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Councillors Deserve More: An Analysis of Council Remuneration in Windsor

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Councillors Deserve More: An Analysis of Council Remuneration in Windsor

By

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An Internship Paper
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“Councillors Deserve More: An Analysis of Council Remuneration in Windsor”

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the salaries of municipal councillors in Windsor, Ontario to determine if they are being paid an appropriate salary for the work they perform and the responsibility they hold. There are three methods used to find this result. First, the salaries of Windsor's councillors are compared to the average salaries of other part-time workers in Ontario. Second, the average amount of time that councillors spend working on a weekly basis, both in meetings and outside of meetings, is determined. Finally, the salaries of Windsor's councillors are compared to average salaries of boards of directors, as this is a job has a comparable level of responsibility to being a councillor. Ultimately, this paper finds that Windsor's city councillors deserve a higher salary than they are currently being paid. This finding is important, as the general public often has a negative view of politicians. Learning that Windsor's councillors are currently doing more work than their compensation rewards them for could allow Windsor residents to regard their municipal politicians in a more positive light. A higher salary could also provide younger residents a greater opportunity to become city councillors in Windsor, which could allow the council to be more representative of the city it serves.

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INTRODUCTION

Politicians often have difficulty increasing their own salaries without receiving rancour from the public. While a persistent issue, it has become more problematic with new policies from the federal government that changes the way in which local politicians now have to declare their income. As of January 2019, one-third of municipal councillors' income will no longer be tax free (Association of Municipalities of Ontario, 2018). Having to pay income tax on all of their municipal income means that many councillors will face a decrease in take-home salary. This was announced two-years ago in order to give municipalities an opportunity to decide how to handle this change in salary (Todd, 2017).

To compare councillor rates, the City of Windsor surveyed other municipalities to gauge how they were going to adapt to the loss of the one-third income tax free portion of councillors' salaries. The 2018 survey found three main options: keep the same salary for councillors, even though they would be taking home less money; insure councillors take home the same amount of money by raising their salaries enough to cover their increased income tax; and reassess councillors' salaries altogether (Council Compensation Review Committee, 2018). The review committee recommended a \$6,100 annual salary increase for councillors, ensuring that councillors will receive the same take home salary after their tax break ends, and that recommendation was approved by council in 2018 (CTV Windsor, 2018). Although increasing councillors' salaries may seem like a reasonable option, determining the salaries of politicians can be a complex and difficult issue.

Generally, politicians are not viewed favourably by the public. In a 2018 Global News survey, politicians were found to have the lowest esteemed job in Canada, with only 22% of survey respondents having respect for their occupation. Car salespeople were found to be 4%

more popular than politicians (Little, 2018). In the United States, a 2017 Gallup poll found that only 24% of Americans viewed municipal politicians as having a very high or high degree of honesty and ethics. While that may seem low, it is at least better than their views on members of congress. Only 11% of Americans thought that members of congress had a very high or high degree of honesty (Brenan, 2017). Given this unpopularity, news that politicians are getting an increase in salary would likely not be met with a positive reaction by many people.

Thus, many municipalities across Canada are in a tough situation. With the reality that many councillors are about to be losing money and the perception that councils may be too expensive, this is an important time to try and determine how much money Canadian city councillors deserve to get paid. While there are many factors that can contribute to the salaries of councillors, including the budget of the municipality, the salaries of comparable councillors in the region, and the public reaction to the salaries of councillors, this paper will look at the salaries councillors deserve based only on the jobs they hold and the responsibility that comes with them.

It would not be possible in a paper of this length to determine how much councillors from municipalities across Canada deserve to be paid, as there are too many differences regarding the size of the municipalities and the amount of work that councillors from different municipalities are expected to perform. Therefore, this paper will focus only on the city of Windsor, Ontario and ask how much Windsor's city councillors deserve to be paid. After a literature review to determine what has already been written on the payment of politicians, the salaries of Windsor's councillors will be compared to the average part-time salaries in Ontario. Following that comparison, the amount of work councillors are expected to perform will be determined (both in terms of time spent in meetings and time spent working away from City Hall). Finally, the salaries of Windsor's councillors will be compared to the salaries of boards of directors both in

Canada and internationally. Ultimately, it will be argued that Windsor's city councillors deserve a higher salary than they currently receive.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the academic literature written about the payment of politicians concerns how salaries affect the quality of politicians and candidates running for office. Scholars writing on this topic are broadly divided into two opposing groups: those who believe that higher salaries could lower the quality of politicians, and those who believe that higher salaries could raise the quality of politicians. Takalo and Poutvaara (2004) contend that the best way to prevent low-quality potential candidates from running for office is to guarantee that campaigns are appropriately expensive, and the salaries of politicians are appropriately low. Therefore, there will be little reward for substandard individuals becoming politicians. High quality individuals would be likely to win the election and gain achievements while in office, and so they would still be likely to run. With that said, Takalo and Poutvaara (2004) caution that the salaries of politicians should not be so low that high-quality candidates are not motivated to run for office, they should just be low enough that low-quality candidates would not be willing to pay a high campaign cost in order to gain that salary. It should be noted that this particular paper is focused on a municipal government, which has relatively low campaign costs compared to higher levels of politics.

Similarly, Messner and Polborn (2004) argue that raising the salary of an elected position from a low wage to a reasonably high wage would lead to numerous bad candidates running for that position. Having a high number of people running for that position, even if they are not the best people for the job, could lead to high quality candidates deciding they do not need to run. However, Messner and Polborn also argue that if the salary for that position is raised high enough, it could lead to the good candidates wanting to run for the position again. Additionally,

Mattozzi and Merlo's (2008) model finds that raising politicians' incomes leads to inferior politicians and also leads to politicians staying in office for a long period of time. Yet, the authors also state that for people who enter politics with the intention of staying until retirement (as opposed to people who do not see their time in office as a career-long position), raising the income of politicians can either better or worsen the caliber of their careers.

Therefore, while there are authors who believe that raising the salaries of politicians can lower the quality of politicians, many of these authors believe that only happens in specific scenarios. Takalo and Poutvaara (2004) believe it depends on campaign costs. Messner and Polborn (2004) argue that once the salary hits a high enough level, good candidates will be inspired to run again, and Mattozzi and Merlo (2008) believe a higher salary has no effect on the quality of career politicians. Even with those who argue that raising salaries can lead to negative outcomes, there is still recognition that there can be some positive (or at least neutral) outcomes as well.

