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CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY

TOWN OF PRINCETON, MA

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INTRODUCTION

As a result of a Community Compact grant, the Town of Princeton engaged the services of the Collins Center for Public Management (Collins Center) to conduct a classification and compensation study. Working with the Town Administrator, the project objectives were defined as:

- Evaluating and assigning all study positions to appropriate classifications in order to assure internal equity
- Conducting a salary survey of comparable Massachusetts municipalities in order to develop appropriate compensation levels for the Town, and to assure the external equity
- Developing new position for the study positions with clear definitions of essential functions and requirements
- Recommending the implementation of the new system and processes for movement through the salary schedule in the future

METHODOLOGY

The steps followed by the Collins Center were:

- Creation of Position Descriptions
- Discussion of Position Description Issues
- Rating of Positions for Classification and Internal Equity
- Creation of Classification Structure
- Survey of Comparable Communities
- Development of a Salary Schedule
- Implementation of and Progressing Through the Salary Schedule

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

In order to create a viable classification system for the Town, the Collins Center began by evaluating the state of the current systems. Information about existing position descriptions was obtained.

Comprehensive questionnaires were given to the incumbents of the study positions. The questionnaire requested information regarding the position's responsibilities related to supervision, decision-making authority, budgetary responsibilities, and other characteristics that allowed the Collins Center to evaluate its level of difficulty, complexity and importance to the departmental and town organization. Interviews were offered to each employee. The interviews were conducted to clarify information contained in the questionnaires. The Collins Center has found that the time spent prior to drafting the descriptions improves accuracy of drafts and helps minimize the need for edits. The draft descriptions were created and were distributed to incumbents and department heads for comments and final descriptions were created. Very few edits were requested to the drafts and of those comments received most were minor changes. None of the comments and edits warranted significant changes to the draft description. 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 applied successfully in many public organizations in Massachusetts. Each position was assigned a point factor in the categories listed below, which determined the groupings of positions.

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

RECOMMENDED CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE

The recommended classification system is comprised 6 grades which groups positions based on similar rating and is contained in the following Table.

RECOMMENDED GRADE	RECOMMENDED TITLE
I	Treasurer/Collector Town Accountant IT Coordinator
H	Library Director Town Clerk Principal Assessor
G	Veteran's Agent Council on Aging Director Parks and Recreation Director Building Inspector Highway General Foreman
F	Plumbing Inspector Mechanic-HEO/Operator Electrical Inspector Cemetery Superintendent Building Maintenance Supervisor
E	Library Technology Services Associate Librarian – Youth Services Librarian – Pre School Children Executive Assistant/Asst. Treasurer/Collector
D	Office Manager – TA Department Assistant - Police Cemetery Foreman Heavy Equipment Operator
C	Administrative Assistant – Planning Administrative Assistant – Building Library Assistant Truck Driver/Laborer
B	Cemetery Laborer Library Clerk
A	Housekeeper

SURVEY OF COMPARABLE MUNICIPALITIES

Once the positions were classified, a salary survey was conducted to determine the ranges within which other, similar towns compensate their employees. The criteria considered for selecting comparable municipalities included geographical proximity, as well as equalized value and average tax bill. 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. The towns responding to the survey were Barre, Boylston, Harvard, Lancaster, Leicester, Petersham, Spencer, Sterling, West Boylston, West Brookfield, and Westminster. Additionally, limited information was obtained through the Massachusetts Municipal Personnel Association Benchmark database for the Towns of Paxton and Stow.

In most instances, the starting salaries in Princeton are well below the average and median of the survey municipalities. Many salaries do fall within the range of the survey municipalities, but on the lower end of the range.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SALARY SCHEDULE

When evaluating classification, it is important to remember that each municipality is different and the internal comparability within the organization is just as important, if not more so, than external comparability. In developing the recommended salary schedule for the Town, the Collins Center coalesced the position classification with the results of the salary survey in order to establish salary ranges for each grade. 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 schedule with 9 grades, with fifteen 2% steps. The following table represents the recommended compensation schedule. The recommended compensation schedule is attached.

