

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1092

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**As Passed House:**  
March 11, 2019

**Title:** An act relating to the compensation of commissioners of certain metropolitan park districts.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the compensation of commissioners of certain metropolitan park districts.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Fey and Jenkins.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Local Government: 1/22/19, 1/30/19 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 3/11/19, 74-24.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Increases the maximum amount authorized for metropolitan park district commissioners' compensation to \$128 daily and \$12,288 annually.
- Increases the maximum annual compensation for Metro Parks Tacoma commissioners to \$24,576.
- Changes the date that the Office of Financial Management is required to make inflation-based adjustments to the dollar thresholds from 2008 to 2023.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Pollet, Chair; Peterson, Vice Chair; Appleton, Goehner and Senn.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Kraft, Ranking Minority Member.

**Staff:** Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

## **Background:**

### Metropolitan Park Districts.

In Washington a special purpose district (SPD) is a limited purpose local government separate from a city, town, or county government. Special purpose districts provide an array of services and facilities that are otherwise not available from city or county governments. A metropolitan park district (MPD) is a type of SPD created for the control, management, improvement, maintenance, or acquisition of parks, parkways, boulevards, and recreational facilities. An MPD may include territory located in portions or in all of one or more cities or counties.

### Metropolitan Park District Board.

Most powers of SPDs are vested in a board of district commissioners, board of district trustees, or board of district directors. The officers of an MPD include five elected park commissioners who serve up to six-year terms. The commissioners are elected simultaneously when voters are deciding whether an MPD should be formed.

Park commissioners may be compensated at a maximum rate of \$90 per day and up to a maximum rate of \$8,640 per year.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is required to adjust the compensation amounts for inflation every five years, beginning July 1, 2008. In 2018 the OFM adjusted the amounts to a maximum of \$128 per day with an annual compensation limit of \$12,288. The adjustments are published in the Washington State Register but are not reflected in statute. The next adjustment is slated to occur on July 1, 2023.

## **Summary of Bill:**

The daily maximum compensation amounts for MPD commissioners is increased from:

- \$90 to \$128 per day; and
- \$8,640 to \$12,288 per year.

The maximum annual compensation is \$24,576 for any MPD district with facilities including an aquarium, a wildlife park, and a zoo, accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency. The date from which OFM must make inflation adjustments to the compensation thresholds is changed from July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2023.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

## **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The prime reason for this legislation is to link the time it takes for metro park commissioners to do their job to their compensation. Metro Parks Tacoma is a special

purpose district that is in the middle of multi-million dollar projects, including many capital construction projects, and has an annual budget of approximately \$64 million. In addition to Point Defiance, this MPD also includes the regional facility of Northwest Trek located in unincorporated Pierce County.

Metro Parks Tacoma serves as the recreation agency for the City of Tacoma. It is a substantial organization and despite all the projects and work involved, the public expects the park commissioners to be engaged. Virtually every year the commissioners reach their annual compensation cap around October, and as a result, they receive no per diem or compensation for that time spent doing business on behalf of the metro parks after that time period.

This bill is a housekeeping bill. It doubles the cap for only the annual compensation limit set for Metro Parks Tacoma commissioners. It does not change the daily compensation rates as the OFM has already increased those rates for inflation.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Fey, prime sponsor; and Andrew Austin, Metro Parks Tacoma.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.