Conversely, there are some scholars who argue that raising the incomes of politicians will lead to higher quality politicians. For example, a highly cited study by Caselli and Morelli (2004), argues that low salaries prevent good candidates from entering politics, and therefore low quality candidates win elections. Furthermore, Besley (2004) contends that American governors with higher salaries are more in sync with their constituents than governors with lower salaries. Governors who could be receiving significantly more money in the private sector are less invested in re-election, and therefore are less likely to be concerned with how happy their constituents will be with their choices. Finally, there is a third article that does not appear to fit into either camp of scholars. Hoffman and Lyons (2013) argue that increased income would not lead to politicians doing better work in the United States. The authors contend that politicians

with high salaries do not spend more time passing laws or voting in the legislature than politicians with lower salaries, although they do spend a higher amount of time trying to raise money and working with citizens. Thus, they believe salary does not affect the quality of politicians.

The previously discussed literature about how the quality of politicians can be affected by their salaries contains some interesting views but is not focused specifically on municipal politics. This is not surprising, as there is less academic literature on municipal politics compared to higher levels of politics in general. An exception to this general lack of research is an article by Schobel (2014) that is specifically focused on municipal council remuneration in Canada. Schobel's research is focused on the remuneration process itself, and ultimately suggests a salary evaluation procedure comprised of four steps. The first step is creating a private citizen remuneration committee. The second step is evaluating the salaries of councillors by comparing them to the salaries of councillors in similar municipalities, determining how much time councillors spend working per week in comparison to a 40-hour work week, and comparing the amount of work they do to jobs in the most recent census. The third step is bringing their findings to council and suggesting that all councillors receive the same salaries. It appears that his research has been adopted by the federal government as he recommended that councillors do not receive the one-third income tax allowance. Finally, the fourth step is council's acceptance of the suggested salary (Schobel, 2014). This article is helpful in providing an outline for council remuneration committees to follow, but it does not determine the appropriate salary for councillors in one specific municipality.

Beyond Schobel's article, most of the research done on council remuneration in Canada is not found in scholarly journals. Some important information can still be found on the topic from

these sources. One of these sources is the Association of Managers, Clerks & Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO), which surveyed 257 municipalities in August 2017. The survey results were released in a report, which largely focused on the salaries Ontario councillors are currently making, as opposed to investigating whether or not the councillors were being paid an appropriate salary. However, this report does state that councillors are expected to do more work today than they were expected to do in the past, partially because they are likely to be members of more committees and groups than councillors of previous eras, and partially because councillors can often be reached by constituents at all times due to the rise of social media and electronic devices that allow for greater communication. This has led to councillors feeling as though they are always working, even though they are rarely paid a high salary, and in some cases receive no salaries at all (AMCTO, 2018).

Similar to the AMCTO report, the Rural Institute of Ontario (ROI) carried out a survey of 606 councillors and heads of council in 2016 as part of a profile of municipal councillors in Ontario. While this profile does not determine if the incomes that Ontario's councillors receive are appropriate, it does mention that young people have difficulties running for municipal council because of the low salaries that many councillors achieve. According to this report, young people often need to focus on making the most income possible as they are likely to have dependents and are typically in the peak of their careers (Deska, 2016). Thus, according to the AMCTO many councillors are underpaid, and according to the ROI, the low pay of councillors is an obstacle for many young people to run for municipal council. Both reports show that there are important reasons for municipalities to consider raising the salaries of their councillors.

However, raising the salaries of politicians may be an unpopular move with the public, and that is an important factor that municipalities are likely to consider. The final section of this

literature review will look into research that has been conducted on the unpopularity of politicians. For example, Corbett (2015) outlined the two main explanations scholars use to explain this lack of popularity. First, there is the ‘gap’ idea: politicians do not act in a way that the public thinks they should act. This is either because the public does not understand and properly involve itself in politics, and therefore the political system does not work to its full potential, or because politicians do not act in the high-quality manner that was common with politicians of the past.

The second idea is the ‘trap’ view: politicians try to behave in a way that will impress the public, but this is made difficult by the public’s conflicting desires. There are different types of conflicting desires, including citizens that want relatable politicians that are also of a higher quality than the people they represent; as well as politicians that stick firmly to their beliefs, but also cooperate with opponents in order to accomplish goals (Corbett, Someone has to do it: Towards a Practical Sense of Politicians, 2015). Corbett does have several other articles on the topic of politicians’ popularity. In another article, he mentions that politicians are framed as irresponsible leeches who take advantage of taxpayer money and are imbedded in an untrustworthy system, often being vilified for their professions (Corbett, 2016).

In 2018, Corbett co-authored an article that found people wanted politicians that acted in a highly professional manner, but also did not want politicians to be paid like professionals and desired politicians to be political outsiders. Interestingly, the people interviewed for this article were civil servants, not members of the general public (Fawcett & Corbett, 2018). While that explanation seems to match the ‘trap’ view of politics mentioned in Corbett’s 2015 articles, there are articles written by other authors that also provide potential explanations for why politicians are so unpopular. According to Wright (2013), politicians are unpopular because the public views

them as distant from the people they represent and do not take the implications of their job seriously. Wright argues that the public is at least partially correct in this view, and that politicians must transform the way they act, and there must be more variety in people who become politicians.

Overall, academic literature regarding the payment of politicians contains broadly opposing views, although even those authors that argue a higher salary could lead to poor politicians often limit their arguments to specific scenarios. This research is not focused on municipal politicians. AMCTO (2018) has stated that councillors feel they do not get paid an adequate salary for the amount of work they do, and an ROI report by Deska (2016) shows that councillors believe the low salaries they receive prevent young people from running for office. Furthermore, there are academic articles that highlight several reasons why the public does not like politicians. Politicians' unpopularity could make it difficult for councillors to ask for higher incomes, even if there is a credible remuneration process, like the process suggested by Schobel (2014), in place. On a related note, there is the question of who runs for office and who gets elected to municipal councils.

Throughout Canadian history, politics has been prohibitive towards working class people, particularly those who do not own property. Property ownership was considered a requirement for voters in most Canadian provinces until the early 20th century (Elections Canada, 2007). Today, it is not necessary for Canadian citizens to own property in order to vote in elections. Nonetheless, as this paper will later discuss, the median age for municipal councillors in Ontario is 60 years old (Deska, 2016). According to the 2016 census, Canadians between the ages of 55 and 64 are the most likely to own homes (Statistics Canada, 2017). Clearly, property owners are still highly likely to be represented on municipal councils in Canada.

Yet, municipal governments have powers that far exceed property-related issues. In Ontario, municipal government jurisdiction includes public transit, child care, social housing, and land use planning (Government of Ontario, 2018). Therefore, municipal councils play a large part in many aspects of their community, but councillors in Ontario tend to be older than the average Ontarian. Also, it is easier for retired individuals to be municipal councillors than young people, particularly young people facing financial difficulties (Deska, 2016). In order for councils to fairly make decisions for the communities they serve, they must be representative all aspects of those communities. It has been many years since wealth and property ownership was the defining feature of voting rights in Canada, and all levels of politics, including municipal, must now embody the diversity of Canadians.

