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CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY

TOWN OF PAXTON, MA

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INTRODUCTION

After receiving a grant from the Massachusetts Community Compact Program, the Town of Paxton engaged the services of the Collins Center for Public Management (Collins Center) to conduct a classification and compensation review. Working with the Town Administrator, the project objectives were defined as:

- Evaluating and assigning all positions studied to appropriate classifications to assure internal equity; and
- Developing new descriptions for the positions studied that would include clear definitions of essential functions and requirements.
- Conducting a market survey to determine relative place in market and recommend an equitable compensation structure

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

To create a viable classification system for the Town, the Collins Center began by evaluating the Town's current system. Copies of existing position descriptions were provided by the Town to facilitate this evaluation.

Position description questionnaires were given to each incumbent of the positions included within the study. The questionnaire elicits information concerning the amount of supervision exercised and received for each position, as well as decision-making authority, budgetary responsibilities, and other characteristics that allowed the Collins Center to evaluate the position's level of difficulty, complexity and importance to the departmental and town organization.

The draft descriptions were then created and provided to the Town Administrator to be distributed to incumbents and department heads for comments prior to the preparation of the final descriptions. The final recommended position descriptions are provided electronically under separate cover.

RATING OF POSITIONS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND INTERNAL EQUITY

Once descriptions were drafted, the Collins Center used a point factor rating method to objectively evaluate the positions. The application of an objective position evaluation system that is consistently applied to each position is critical in assuring the internal equity of the classification plan. The evaluation system utilized by the Collins Center is one that has been successfully implemented in many public organizations in Massachusetts. Each position was assigned a point factor in a series of categories, including those listed below, and the total points determined the groupings of positions.

Supervision Required	Supervisory Responsibility
Accountability	Judgment
Complexity	Nature and Purpose of Personal Contacts
Confidentiality	Education
Experience	Work Environment

RECOMMENDED CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE

The review of position descriptions revealed that the current classification of positions is fairly accurate. However, in a few instances, responsibilities have changed in recent years, requiring an adjustment in classification, most notably is the Council on Aging Director. The position has authority for a building, staff, community outreach and programming and should be adjusted to represent the full breadth and responsibility for the position.

Public Safety departments have a hierarchy of positions, with each title representing a different grade. As such, the Collins Center does not recommend a change to the classification structure.

Additionally, in many instances, employees have been paid above the existing pay scales rendering the system inaccurate. A contributing factor to the disparity of structures and systems is the number of appointing authorities within the Town's government. The Collins Center recommends a policy be adopted for all positions, regardless of appointing authority.

The following Table reflects the recommendation structure for the general government positions. The grades are created by assessing the characteristics detailed above and grouping positions based on the ratings. The following tables identify the groupings.

GROUP	TITLE	DEPARTMENT
H	Town Administrator	Board of Selectmen
G	Fire Chief Police Chief	Fire Police
F	Superintendent of Public Works Superintendent of Water	Public Works Water
E	Town Accountant Town Clerk Principal Assessor Treasurer/Collector Library Director Building Commissioner	Accounting Town Clerk Assessing Treasurer/Collector Library Building
D	Recreation Director Council on Aging Director Executive Assistant	Recreation Council on Aging Town Hall/BOS
C	DPW Mechanic Heavy Equipment Operator Drinking Water Operator/Technician Children’s Librarian Town Service Coordinator	Public Works Public Works Water Library Town Hall
B	Assistant Treasurer/Collector Administrative Assistant - DPW Administrative Assistant – Police Municipal Assistant Dispatcher	Treasurer/Collector Public Works Police Town Hal Public Safety
A	Library Clerk	Library

SURVEY OF COMPARABLE MUNICIPALITIES

Once the positions were classified, a salary survey was conducted to determine the ranges within which other, similar and area towns compensate their employees. A summary of the results is attached to this report. Obtaining survey data is one of the most challenging aspects of a classification and compensation study. Not all towns have the same titles which can make comparisons difficult and not all titles mean the same thing across municipalities. However, the

survey provided sufficient data to evaluate the market and make recommendations. The towns used in the survey were Berlin, Boylston, Holden, Hubbardston, Leicester, Princeton, Spencer, Sturbridge and West Boylston.