RECOMMENDED GRADE	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM HOURLY RATE	RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM HOURLY RATE
A	\$15.00	\$19.79
B	\$15.75	\$20.78
C	\$16.54	\$21.83
D	\$17.37	\$22.92
E	\$18.24	\$24.05
F	\$19.15	\$25.28
G	\$20.11	\$26.53
H	\$24.13	\$31.82
I	\$28.96	\$38.21

IMPLEMENTATION OF AND PROGRESSING THROUGH THE PAY SCALE

In establishing the initial placement on the scale, the Collins Center recommends employees be placed in the recommended grade at a rate granting them a 3% increase. For most employees, that places them within the range. For those that are more than 3% below the range, it is recommended they be placed at the minimum pay of the range. Adjusting salaries beyond placement on the scale will need to be a policy decision of the Town.

FUTURE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE SALARY SCHEDULE

The recommended classification plan provides for a sufficient range of salaries and will not need to be adjusted on an annual basis. It is recommended that a market survey be conducted by the Town every 3 to 5 years and an appropriate across the board increase be applied to the entire scale.

CONCLUSION

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 SURVEY INFORMATION FROM COMPARABLE MUNICIPALITIES

TITLE	Princeton Minimum	Princeton Maximum	Average Minimum	Median Minimum	Princeton- Ave Minimum	Princeton- Median Minimum	Average Maximum	Median Maximum	Princeton- Ave Maximum	Princeton- Median Maximum
Town Accountant		\$30.62					\$33.51	\$34.63	(\$2.44)	(\$3.56)
Treasurer/Collector		\$31.07	\$26.74	\$25.72			\$36.42	\$34.71	(\$4.41)	(\$2.70)
IT Coordinator		\$32.01								
Town Clerk	\$17.21	\$24.52	\$24.69	\$23.08	(\$7.48)	(\$5.87)	\$30.02	\$30.05	(\$5.50)	(\$5.53)
Principal Assessor		\$30.50	\$24.03	\$24.96			\$29.64	\$27.07	\$0.98	\$3.56
Library Director	\$21.01	\$29.95	\$26.86	\$25.72	(\$5.85)	(\$4.71)	\$34.99	\$34.55	(\$4.49)	(\$4.05)
Director - COA/Sr. Center	\$17.21	\$24.52	\$21.27	\$22.37	(\$4.06)	(\$5.16)	\$27.58	\$24.29	\$2.38	\$5.66
Highway Foreman - (Division)	\$17.21	\$24.52					\$25.48	\$28.46	(\$0.96)	(\$3.94)
Parks & Rec. Director	\$17.21	\$24.52	\$18.22	\$16.73	(\$1.01)	\$0.48	\$24.83	\$25.18	(\$0.31)	(\$0.66)
Veteran's Agent										
Building Inspector										
Superintendent	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$21.59	\$21.54	(\$6.74)	(\$6.69)	\$29.28	\$27.66	(\$5.59)	(\$3.97)
HEO/Mechanic		\$23.69	\$21.17	\$21.05			\$26.83	\$27.66	(\$2.31)	(\$3.14)
Plumbing Inspector										
Electrical Inspector										
Bldg. Maint Supervisor	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$17.91	\$17.44	(\$3.06)	(\$2.59)	\$25.77	\$25.67	(\$4.61)	(\$4.51)
Pre School Childrens Librarian		\$17.66	\$18.28	\$17.54			\$23.37	\$22.44	(\$5.29)	(\$4.36)
Youth Services Librarian	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$17.00	\$16.49	(\$2.15)	(\$1.64)	\$22.89	\$22.44	(\$1.73)	(\$1.28)
Technology Library Associate	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$14.89	\$14.89	(\$0.04)	(\$0.04)	\$21.46	\$21.46	(\$0.30)	(\$0.30)
Ex. Asst/Asst										
Treasurer/Collector	\$12.26	\$18.08	\$17.94	\$17.36	(\$5.68)	(\$5.10)	\$24.17	\$23.37	(\$6.09)	(\$5.29)
Office Manager	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$16.21	\$15.22	(\$1.36)	(\$0.37)	\$21.99	\$22.84	(\$0.83)	(\$1.68)