The articles outlined in this literature review show not only the current state of academic research on council remuneration, but also shows how citizens' views of politicians can complicate this process. It is important to remember that many people do not view politicians with respect, and this will likely affect their views on how much money politicians should be paid. The rest of this paper will take an approach that is not common in the literature, determining if the councillors in one municipality are making an appropriate salary. By finding an appropriate wage for Windsor's councillors, based on the amount of work and responsibility those councillors have, residents of Windsor could potentially have a clearer idea of the level of effort council work entails, as well as a transparent view of why councillors receive the salary they are awarded.

It is very difficult to determine how much any job deserves to be paid, and this includes municipal councillors in Windsor. Nearly a century ago, Sharp (1920) wrote about the debate over what constitutes a fair wage. He pointed out that some view a fair wage as being determined

by the amount of effort an employee puts into a job, while others view a fair wage as being determined by the outcomes an employee achieves, and an overarching dispute about whether economic fairness stems from social welfare. The disagreements that Sharp discussed are still occurring today. Baker (2018) recently pointed out that while academics debate if raising a minimum wage will ultimately benefit or hurt the working class, we should question if the laws of economics should really be determining how society determines how much a job is worth.

Disagreement over deciding the salary of a specific job is common and is evident when unions and corporations cannot come to agreements that satisfy both parties. In Windsor, nearly 2000 casino workers went on strike for two months in 2018, and the head of the union representing the workers described the interactions between the union and casino as likely the most difficult negotiations in which he had ever been a part (Chen & Wilhelm, 2018). Clearly, determining appropriate salaries is a contentious issue, both in Windsor and around the world. Despite this difficulty, it is important to try and ensure workers are paid a suitable wage for the job they perform, and that is the ultimate goal of this paper.

COUNCIL REMUNERATION IN ONTARIO

As of November 2018, city councillors in Windsor, Ontario are paid a base salary of \$28 770 and an additional \$10 877 for committee work for a total of \$39 647 per year (Cross, 2018). In 2018, the Council Compensation Review Committee recommended a salary increase of \$6 100 to compensate for the impending loss of the one-third income tax break. This will be the first salary increase for Windsor's councillors since 2005 (Council Compensation Review Committee, 2018). It is difficult to put this in perspective by comparing the salaries of Windsor's councillors to the salaries of other municipal councillors in Ontario for a number of reasons.

First, some Ontario councillors are paid a ‘salary’ whereas others are paid an ‘honorarium’. Both refer to the income paid to councillors, but the AMCTO finds the average salary and honorarium awarded to councillors by the population of their respective municipalities separately and does not state a provincial average for compensation awarded to councillors. However, by first finding the average income for each size category of municipality, it is possible to calculate an overall average income for municipal councillors in Ontario. Based on the average salaries and honorariums for municipal councillors provided in the AMCTO’s 2018 Municipal Council Compensation Report, the average income (not including benefits) for a councillor in Ontario is approximately \$27 510. This average income is very close to Windsor councillors’ base salaries of \$28 770 (Cross, 2018). However, Windsor has a much higher population than many municipalities in Ontario. Only 12% of municipalities that took part in the 2018 AMCTO survey had a population of 50 000 people or higher, whereas 60% of municipalities had populations of less than 10 000 people. Therefore, Windsor’s councillors are currently making an average salary, but Windsor’s population is higher than average for Ontario municipalities.

For municipalities with populations between 100 000 and 249 999, the category of municipalities which includes Windsor, the average income (not including benefits) given to councillors is \$34 668 (AMCTO, 2018). Windsor’s councillors are making a lower than average base salary for a municipality of its size. A 2017 AMO Annual Council Remuneration Survey reveals the base salaries for municipalities across Ontario in 2017. Once again, this does not include additional income awarded to councillors for attending meetings, and some municipalities have decided to raise councillors’ salaries since this information was published. However, the base salaries of Windsor’s councillors can still be compared to the base salaries of councillors from comparable municipalities for a general sense of where Windsor falls in relation

to other municipalities in Ontario. Table 1 shows the population size and councillor salaries for some municipalities in the AMO survey that are comparable to Windsor. Like Windsor, all of these municipalities have ward structures, as opposed to councillors representing the municipality at large.

Table 1: Base Salaries of Municipalities in Ontario

Municipality	Population	Base Salary (2017)
Brantford	97 496	\$28 614
Burlington	183 314	\$69 838
Chatham-Kent	101 647	\$26 900
Guelph	131 794	\$34 913.06
Kitchener	233 222	\$40 545
London	383 822	\$33 465
Markham	328 966	\$75 449
Ottawa	934 243	\$99 685.04
Windsor	217 188	\$28 110

Source: AMO Annual Council Remuneration Survey (2018)

As Table 1 demonstrates, there are several municipalities in Ontario where councillors are paid higher base salaries than councillors in Windsor are paid, despite the populations of those municipalities being smaller than Windsor's population. The two municipalities with the closest base salaries to Windsor, Brantford and Chatham-Kent, both have smaller populations than Windsor. However, as this does not show the additional money that some municipal councillors are awarded for committee meetings, it does not give the full picture. Nevertheless, it is important to see where Windsor stands in regard to council remuneration in the province before one looks deeper into council remuneration in Windsor.

IMPORTANCE OF ANALYZING COUNCIL REMUNERATION

The topic of this paper is important for a number of reasons. First, as mentioned in the introduction, Canadian councillors are about to lose the one-third income tax free portion of their

income. Therefore, the salaries of councillors across the country are about to be impacted by the federal government, and it makes sense to analyze the payment of councillors as a result of this change. Second, politicians are facing unpopularity in the general public for a number of potential reasons. This unpopularity has become very important for Ontario's councillors in 2018 due to Premier Ford's interaction with Toronto's city council.

Upon being elected, Ontario Premier Doug Ford announced that he wanted to cut the size of Toronto's city council from 47 to 25 councillors. He claimed this would both make the City of Toronto more efficient and save taxpayers \$25 million (Breen, 2018). Whether cutting nearly half of Toronto's city councillors would actually make the City more efficient, and whether efficiency and cost savings were Ford's actual goals in changing Toronto's city council, can both be debated. However, it is important to note that Ford believed his claims of Toronto's council being inefficient and too expensive would be popular enough with the public that he was not only willing to try and change the make up of the council shortly before a municipal election, but that he was willing to invoke the Notwithstanding Clause if necessary.

Thus, in Ontario the Premier has made it clear that cutting councillors would save money and improve the city of Toronto. Meanwhile, the President of the United States also takes issue with the political process, as is shown by his "Drain the Swamp" campaign slogan which signalled that America's political system was corrupt and in need of a large change (Alter & Teague Beckwith, 2017). Clearly, there is an atmosphere of disapproval surrounding politics at this time, and this can affect council remuneration. If the public does not believe that politicians have an important job, or does not believe that politicians work hard, they likely will not believe that politicians deserve higher salaries.

