



Administration

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MEMO

TO: County Commission
FROM: Robert W. Wilson
Date: May 25, 2023
Subject: 2024 COLA Recommendation

On Wednesday, May 31st department heads recommended a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) of 5.1% for County employees in 2024. This follows a long-standing practice of Department Heads making an initial COLA recommendation for the following year.

Typically at the May Department Head meeting the group will consider a COLA recommendation in relation to the April-to-April Consumer Price Index (CPI) figure for upper Midwest cities with populations of 500,000 or less. In the previous 18 years between 2005 and 2022:

- Department Heads have adopted this CPI figure as the COLA recommendation for the following year – and the Commission approved it as part of the final budget 14 times.
- Twice the CPI was negative and Department Heads recommended - and Commissioners approved a 0% COLA.
- Twice Department Heads recommended the CPI as a COLA – and Commissioners approved something less. Last year the CPI was 8.5%, and Commissioners approved a 4% COLA. In 2011 the CPI was 3.4%, but a change in law required the County increase NDPERS contributions by 1%. The approved COLA was 2.4%.

Commission Assistant Taylor Kaushagen has prepared a spreadsheet, included for your review, detailing the information described above. Please note the spreadsheet includes six years when a salary study occurred, as it will during this budgeting process.

At the meeting on June 5th the Commission should take action to identify a COLA percentage the Finance Office will use in preparing budget information. The COLA percentage can, at Commission direction, be updated at later points in the budgeting process.

SUGGESTED MOTION: Move to adopt a 5.1% COLA for use in developing the 2024 Cass County Budget.

Year	Reccomended by DH	COLA %	Salary Study/Other Factor
2023	8.5%, was CPI	4%	-
2022	5.1%, was CPI	5.1%	-
2021	0%, no reccomendation	0%	Salary Study 2.43%
2020	1.7%, was CPI	1.7%	-
2019	1.4%, was CPI	1.4%	Salary Study no change reccomended
2018	1.7%, was CPI	1.7%	-
2017	0.7%, was CPI	0.7%	-
2016	0%, CPI was -1.0%	0%	Salary Study 2.00%
2015	2%, was CPI	2%	
2014	1%, was CPI	1%	
2013	2.4%, was CPI	2.4%	Salary Study no change reccomended
2012	3.4%, was CPI	2.4%	NDPERS contribution increase 2%, county pay 1%
2011	3%, was CPI	3%	-
2010	0% , CPI was -1.5	0%	Salary Study 1.4%
2009	4%, was CPI	4%	-
2008	2.3%, was CPI	2.3%	-
2007	3.5%, was CPI	3.5%	Salary Study 2.1%
2006	3.25%, was CPI	3.25%	-