

ORDINANCE NO. 1166

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL AMENDING SEBASTOPOL MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 2.44, CITY COUNCIL SALARIES, TO INCREASE COMPENSATION FOR CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS TO NINE HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS (\$950.00) PER MONTH, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2027

WHEREAS, California Government Code section 36516 authorizes the legislative body of a general law city to enact an ordinance providing compensation for members of the city council, with the amount based upon the population of the city; and

WHEREAS, on June 29, 2023, the Governor signed Senate Bill 329 (SB 329), which amended Government Code section 36516 to increase the maximum monthly compensation that may be paid to City Council members in cities with populations of 35,000 or less to Nine Hundred Fifty Dollars and Zero Cents (\$950.00) per month, subject to annual adjustment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sebastopol has not adjusted compensation for members of the City Council since at least 1984 — a period of more than forty (40) years — during which time the responsibilities, time commitment, and complexity of local governance have increased substantially while compensation has remained static; and

WHEREAS, currently City Council members receive compensation of Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.00) per month, which, when adjusted for inflation, represents a significant reduction in real purchasing power over four decades; and

WHEREAS, in addition to attending regular City Council meeting, there is substantial additional time required of Council Members for special meetings, closed sessions, workshops, study sessions, review of lengthy agenda packets and supporting materials, preparation for meetings, responding to constituent communications, attending community events, serving on City committees and regional agencies, participating in intergovernmental meetings, and fulfilling other duties of public office; and

WHEREAS, the significant time commitment required of City Council members, combined with relatively low compensation, can create financial barriers that deter qualified individuals, particularly those from lower-income backgrounds, younger candidates, single parents, and people of color, from seeking or continuing in public office, thereby limiting the diversity of perspectives on the City Council; and

WHEREAS, SB 329 was enacted in part to address these barriers and to make service on city councils more accessible to a broader cross-section of the community; and

WHEREAS, the proposed compensation of Nine Hundred Fifty Dollars and Zero Cents (\$950.00) per month is consistent with compensation levels adopted by comparable cities in Sonoma County; and

WHEREAS, increasing City Council compensation supports the City Council's goals and priorities, including maintaining a High Performance Organization, restoring and maintaining public trust through transparent and effective governance, and improving community engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Budget Committee of the City Council reviewed this matter at its meeting of May 11, 2026, and recommended support for increasing compensation to \$950.00 per month; and

WHEREAS, on May 19, 2026, the City Council considered a staff report on this matter, received public comment, and directed staff to prepare an ordinance to implement the compensation increase; and

WHEREAS, Government Code section 36516.5 provides that any ordinance increasing the compensation of City Council members may take effect only when at least one member of the City Council commences a new term of office following a municipal election; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to adopt this ordinance in full compliance with all applicable provisions of state law.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Findings. The City Council hereby adopts and incorporates by reference all of the recitals set forth above as its findings demonstrating the need for the increased compensation established by this ordinance, as required by Government Code section 36516.

Section 2. Amendment of Municipal Code. Chapter 2.44, City Council Salaries, of the Sebastopol Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows (with deletions in ~~striketrough~~ and additions underlined):

Chapter 2.44 City Council Salaries

2.44.010 Establish salary.

Section 36516 of the Government Code of the State of California authorizes the City Council to establish a salary for said City Council members, in cities up to and including 35,000 in population, up to and including \$950.00 ~~\$300.00~~ per month, subject to annual adjustment as set forth in Section 36516. Population of the City of Sebastopol is less than 35,000.

2.44.020 Salary amount.

Effective January 1, 2027, there is herewith established a salary for each City Council member in the sum of \$950.00 ~~\$300.00~~ per month.

~~2.44.030 Effective date:~~

~~Payment of the increased salary as provided in the previous section shall be effective January 1 in accordance with Section 36516.5 of the Government Code of the State of California.~~

~~2.44.040 Continuance of salary:~~

~~The existing salary as provided by Ordinance No. 771 shall continue for each Council member until said sum is increased as authorized by law.~~

Section 3. Implementation. In accordance with Government Code section 36516.5, the compensation established by this ordinance shall not be paid until January 1, 2027, following the November 2026 municipal election. Until January 1, 2027, Councilmembers shall continue to review a salary of \$300 per month.

Section 4. Supersession. This ordinance supersedes and replaces any prior ordinance, resolution, or provision of the Sebastopol Municipal Code that established a different amount of compensation for members of the City Council.

Section 5. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council declares that it would have adopted this ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase thereof regardless of the fact that any

one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases may be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 6. Publication. The City Clerk is directed to cause this ordinance to be published in the manner and within the time required by law.

Section 7. Effective Date of Ordinance. This ordinance shall take effect and be in full force and effect thirty (30) days after its final adoption, subject to the implementation date established in Section 3.

APPROVED FOR FIRST READING AND INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Sebastopol held on the 7th day of July, 2026.

SCHEDULED FOR SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Sebastopol scheduled to be held on the 21st day of July, 2026.

VOTE:

AYES: Councilmember Carter, Zollman and Vice Mayor Maurer

NOES: Councilmember Hinton

ABSENT: Mayor McLewis

ABSTAIN: None

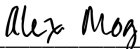
APPROVED:

Signed by: 
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Mary Gourley, City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Signed by: 
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Alex Mog, City Attorney