This paper analyzes council remuneration in Windsor, focusing on the salaries that councillors deserve to be paid based on the job they do and the responsibility they have, not based on the salaries that Windsor residents want their councillors to receive. This distinction is important because the unpopularity of politicians may result in municipal councillors not being awarded significant salary increases when council remuneration committees, or other people involved in municipal remuneration processes, take public opinion into account. By analyzing the level of work and responsibility that being a city councillor involves, this paper hopes to find an appropriate salary for Windsor's councillors that can provide new knowledge for Windsor residents, and combat the general dislike for politicians that exists today.

Furthermore, the ROI councillor profile cited in the literature review mentioned that the low pay municipal councillors receive is an obstacle for young people who might consider running for local politics, as they often have to focus on making as much money as possible in the height of their working years (Deska, 2016). It also needs to be noted that local politicians in Ontario have a median age of 60 years old, whereas the median age in the province is 40 years old. Moreover, less than 10% of Ontario's local politicians are between the ages of 18 and 40, but approximately 70% are between the ages of 50 and 70 (Deska, 2016). This reveals that the age of councillors in Ontario is not representative of the people of the province. This is also a problem that Windsor's council faces, according to the councillors themselves. When the Council Compensation Review Committee interviewed Windsor's councillors about their jobs, they revealed that people who want to run for council would either need to have a flexible work schedule or be retired (Council Compensation Review Committee, 2018).

Age is clearly a factor in determining who is likely to run for municipal council in Ontario and the necessity for a flexible work schedule can also prevent many people from being able to

run for council. If the hours required to work as a councillor in Windsor make it difficult to work another job, it makes sense that Windsor councillors receive salaries that ensure they do not need to rely on other incomes. Removing the need to rely on more than one income could potentially allow for people of different socioeconomic backgrounds to consider running for council, a choice that would currently be very difficult for people who do not have positions that allow them to organize their schedules around time spent at committee and council meetings. Thus, determining an appropriate salary for councillors could allow Windsor's city council to become more diverse, and therefore representative of the city itself. Between the timing of the loss of their income tax break, a general belief that politicians do not do valuable work, and the possibility of salary impacting the representativeness of municipal councils, it is important to analyze current council remuneration in Canada.

This paper examines how much Windsor's city councillors deserve to be paid. It would likely not be possible to come up with an exact salary for councillors without directly interviewing them or watching them work, as without personally knowing exactly how much time each councillor spends working and the level of responsibility they have, it will be difficult to come up with a specific dollar amount. However, there is information available that does reveal a more general level of work and responsibility. Therefore, this paper will attempt to find if councillors deserve to be paid a salary that is higher than the roughly \$40 000 they are currently paid per year (\$28 770 in base salary, and \$10 877 for sitting on committees), or if they do not deserve to be paid a higher salary (Cross, 2018). This paper will argue that, based on the amount of time spent working and the level of responsibility councillors have, Windsor's city councillors deserve a higher salary.

METHODOLOGY

There are three different methods that will be used to determine if Windsor's councillors should be making a higher salary than they are currently being paid. First, the councillors' salaries will be compared to the average part-time salary in Ontario, as well as the average salary of similar part-time jobs in Ontario, to ascertain if Windsor's councillors are being paid an appropriate wage for a part-time job. The 2016 census will be used to show the average part-time salaries in Ontario. The census determines a part-time job as a position that typically requires an employee to work less than 30 hours per week (Statistics Canada, 2018). Second, the amount of work that councillors perform will be demonstrated. There are two broad types of work that councillors have to do: attending meetings at city hall or other municipal locations to make decisions for the City, and working with residents and representing the city outside of meetings. The amount of time that councillors spend in meetings can be measured, and so an approximate average of the amount of time each councillor was expected to spend in meetings in 2015, 2016, and 2017 will be displayed.

The amount of time councillors were expected to spend in meetings, instead of the exact time each councillor spent in meetings, is being measured because some councillors may miss meetings on occasion, or may leave a meeting and then return to it later. The length of every council meeting, standing committee meeting, and advisory committee meeting will be calculated using the times of the beginning and end of each meeting in the meeting minutes, and which will show the approximate amount of time each councillor has committed to spending in those meetings. Meetings in 2018 are not included in these calculations because the year is not over, and so there are still meetings that have yet to take place. Also, there are meetings that have already occurred, but which have not had their minutes made publicly available, and so the length

of the meetings cannot be found. Only an approximate average of the time councillors are expected to spend in meetings can be found because there are two meetings which did not have their adjournment time included in their meeting minutes (a Windsor Licensing Commission meeting in 2015 and a Housing Advisory Committee meeting in 2017). Due to their lack of adjournment times, it is not possible to measure the length of those two meetings, and they must be excluded from the calculations.

Finally, the salaries of Windsor's councillors will be compared to the salaries of boards of directors in the private sector. This comparison will be made because boards of directors are responsible for governing organizations, serving their stakeholders, and making sure the organization is functioning to the best of its ability by supervising policy and future plans in meetings (Brefi Group, 2018). This seems to be the most comparable private sector job to municipal councillors. The average Canadian board of director salary in 2014 will be used, as it is the most recent average Canadian salary from a reputable source. However, a 2017 survey of boards of directors' salaries from around the world will also be used for comparison.

FINDINGS

Appropriate Part-Time Salary

Being a councillor in Windsor is considered a part-time job. Whether or not councillors work a schedule that is consistent with a part-time job will be discussed later. Now, it will be determined if Windsor's councillors are being paid a salary that is appropriate for a part-time job in Ontario. As previously stated, Windsor's councillors receive a base salary of \$28 770 and committee compensation of \$10 877 for a combined total of \$39 647 (Cross, 2018). According to the 2016 census, the average salary for all Ontarians who worked part-time jobs for the full year was \$21 772 (Statistics Canada, 2018). This is approximately \$7000 less than Windsor

councillors' base salaries, and \$17 875 less than the total salary Windsor's councillors receive. Based on this comparison, it would seem as though councillors in Windsor are paid a salary that is considerably higher than other part-time workers in Ontario.

However, the census also reveals the average salaries for more specific part-time occupations in Ontario. The occupation in the census that seems to be the most similar to working as a councillor is working as a legislator or senior manager. According to the National Occupational Classification, this broad category of jobs can include mayors, school board trustees, First Nations Band Chiefs, Human Rights Commission chairpersons, and county clerks (Government of Canada, 2018). Ontarians who work year-round as part-time legislators and senior managers receive an average salary of \$86 873 (Statistics Canada, 2018). Therefore, while Windsor councillors are paid more than the average salary for all part-time workers in Ontario, they are paid less than half the average salary for part-time workers in comparable occupations. This is significant because it shows that even if working as a councillor is considered to be a part-time job, that does not necessarily mean that it is appropriate for them to be paid low salaries. Working as a councillor, even if it is officially considered to be a part-time position, is still a job that has a lot of responsibility. Similar positions in Ontario come with compensation that reflects this responsibility and the power that comes with it.

