

# SUN POST-HERALD

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## Mayor, council salary increases being pondered

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**LAKEWOOD** — City Council could get its first pay raise in 33 years if a proposal is approved by a majority of council. If the pay hike gets the green light, council members' pay would rise from \$4,000 per year to \$7,000. The last increase was in 1978.

Also on the table is a recommendation to raise the

mayor's salary from \$75,600 to \$100,000 annually. The mayor's pay has not been increased since 1991.

Ward 1 Councilman Kevin Butler said the pay needs to be increased in order to keep up with the cost of living. Most members of council agreed, except Ward 4 Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan.

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### SALARY

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She said council members already receive optional health benefits as part-time employees and that increasing their salary would be difficult to justify.

"Many companies across the country give part-time work so they don't have to give health insurance," she said.

Madigan also said she does not feel higher pay for the mayor will guarantee better talent. She said a mayor takes

the position because of a love for public service.

Ward 2 Councilman Thomas Bullock echoed her thoughts.

"I cannot justify adding even one cent to the salary of the mayor or the council," he said.

However, Councilman-at-large Brian Powers said it is a natural progression, adding a pay increase needs to happen more than every 33 years. Powers talked about former mayor Ed FitzGerald's dissatisfaction with the salary.

"Ed FitzGerald said he (couldn't) afford to be mayor for more than one term," Powers said.

In order to bring in adequate talent to council and the mayor's position, Powers said the city needs to be more competitive in its salaries. Lakewood, which has a larger population, has lower pay than surrounding suburbs, he noted.

Councilwoman-at-large Monique Smith said the position on council is much more than just a part-time job. She said she puts in much effort at City Hall and also at home, when citizens are knocking on her door or calling her personal phone. She also said the mayor's position deserves a raise in order to attract quality talent.

Mayor Michael P. Summers proposed that a raise be implemented in two increments, with half in 2012 and half in 2016. He said it would be easier for the public to swallow and would put less strain on the city's budget.

The salary structure is reviewed every two years. The Civil Service Commission gives a salary raise recommendation based on the city's budget and population size.

See more Lakewood news at [cleveland.com/lakewood](http://cleveland.com/lakewood).

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