While not necessarily followed, Paxton has a compensation schedule with approximately 36% ranges from minimum to maximum. The industry standard is to have salary ranges spanning 25% to 30%. The Collins Center recommends a compensation schedule of 12 steps with 2.5% increments.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SALARY SCHEDULE

When evaluating classification, it is important to remember that each municipality is different and the comparability within the organization is just as important, if not more so, than external comparability. In developing the recommended salary schedule, the Collins Center coalesced the position classification with the results of the salary survey to establish salary ranges for each of the grades. The salary ranges were established by evaluating the median and average pay with respect to the existing pay of the positions in each grade

The Collins Center recommends a classification and compensation schedule with each grade having twelve steps with 2.5% increments. The following table represents the recommended compensation schedule for the general government positions.

RECOMMENDED GRADE	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM	RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM
H	\$39.77	\$52.16
G	\$36.15	\$47.43
F	\$32.86	\$43.11
E	\$27.38	\$35.91
D	\$23.81	\$31.25
C	\$20.70	\$27.17
B	\$18.00	\$23.61
A	\$15.00	\$19.67

IMPLEMENTATION

The Collins Center recommends employees initially be placed on the step of the grade that provides for the same rate of pay or an increase. The Town will need to make policy decisions regarding progression through the scales, longevity and across the board increases.

Since the stated objective of the study was to plan for Fiscal Year 2021 the Collins Center recommends placing in the appropriate steps and then applying whatever cost of living increase the Town would generally give hourly non contracted/union employees. At the same time the pay scales should be adjusted by the same percentage by the Town Administrator. Moving forward, it is recommended a step increase be granted on July 1 of each year to those employees who have received a positive employee performance evaluation, unless otherwise dictated by collective bargaining agreement.

The recommended compensation schedule should represent the labor market for a few years. It is recommended the Town conduct a brief survey every three years to analyze the increases granted by neighboring municipalities and adjust the overall schedule as needed.

CLOSING

Thank you for allowing the Collins Center to work with the Town on this project. We believe the recommended position descriptions and classification plan will serve the Town well for many years to come.

SUMMARY OF SALARY SURVEY

TITLE	Paxton MINIMUM HRLY RATE OF RANGE	Paxton MAXIMUM HRLY RATE OF RANGE	Average Minimum	Median Minimum	Paxton Minus Average Minimum	Paxton Minus Median Minimum	Average Maximum	Median Maximum	Paxton Minus Average Maximum	Paxton Minus Median Maximum
Town Administrator	\$38.20	\$51.97	\$53.81	\$44.87	(\$15.61)	(\$6.67)	\$59.25	\$58.95	(\$7.28)	(\$6.98)
Chief of Police	\$33.22	\$45.20	\$54.18	\$54.33	(\$20.96)	(\$21.11)	\$59.16	\$59.72	(\$13.96)	(\$14.52)
Fire Chief	\$27.51	\$37.43	\$48.41	\$50.24	(\$20.90)	(\$22.73)	\$52.63	\$52.31	(\$15.20)	(\$14.88)
Superintendent of Public Works	\$37.13	\$33.22	\$34.27	\$35.80	\$2.86	\$1.33	\$41.13	\$39.53	(\$7.91)	(\$6.31)
Superintendent of Water	\$33.22	\$45.20	\$35.22	\$35.22	(\$2.00)	(\$2.00)	\$43.18	\$43.18	\$2.02	\$2.02
Town Accountant	\$26.20	\$35.64	\$34.03	\$30.13	(\$7.83)	(\$3.93)	\$43.04	\$40.95	(\$7.40)	(\$5.31)
Council on Aging Director	\$18.83	\$25.63	\$22.73	\$19.85	(\$3.90)	(\$1.02)	\$30.47	\$26.53	(\$4.84)	(\$0.90)
Assistant Fire Chief	\$22.78	\$31.00	\$35.66	\$35.66	(\$12.88)	(\$12.88)	\$23.50	\$24.05	\$7.50	\$6.95
Library Director	\$26.20	\$35.64	\$29.06	\$27.02	(\$2.86)	(\$0.82)	\$37.86	\$35.54	(\$2.22)	\$0.10
Police Lieutenant	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$29.19	\$32.27	(\$29.19)	(\$32.27)	\$41.00	\$44.50	(\$41.00)	(\$44.50)
Town Clerk	\$26.20	\$35.64	\$28.54	\$25.93	(\$2.34)	\$0.28	\$37.43	\$32.91	(\$1.79)	\$2.73
Principle Assessor	\$20.71	\$28.18	\$27.59	\$29.06	(\$6.88)	(\$8.35)	\$39.92	\$38.21	(\$11.74)	(\$10.03)
Building Commissioner	\$26.20	\$35.64	\$27.45	\$26.15	(\$1.25)	\$0.05	\$37.72	\$33.43	(\$2.08)	\$2.21
Treasurer/Collector	\$26.20	\$35.64	\$32.05	\$29.55	(\$5.85)	(\$3.35)	\$40.59	\$37.48	(\$4.95)	(\$1.84)
Heavy Equipment Operator	\$21.00	\$30.45	\$21.06	\$21.37	(\$0.06)	(\$0.36)	\$26.12	\$27.11	\$4.33	\$3.34
Police Officer	\$24.99	\$29.92	\$25.09	\$25.12	(\$0.10)	(\$0.13)	\$30.87	\$30.86	(\$0.95)	(\$0.93)