Weekly Schedule

One of the important steps in determining if Windsor's councillors deserve a higher salary is establishing the number of hours they work. There are two broad parts of councillors' jobs: time spent in city council and committee meetings, and time spent working with constituents and representing the city at public events outside of meetings. The first part of councillors' jobs can be measured by calculating the length of each city council and committee meeting from the call

to order to adjournment time listed in the meeting minutes. As there are still meetings to be held in 2018, it is not possible to find the average time councillors spent in meetings for this year. However, it is possible to find this average for 2015, 2016, and 2017. Measuring the amount of time councillors spend in meetings is important, because attending meetings is a significant part of a councillor's job. However, showing the time councillors spend in meetings is not reflective of the total amount of time councillors spend working. It does not, for example, allocate any time for preparing for meetings.

The second part of a councillor's job, time spent working outside of meetings, is much more difficult to measure. The most ideal way to find this information would be to personally interview each councillor about their weekly schedules. However, this was not a possibility due to the time restraints presented for this paper. Fortunately, Windsor's Council Compensation Review Committee interviewed city councillors about their jobs in June 2018. The main findings of these interviews were made public in the minutes of the June 26 committee meeting. These interviews revealed that, according to councillors, they work significantly more than the 24 hours per week typically associated with a part-time job. In fact, councillors claim that they work nearly 40 hours per week (Council Compensation Review Committee, 2018).

This is a different schedule than most Windsor residents expect Windsor councillors to work. According to a City Council Compensation Survey conducted by the City of Windsor, approximately 29% of respondents believe that Windsor's councillors work 10 to 20 hours per week, and approximately 37% of respondents believe that councillors work 20 to 30 hours per week (City of Windsor, 2018). In the same survey, roughly 62% of respondents said they believed a part-time job should entail 20 to 30 hours of work per week, and 50% of respondents did not believe that councillors should receive a salary raise in 2019 (City of Windsor, 2018).

Clearly, while approximately half of the people who took the Council Compensation Survey did not believe that councillors deserved a raise, more than half of the respondents were underestimating the number of hours that councillors work per week. It is also notable that in spite of the unpopularity that politicians face in general, approximately 49% of respondents were in favour of an increase in councillors' salaries (City of Windsor, 2018).

While the Council Compensation Review Committee's June 26 meeting minutes did reveal that councillors claim to work nearly 40 hours per week, the committee did not distinguish between the work schedules of individual councillors. Each of Windsor's 10 city councillors likely have different work schedules, with some councillors working more than others. Nonetheless, it is important to note that if most councillors work nearly 40 hours per week, they are working schedules that are closer to full-time jobs than part-time jobs. According to the 2016 census, the average wage for all year-long full-time positions in Ontario is \$69 759, and the average wage for senior managers and legislators who work year-long full-time positions in Ontario is \$211 482 (Statistics Canada, 2018). The information found in the Council Compensation Review Committee's meeting minutes is not perfect, but it is the best information publicly available. Knowing both this information and the amount of time councillors are expected to spend in meetings makes it possible to gain an idea of the councillors' weekly schedules.

City council meetings take place twice per month and each of the four standing committees meet once per month (City of Windsor, 2018). However, there is not a set schedule for how often advisory committees should meet. Some advisory committees meet far more frequently than others. Furthermore, meetings can vary significantly in length. For example, most city council meetings are between two and four hours in length. However, some meetings can be

far longer than others, particularly budget meetings. The budget meeting held on January 23, 2018 was over 11 hours in length (City of Windsor, 2018). Due to these differences in meeting schedules and meeting length, a councillor's work schedule varies on a weekly basis.

Nonetheless, hours per week is the method typically used to measure work schedules. It is possible to find the average time councillors spend in meetings on a weekly basis by dividing the annual number of hours councillors spend in meetings by 52. This is an interesting approach to see how many of the close to 40 hours councillors work per week is spent in meetings compared to average number of hours they spend working away from city hall per week. Table 2, below, will outline the annual number of hours councillors spent in committee and council meetings in 2015, 2016, and 2017 (councillors who were in at least one of the meetings without a listed adjournment time are marked with an asterix, as their total number of hours are slightly lower in the table than they should be). This does not include hours spent working on constituency issues outside of meetings. This table reveals that councillors do not spend many hours per year in meetings.

However, Tables 3, 4, and 5 show the average number of hours per week councillors spend in committee meetings, council meetings, and working outside of meetings in 2015, 2016, and 2017. As revealed by the Council Compensation Review Committee in its meeting minutes from June 26, 2018, councillors claim to work nearly 40 hours per week. Based off this number and the calculated amount of time that councillors spend in meetings, Tables 3, 4, and 5 reveal that the vast amount of hours councillors spend per year is outside of meetings, working on constituency issues and preparing for meetings. Note that councillors are not identified by name in the table and charts, as some councillors spend more time in meetings than others and the

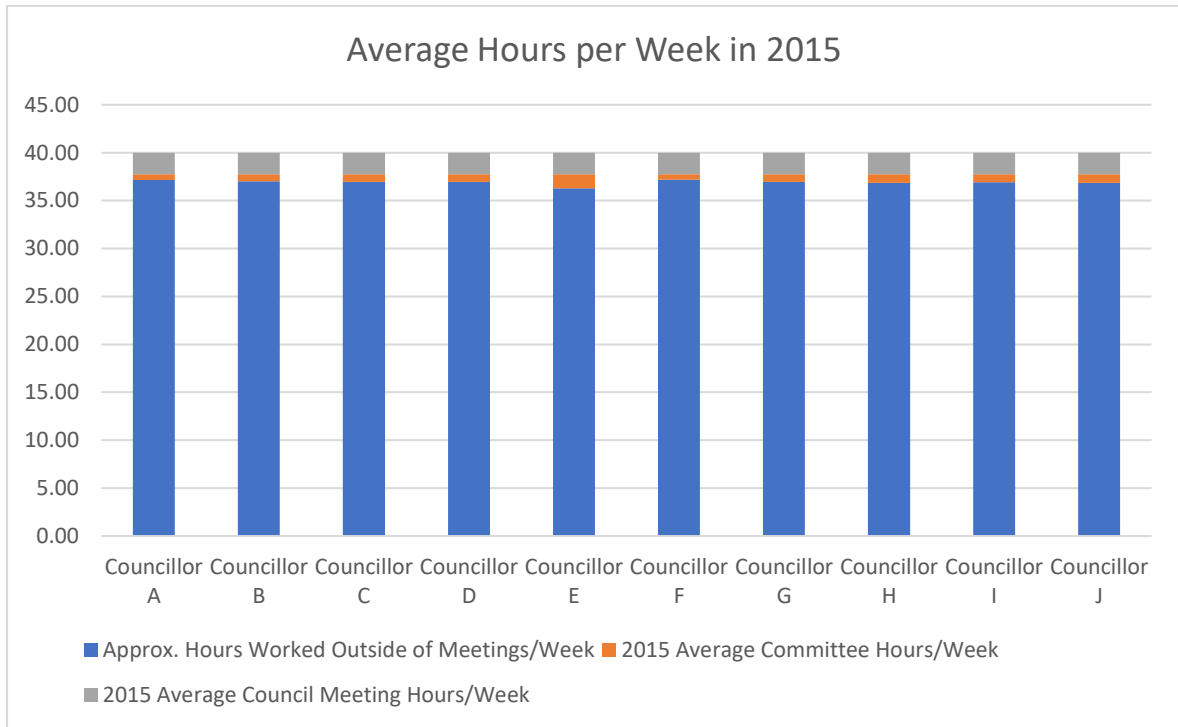
purpose of this paper is not to judge councillors based on who does the most committee work. As will be discussed later, it is likely easier for some councillors to join committees than others.

