

CITY OF BETHLEHEM

Inter-Office Memorandum

SUBJECT: Elected Officials' Salaries: City Council, Controller, Mayor

TO: Michael G. Colón, Council President

FROM: Kiera Wilhelm, Council Member

DATE: February 13, 2025

In response to your January 28, 2025 memorandum, I respectfully propose salary increases for City Council, Controller, and Mayor, based on the following:

CITY COUNCIL

From 2006-2009, Council saw a salary increase of \$200/year, but there has been no increase in Council salaries since 2009 (16 years). Additionally, the current salary of \$7,100 is a barrier to qualified candidates who, for example, may need to cover the cost of child care, etc. The salaries of Council members in both Allentown and Easton exceed those in Bethlehem.

CONTROLLER

This role is critical to the transparency, efficiency, and financial accountability of the City. From 2006-2009, Bethlehem's Controller saw a salary increase of \$1500/year; there has been no increase since 2009 (16 years).

MAYOR

Bethlehem's Mayor received an annual salary increase from 2006-2013 (average of \$2200/year), but there has been no increase since 2013 (12 years). The budget book provides a list of high-level supervisors who receive a larger salary than the Mayor, including the 6 Department Heads he directly supervises. While City employees are fairly compensated with annual cost of living adjustments, elected positions are not included. The salaries of Mayors in both Allentown and Easton exceed that of Bethlehem.

Please forward this memo and attached amendments to our Finance Committee for consideration. The responsibilities of public officials require specialized skills, long hours and complex tasks. Increasing salaries would help to ensure that our elected officials are being paid a fair wage for their service. Thank you for your consideration.

Kiera Wilhelm



Council Member

cc: Bethlehem City Council

EXHIBIT "A"

CITY SALARIES

				PROPOSED	PROPOSED
SALARIES	2025 City of Bethlehem	2025 City of Easton	2025 City of Allentown	2026 City of Bethlehem	2026 City of Allentown
Council President	\$7,600*	\$9,371	\$6,649	\$11,400	\$16,000
Council	\$7,100*	\$9,371	\$6,149	\$10,650	\$15,000
Mayor	\$90,500**	\$101,938	\$95,000	\$98,000	
Controller	\$49,000***	\$22,389	\$49,894	\$56,000	
Treasurer Due 2027 for Jan. 2028	\$2,200	N/A	N/A		
Council Solicitor	\$26,316		\$50,000 (2 Year Renewal)		\$50,000 (2 Year Renewal)

*Council - Last increase was 2009 (from 2006 to 2009, council received an increase of \$200/year)

**Mayor - Last increase was 2013 (prior to 2013 salary was \$87,500)

***Controller - Last increase was 2009 (from 2006 to 2009, controller received an increase of \$1,500/year)

BILL NO. ____ - 2025

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - ____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,
AMENDING 2017-01
ESTABLISHING THE SALARIES OF THE MEMBERS
OF COUNCIL AND THE PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 1 of Ordinance 2017 is hereby amended as follows, with strikeouts indicating deletions, and underlining indicating text to be inserted:

That pursuant to Act of the Assembly of July 15, 1957 (P. L. 901), and as amended on July 26, 1961 (P. L. 910) and November 1, 1971 (P. L. 500), the salaries of the members of Council and the President of Council of the City of Bethlehem, Counties of Lehigh and Northampton, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, are hereby established at:

<u>Members of Council</u>	<u>President of Council</u>
\$7,100	\$7,600
<u>\$10,650</u>	<u>\$11,400</u>

~~SECTION 2. That the salaries outlined in Section 1 hereof shall become effective with the next term of office of the respective members of Council and President of Council.~~

SECTION 2. That the salaries outlined in Section 1 shall take effect on or after January 1, 2026, as members are newly elected or re-elected to Council.

SECTION 3. That the salaries outlined in Section 1 hereof shall remain in effect until such compensation is increased or decreased in accordance with § 41607 of the Optional Third-Class City Charter Law.

SECTION 4. All Ordinances and parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith be, and the same are hereby repealed.

Sponsored by _____

PASSED finally in Council on the _____ day of _____, 2025.

President of Council

2.

B/ ____/2025
Ord. 2025-____

ATTEST:

City Clerk

This Ordinance approved this day of , 2025.

Mayor

BILL NO. ____ - 2025

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - ____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,
AMENDING 2017-03
ESTABLISHING THE SALARY OF THE CONTROLLER.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

~~SECTION 1. That from and after the first Monday of January 2018, the salary of the Controller of the City of Bethlehem is hereby fixed as follows:~~

~~\$ 49,000 per annum~~

SECTION 1. That from and after the first Monday of January 2026, the salary of the Controller of the City of Bethlehem is hereby fixed as follows (underlined text denotes additions, whereas ~~strikeouts~~ denote deletions):

\$56,000 per annum

SECTION 2. That the salary outlined in Section 1 hereof shall remain in effect until such compensation is increased or decreased in accordance with § 41607 of the Optional Third-Class City Charter Law.

SECTION 3. All Ordinances and parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith be, and the same are hereby repealed.

Sponsored by _____

PASSED finally in Council on the _____ day of _____, 2025.

President of Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk

2.

B/ ___/2025
Ord. 2025-___

This Ordinance approved this day of , 2025.

Mayor

BILL NO. ____-2025

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - ____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM,
COUNTIES OF LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,
AMENDING 2017-02
ESTABLISHING THE SALARY OF THE MAYOR.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

~~SECTION 1. That from and after the first Monday of January 2018, the salary of the Mayor of the City of Bethlehem is hereby fixed as follows:~~

~~\$ 90,500 per annum~~

SECTION 1. That from and after the first Monday of January 2026, the salary of the Mayor of the City of Bethlehem is hereby fixed as follows (underlined text denotes additions, whereas ~~strikeouts~~ denote deletions):

\$98,000 per annum

SECTION 2. That the salary outlined in Section 1 hereof shall remain in effect until such compensation is increased or decreased in accordance with § 41607 of the Optional Third-Class City Charter Law.

SECTION 3. All Ordinances and parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith be, and the same are hereby repealed.

Sponsored by _____

PASSED finally in Council on the _____ day of _____, 2025.

President of Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk

2.

B/ ____/2025
Ord. 2025-____

This Ordinance approved this day of , 2025.

Mayor