TITLE	Princeton Minimum	Princeton Maximum	Average Minimum	Median Minimum	Princeton- Ave Minimum	Princeton- Median Minimum	Average Maximum	Median Maximum	Princeton- Ave Maximum	Princeton- Median Maximum
Admin Asst	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$16.18	\$14.58	(\$1.33)	\$0.27	\$21.98	\$21.74	(\$0.82)	(\$0.57)
Admin Asst.	\$12.26	\$18.08	\$16.25	\$15.22	(\$3.99)	(\$2.96)	\$21.63	\$20.45	(\$0.47)	\$0.71
Admin Asst.		\$16.00	\$16.84	\$15.53			\$22.61	\$21.75	(\$5.61)	(\$4.75)
Admin Asst.	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$16.97	\$17.15	(\$2.12)	(\$2.30)	\$22.97	\$22.88	(\$1.81)	(\$1.72)
Cemetery Foreman		\$17.00								
Heavy Equipment Operator	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$20.12	\$20.68	(\$5.27)	(\$5.83)	\$24.59	\$24.68	(\$3.43)	(\$3.52)
Library Assistant	\$12.26	\$18.08	\$13.98	\$13.79	(\$1.72)	(\$1.53)	\$18.67	\$19.29	(\$0.59)	(\$1.21)
Truck Driver/Laborer	\$14.85	\$21.16	\$17.07	\$17.83	(\$2.22)	(\$2.98)	\$21.66	\$22.46	(\$0.50)	(\$1.30)
Cemetery Laborer		\$14.00	\$13.46	\$12.99			\$17.27	\$17.09	(\$2.67)	(\$2.49)
Library Clerk	\$12.26	\$18.08								
Housekeeper		\$14.60								

RECOMMENDED CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE

Grade/Step	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
A	\$15.00	\$15.30	\$15.61	\$15.92	\$16.24	\$16.56	\$16.89	\$17.23	\$17.57	\$17.92	\$18.28	\$18.65	\$19.02	\$19.40	\$19.79
B	\$15.75	\$16.07	\$16.39	\$16.72	\$17.05	\$17.39	\$17.74	\$18.09	\$18.45	\$18.82	\$19.20	\$19.58	\$19.97	\$20.37	\$20.78
C	\$16.54	\$16.87	\$17.21	\$17.55	\$17.90	\$18.26	\$18.63	\$19.00	\$19.38	\$19.77	\$20.17	\$20.57	\$20.98	\$21.40	\$21.83
D	\$17.37	\$17.72	\$18.07	\$18.43	\$18.80	\$19.18	\$19.56	\$19.95	\$20.35	\$20.76	\$21.18	\$21.60	\$22.03	\$22.47	\$22.92
E	\$18.24	\$18.60	\$18.97	\$19.35	\$19.74	\$20.13	\$20.53	\$20.94	\$21.36	\$21.79	\$22.23	\$22.67	\$23.12	\$23.58	\$24.05
F	\$19.15	\$19.53	\$19.92	\$20.32	\$20.73	\$21.14	\$21.56	\$21.99	\$22.43	\$22.88	\$23.34	\$23.81	\$24.29	\$24.78	\$25.28
G	\$20.11	\$20.51	\$20.92	\$21.34	\$21.77	\$22.21	\$22.65	\$23.10	\$23.56	\$24.03	\$24.51	\$25.00	\$25.50	\$26.01	\$26.53
H	\$24.13	\$24.61	\$25.10	\$25.60	\$26.11	\$26.63	\$27.16	\$27.70	\$28.25	\$28.82	\$29.40	\$29.99	\$30.59	\$31.20	\$31.82
I	\$28.96	\$29.54	\$30.13	\$30.73	\$31.34	\$31.97	\$32.61	\$33.26	\$33.93	\$34.61	\$35.30	\$36.01	\$36.73	\$37.46	\$38.21