Table 2: Annual Hours by Councillors in Meetings

Councillor	2015 Committee Hours	2015 Council Hours	2016 Committee Hours	2016 Council Hours	2017 Committee Hours	2017 Council Hours
Councillor A	31 hrs 15 min	116 hrs 41 min	40 hrs 38 min	71 hrs 51 min	27 hrs 6 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor B	*37 hrs 38 min	116 hrs 41 min	29 hrs 32 min	71 hrs 51 min	*22 hrs 10 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor C	41 hrs 35 min	116 hrs 41 min	31 hrs 47 min	71 hrs 51 min	22 hrs 13 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor D	41 hrs 24 min	116 hrs 41 min	51 hrs 26 min	71 hrs 51 min	46 hrs 27 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor E	*76 hrs 10 min	116 hrs 41 min	61 hrs 32 min	71 hrs 51 min	58 hrs 37 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor F	29 hrs 35 min	116 hrs 41 min	24 hrs 34 min	71 hrs 51 min	13 hrs 10 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor G	41 hrs 5 min	116 hrs 41 min	34 hrs 11 min	71 hrs 51 min	36 hrs 50 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor H	46 hrs 39 min	116 hrs 41 min	51 hrs 49 min	71 hrs 51 min	47 hrs 19 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor I	42 hrs 51 min	116 hrs 41 min	50 hrs 57 min	71 hrs 51 min	44 hrs 14 min	97 hrs 26 min
Councillor J	47 hrs min 52 min	116 hrs 41 min	55 hrs 44 min	71 hrs 51 min	36 hrs 49 min	97 hrs 26 min
Average Hours per Year	43 hrs 36 min	116 hrs 41 min	43 hrs 13 min	71 hrs 51 min	35 hrs 30 min	97 hrs 26 min
Total Hours per Year	160 hrs 17 min		115 hrs 4 min		132 hrs 56 min	

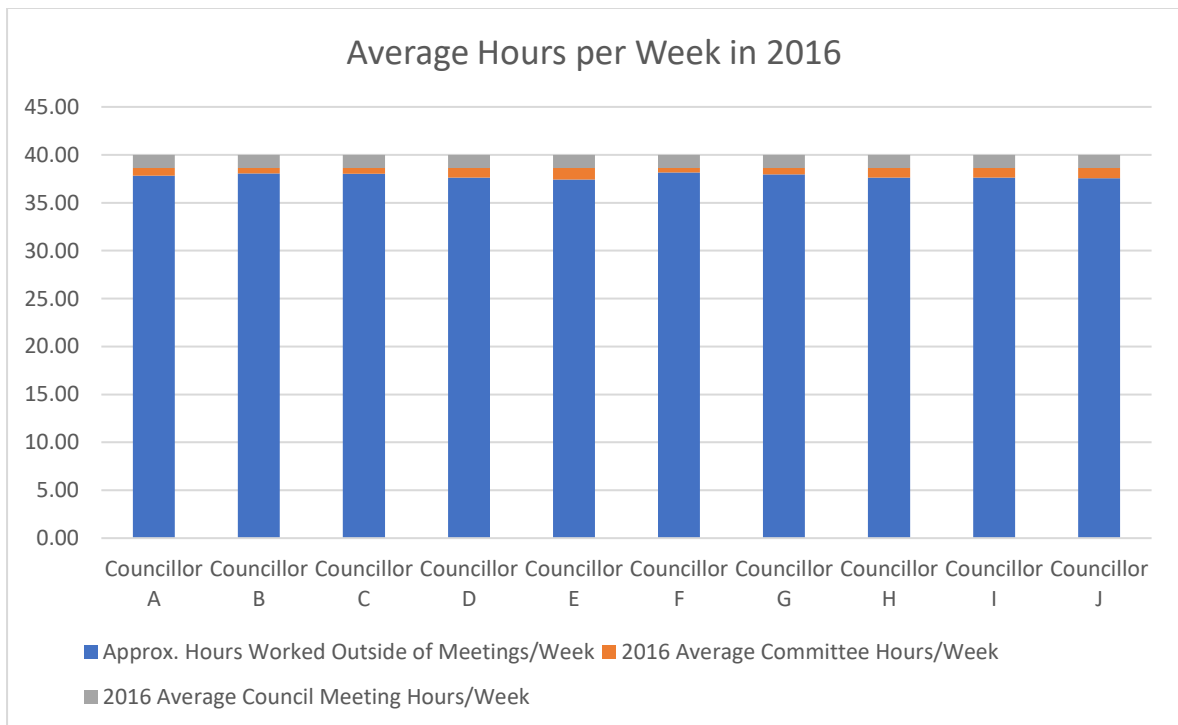
Sources: City of Windsor Council Minutes, City of Windsor Committees of Council Minutes

