Associates, the company conducting the compensation and classification study for the city. She spoke to the Kodiak City Council during the September 11 work session and said that overall Kodiak is fairly competitive, but salaries here are lower than around the country.

“On average the salaries paid at the city of Kodiak lag the market by about eleven and a half percent. And keep in mind that is an on average figure. So when we look at all the jobs across the city and the pay. It means that in some cases there are positions and people are being paid at the market rate. Some are being paid maybe above the market rate. And we have some that are well below the market rate. So that lag in the market by eleven and a half percent doesn’t mean that ever single individual at the city is being underpaid by eleven and a half percent, but that is the on average figure.”

Messer said Kodiak remains competitive with the rest of the nation once you factor in benefits.

“When we look at the total compensation, just the dollar outlay for base pay, health insurance and paid time off the gap narrows a bit and Kodiak just lags the market by 3.2 percent, which is considered highly competitive.”)

The numbers were found during a complex study that classified and evaluated various jobs within the city to determine how they compare with others around the country.

“First of all we started off doing a classification study and that is where we took a look at all the jobs within the city. The job evaluation piece is where we went ahead and evaluated the jobs internally, from an internal perspective, using a job evaluation method called DBM and I’ll talk about that a little later in the presentation. Then we conducted the market study. That’s where we went out and took a look at how does Kodiak compare to the general market place with respect to pay. After we had finished all of that we performed a cost analysis to see what it would cost to bring the city of Kodiak in line with what the market is paying and came up with a couple of options there. ”)

While Kodiak is overall still considered competitive, Messer stressed the percentage base pay lags the market. She said potential hires may not understand the full extent of their benefits package, and if the base pay alone isn’t competitive then Kodiak could be losing solid applicants for certain jobs.

Aimée Kniazowski is the city manager and said Kodiak has definitely lost applicants in the past because of base pay numbers.

“And we do have difficulty in some cases retaining or attracting employees because that wage lags the market. We have a nice benefits package, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that, we pay a lot of

money for it, it may not be the best. ”)

Messer

presented the preliminary findings of the study during the September 11 work session. The final report will be presented during the October 25 City Council regular meeting when the council will approve the findings and vote on implementation of recommendations to make the city more competitive.