TITLE	Paxton MINIMUM HRLY RATE OF RANGE	Paxton MAXIMUM HRLY RATE OF RANGE	Average Minimum	Median Minimum	Paxton Minus Average Minimum	Paxton Minus Median Minimum	Average Maximum	Median Maximum	Paxton Minus Average Maximum	Paxton Minus Median Maximum
Recreation Director	\$20.71	\$28.18	\$26.14	\$22.31	(\$5.43)	(\$1.60)	\$32.75	\$27.91	(\$4.57)	\$0.27
Drinking Water Operator/Tech	\$19.76	\$32.53	\$24.02	\$24.02	(\$4.26)	(\$4.26)	\$29.15	\$29.15	\$3.39	\$3.39
DPW Mechanic	\$20.50	\$28.38	\$22.75	\$23.38	(\$2.25)	(\$2.88)	\$27.35	\$26.98	\$1.03	\$1.41
Children's Librarian	\$17.12	\$23.30	\$21.74	\$21.18	(\$4.62)	(\$4.06)	\$27.68	\$26.76	(\$4.38)	(\$3.46)
Executive Assistant-BOS/TA	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$22.95	\$22.04			\$25.95	\$25.66		
Administrative Assistant	\$16.30	\$22.17	\$17.83	\$17.59	(\$1.53)	(\$1.29)	\$23.59	\$23.01	(\$1.42)	(\$0.84)
Dispatcher	\$19.25	\$21.52	\$18.76	\$19.87	\$0.49	(\$0.62)	\$23.05	\$23.04	(\$1.53)	(\$1.52)
Municipal Assistant	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18.47	\$18.64			\$23.57	\$22.88		
Assistant Treasurer	\$16.20	\$22.17	\$20.74	\$20.33	(\$4.54)	(\$4.13)	\$27.79	\$28.05	(\$5.62)	(\$5.88)
Library Clerk	\$13.44	\$18.28	\$15.38	\$15.75	(\$1.94)	(\$2.31)	\$18.64	\$20.78	(\$0.36)	(\$2.50)

RECOMMENDED COMPENSATION SCHEDULE

GRADE	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Step 1	\$15.00	\$18.00	\$20.70	\$23.81	\$27.38	\$32.86	\$36.15	\$39.77
Step 2	\$15.38	\$18.45	\$21.22	\$24.41	\$28.06	\$33.68	\$37.05	\$40.76
Step 3	\$15.76	\$18.91	\$21.75	\$25.02	\$28.76	\$34.52	\$37.98	\$41.78
Step 4	\$16.15	\$19.38	\$22.29	\$25.65	\$29.48	\$35.38	\$38.93	\$42.82
Step 5	\$16.55	\$19.86	\$22.85	\$26.29	\$30.22	\$36.26	\$39.90	\$43.89
Step 6	\$16.96	\$20.36	\$23.42	\$26.95	\$30.98	\$37.17	\$40.90	\$44.99
Step 7	\$17.38	\$20.87	\$24.01	\$27.62	\$31.75	\$38.10	\$41.92	\$46.11
Step 8	\$17.81	\$21.39	\$24.61	\$28.31	\$32.54	\$39.05	\$42.97	\$47.26
Step 9	\$18.26	\$21.92	\$25.23	\$29.02	\$33.35	\$40.03	\$44.04	\$48.44
Step 10	\$18.72	\$22.47	\$25.86	\$29.75	\$34.18	\$41.03	\$45.14	\$49.65
Step 11	\$19.19	\$23.03	\$26.51	\$30.49	\$35.03	\$42.06	\$46.27	\$50.89
Step 12	\$19.67	\$23.61	\$27.17	\$31.25	\$35.91	\$43.11	\$47.43	\$52.16