Table 3



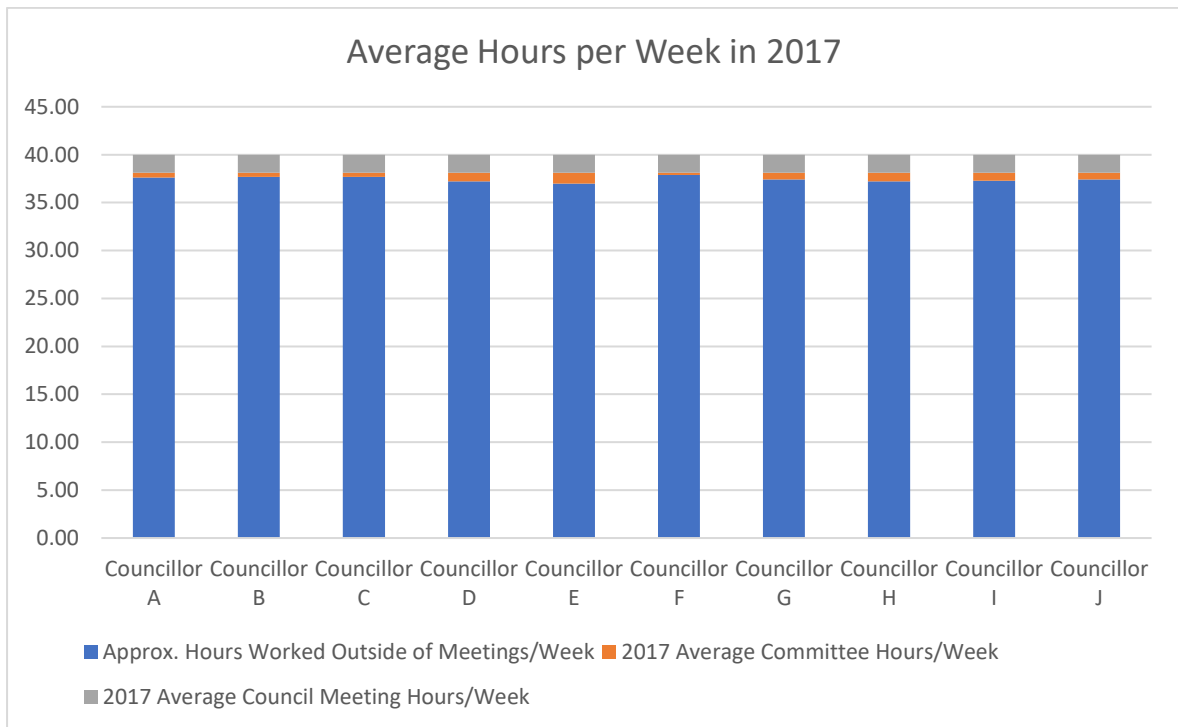
Sources: City of Windsor Council Minutes, City of Windsor Committees of Council Minutes, Council Compensation Review Committee (2018)

Table 4



Sources: City of Windsor Council Minutes, City of Windsor Committees of Council Minutes, Council Compensation Review Committee (2018)

Table 5



Sources: City of Windsor Council Minutes, City of Windsor Committees of Council Minutes, Council Compensation Review Committee (2018)

Although, as previously stated, these tables are not reflective of councillors’ work schedules for every week (some meetings are longer than others, some weeks may have multiple meetings while others may have none) they do reveal a general idea of where councillors spend the majority of their time. The vast majority of councillors’ time is spent working outside of meetings. This is not surprising. As stated in the literature review, AMCTO (2018) states that councillors are now expected to be accessible nearly around the clock. The tables also show that most councillors (with the exception of Councillor E in all three years, and Councillor H in 2016) spend less than an average of one hour per week in committee meetings. This may appear surprising at first glance, as councillors are paid \$10 877 for their committee work (Cross, 2018). While nearly \$11 000 may seem like a lot of money for less than 52 hours of work per year, it is important to remember two points. First, just because councillors may not spend a lot of time in committees does not mean they do not accomplish important work there. Second, committee

meetings may be short, but they likely still have a big impact on councillors' days, as councillors need to prepare for the meetings, and need to spend time during the typical workday at City Hall.

Most committee meetings take place at four main times: 9:00 am, 9:30 am, 4:00 pm, or 4:30 pm. This would make it difficult for councillors to have a full-time job apart from their council work. This also applies to council meetings, albeit to a lesser extent. Most council meetings take place at 6:00 pm, which would make them difficult to attend for people who do not have jobs that take place during the traditional work day of 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Councillors have made this clear in the Council Compensation Review Committee interviews (2018), where they stated that in order to be a councillor in Windsor one either needs to have a flexible work schedule or be a retiree. This matches the ROI Municipal Councillor profile previously cited, which argued that the low salaries municipal councillors are paid makes it difficult for young people to run for council, and states that 70% of Ontario's municipal councillors are between the ages of 50 and 70 (Deska, 2016). Presumably, many of those councillors between the ages of 50 and 70 have either established themselves in their jobs to the point they can organize their schedules around council work or are retired altogether.

For example, the average age of a city councillor in Windsor is approximately 59 years old in November 2018, based on the councillors ages as given by The Windsor Star (McArthur, 2018; Cross, 2017) and CBC News (Pinto & Roberts, 2018). The CBC News article also includes councillors' occupations in addition to council work. Councillor Holt is a tool & die maker at Ford Motor Company and a partner at a brewing company. Councillor Kusmierczyk is the director of partnerships at WEtech alliance, and Councillor Francis is the director of programs and development for the multicultural Council of Windsor & Essex County. Three of the councillors listed being a councillor as their sole occupations (Pinto & Roberts, 2018).

In summary, according to the Council Compensation Review Committee (2018) councillors claim to work nearly 40 hours per week, making their council work comparable to a full-time job. Senior managers and legislators who work full-time in Ontario make an average salary of \$211 482, more than five times the salary that Windsor councillors are currently being paid. According to calculations of meeting lengths from council and committee meeting minutes, most councillors work less than an average of one hour per week in committee meetings and between approximately one and half to two and a half hours per week in council meetings. The times that many committee meetings, and council meetings to a lesser extent, are held make it very difficult for most working people to become city councillors.

Comparison to the Private Sector

Finally, comparing the salaries of Windsor's councillors to the salaries of comparable positions in the private sector can reveal how occupations of similar work and responsibility are compensated. As was explained in the methodology section of this paper, serving on a board of directors is comparable to serving on Windsor's city council. According to the Conference Board of Canada (2016), the average salaries for members and chairs of boards of directors for Canadian public corporations was \$136 506 in 2014. While this is a less than the average income for full-time year-round senior managers and legislators in Ontario, it is still more than three times more than Windsor's councillors are currently being paid (Statistics Canada, 2018). A more recent average salary for boards of directors can be found in Loadstone Global's 2017-2018 Private Company Board Compensation Survey. The survey, which was conducted in 2017, included 386 companies from 43 countries. The average revenue of the companies included in the survey was \$321 million (Loadstone Global, 2017). For comparison, Windsor's 2017 revenue budget was \$793 306 313 (City of Windsor, 2017). Therefore, Windsor's councillors are

responsible for more than double the revenue budget than the average board member from Loadstone Global's survey.

The average annual retainer for board members included in the survey was \$29 285 (Loadstone Global, 2017). This is very close to the \$28 770 base salary currently paid to Windsor's councillors (Cross, 2018). Even though Windsor's revenue budget is significantly higher than the average revenue for the companies in the Loadstone Global survey, at first glance it may seem as though the similarities in base salary and retainer means that Windsor's councillors are largely on par with boards of directors around the world. However, the annual retainer is only a portion of the board members' average income.

According to Loadstone Global (2017), members of boards of directors are paid an average of \$2 187 per meeting for an average of four and a half meetings per year. While Windsor's councillors are awarded nearly \$11 000 per year for their committee work, this is considerably less than they would make if they were paid approximately \$2000 per meeting (Cross, 2018). Even if attending city council meetings were to be included as the 'base salary' part of a councillor's job, five councillors are members of two standing committees and the other five councillors are members of three standing committees. Each standing committee is required to meet once per month (City of Windsor, 2018). All councillors currently receive the same amount of money regardless of how many committees on which they sit, so even if that idea was maintained and councillors were only awarded \$2000 per meeting for two standing committees, they would still be paid \$48 000 for standing committee meetings alone. That is not taking account of the numerous advisory committee meetings that councillors have each year. Although some advisory committees do meet more often than others, every councillor is on at least two advisory committees, so receiving compensation for meetings that is comparable to the average

compensation that boards of directors receive would result in Windsor's councillors being paid significantly more money than they are currently making.

Overall, this paper has found that Windsor's councillors are making considerably less than comparable part-time workers in Ontario, according to the most recent census (Statistics Canada, 2018). Councillors' claim that they work nearly 40 hours per week, and that in order to do their work as councillors they either need to be retired or to have a job with a very amenable schedule (Council Compensation Review Committee, 2018). This is reinforced by the times that most advisory committee meetings are held. Even if the meetings themselves are not long, they take place during the traditional work day, which would make it difficult for many working people to become councillors.

Finally, according to the Conference Board of Canada (2016), average members of boards of directors in Canada are making considerably more money than Windsor's councillors are being paid, and according to a worldwide Loadstone Global survey (2017) the base salaries of Windsor's councillors are similar to the average annual retainer of board members for companies that have significantly less revenue than the City of Windsor had in 2017. However, while those average board members attended far fewer meetings than Windsor councillors attend, they received far more money as compensation for attending meetings. Each of these findings show that Windsor's councillors should be paid a higher salary than they currently receive, both based on the hours that they work and the responsibility that they hold. It is particularly notable that Windsor's councillors are making less than half the salaries of workers in comparable positions according to the 2016 census (for both part-time and full-time positions), the Conference Board of Canada (2016), and the Loadstone Global survey (2017). This indicates not only that

Windsor's councillors are being underpaid for their work, but that they deserve to make significantly more money than they are currently making.

CONCLUSION

Based on the empirical comparison done in this paper, Windsor's city councillors should be making a higher salary than they are currently receiving. As this paper has shown, councillors are working nearly full-time hours, attending meetings that would make it difficult for them to have a regular job outside of their council work, and are the leaders of a city that has a yearly revenue that is higher than many sizable companies. They are making less money than fellow Ontarians who work comparable part-time jobs. Furthermore, they are about to lose a portion of their already low salary due to the impending end of their income tax break. Council has accepted the Council Compensation Review Committee's recommendation of a \$6100 raise, so the end of the one-third income tax break ensures that their take home salary in 2019 will be the same as it is currently (CTV Windsor, 2018). This is certainly better than no salary increase at all. However, if councillors are underpaid currently, as this paper has shown that they are, it means they will be just as underpaid after the salary increase.

It may seem strange to argue that councillors need to be paid a higher salary without explaining what their ideal salary should be. This paper was limited due to time restraints, which prevented personal interviews with councillors to learn their individual weekly schedules from being a possibility. Nevertheless, it is the finding that councillors deserve more money that is important for a number of reasons. First, as Windsor's City Council Compensation Review survey revealed, Windsor residents underestimate the amount of work that councillors perform. In many ways this is a positive development, as long as the public learns the number of hours that councillors are actually working per week.

As mentioned earlier in the paper, politicians are unpopular with the public. It is common for people to assume that politicians do not work as much as they should, but Windsor's councillors are working nearly full-time hours for a wage that is low even for part-time workers in similar positions. At a time when politicians are facing resentment and disdain, it is an encouraging discovery that Windsor's municipal councillors are doing more work than their constituents expect of them. Councillors are performing a job that serves the public, so it is unlikely they will ever be paid the same salaries as workers in the private sector receive. Nonetheless, when municipal councillors are making less than half of comparable private sector positions, it is clearly time to reevaluate their salaries. Just because councillors work in the public sector does not mean their time and effort is not valuable.

Furthermore, it is important that councillors are given a pay raise that would allow councils the opportunity to be more representative of the communities they serve. As previously stated, Deska's (2016) ROI Municipal Councillor Profile shows that 70% of municipal councillors are between the ages of 50 and 70 years old, and that the low salaries of municipal councillors make it difficult for younger people to run for office. This is unsurprising, given that Windsor's councillors claim people either need to be retired or have a highly adjustable work schedule in order to be a councillor (Council Compensation Review Committee, 2018). If Windsor's municipal councillors were rewarded for their work with a salary that would allow them to live comfortably without needing to work an additional job, it would likely open the possibility of being a councillor to people of more ages, and potentially more economic backgrounds.

This paper does have limitations. First, it was not possible to personally interview councillors, and so the highlights of the interviews they gave to the Council Compensation

Review Committee had to be used in order to show how many hours councillors claimed to work per week. The committee did not differentiate between the schedules of councillors, even though some certainly work more than others, so only a general idea of councillors' weekly schedules could be discovered. Second, this paper only looks at council remuneration in one city. Council remuneration is an issue that municipalities across Canada are facing, particularly considering the loss of councillors' income tax breaks. While this paper has shown that councillors in Windsor deserve a raise, this may not be representative of other municipalities. Also, there is no perfect way to compare jobs across the public and private sectors, or even across different levels of government. The comparisons included in this paper (both in terms of Windsor's councillors with other part-time jobs in Ontario, and in terms of Windsor's councillors with boards of directors in Ontario) are not flawless, but they are the closest assessments possible within the scope of this paper.

In the future, research that looks into council remuneration in municipalities across the country would be beneficial. It is possible that councillors across the country deserve to be paid a higher income based on the level of work they perform and the responsibility that comes with their positions. Also, some work in the public sector is voluntary, and research on this unpaid work can reveal more information on non-financial reasons why people enter public service, as well as who is most likely to carry out this work. Finally, future research could attempt to find an exact salary that Windsor's city councillors deserve to be paid. Even if city councillors are never awarded the full salaries they deserve to be paid based on the work that they do, it could provide the public with an idea of how much work and responsibility being a municipal councillor actually entails.

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