

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Steven P. Rose, Chairman
Eric S. Beckerman, Clerk
Jason L. Suzor, Associate

Gregory S. Enos
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Town of Avon Massachusetts



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TOWN OF AVON

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TOWN CLERK

BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORKSHOP MEETING NOVEMBER 8, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Steven P. Rose, Chairman
Eric S. Beckerman, Clerk
Jason L. Suzor, Associate

Others Present: Gregory S. Enos, Town Administrator
Shanna M. Faro, Executive Assistant
Aleksandra Stapczynski, Human Resources Services, Inc. (via videoconference)
William Fitzgerald, DPW Director
Robert Borden, Building Inspector
Erin Barry, Town Accountant
Deb Morin, Treasurer/Collector
Patricia Bessette, Town Clerk
Kathleen Waldron, Health Agent.

Chairman Rose called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with all members present. He stated that the purpose of tonight's Workshop Meeting is for the Board to be provided with an update on the Compensation Study.

Mr. Enos introduced the Board to Ms. Stapczynski, whose firm, Human Resources Services, Inc. ("HRS") performed the Compensation and Classification Study for non-union employees of the town. Ms. Stapczynski stated that her company was contacted by Mr. Enos as the town did not have a current system in place to manage its salaries, wages, and grade classifications. The town also needed contemporary, legally compliant job descriptions. Ms. Stapczynski stated HRS was hired to conduct a thorough job analysis, audit of the position, and update of job descriptions. In addition, HRS performed a detailed review of the town's current salaries and wages in comparison to the overall market. The study was primarily designed to focus on the internal and external equity of the structure by which employees are compensated.

Ms. Stapczynski stated that the scope of the project included a review of the town's current compensation program, an analysis of the current departmental structures, perform a thorough job analysis of each position, update job descriptions, conduct a market salary survey, develop a classification plan, update the current compensation structure, and submit the final documents summarizing the findings and recommendations.

Ms. Stapczynski informed the Board that the project got off to a great start with an onsite meeting and orientation with the department heads. The town and HRS experienced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, employees were still able to fill out Position Analysis Questionnaires to aid in the

drafting of their revised job descriptions. In addition, all department managers were able to be interviewed by Ms. Stapczynski via Zoom to discuss their job duties and responsibilities. The first part of the project focused primarily on revising the job descriptions.

The second part of the study focused on the classification and compensation of each position. Ms. Stapczynski informed the Board that to measure the pay rates among the town's municipal competitors for these positions, HRS distributed custom survey documents to comparable organizations jointly identified by the town and HRS. The survey document was designed to collect information regarding specific components of pay rates including minimum and maximum salary wages. HRS conducted a complete market analysis to determine the competitiveness for positions included in the study. HRS surveyed the following eleven communities: Abington, Canton, East Bridgewater, Easton, Halifax, Hanover, Hanson, Plympton, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, and Whitman. Each job was then given a classification grade ranking and the compensation for each position is recommended in spreadsheet with the minimum salary range for each position to the maximum salary range for each position with step increases in between.

With her presentation complete, Mr. Enos asked if the Board had any questions. Chairman Rose asked out of the comparable towns, how many communities had positions almost identical to Avon so much that they were able to be categorized and placed on the chart accurately. Ms. Stapczynski stated that when HRS performed the job analysis, if over 70% of the job duties in the position were comparable, then that creates the benchmark for that position, and they were placed in the chart accordingly. Ms. Stapczynski stated that when a lot of factors are considered such as the budget and population of the community, as well as the average for the comparable communities. Mr. Beckerman asked where the COLA amount from the chart was derived from. Mr. Enos informed the Board that he used a 2.5% as that was the percentage increase that was given to the unions such as AFSCME. Ms. Stapczynski stated that most towns are using a 2% - 2.5% COLA increase between steps on the pay chart. Chairman Rose asked Ms. Stapczynski which positions should be reviewed for pay equity. She replied that a pay equity analysis is very detailed with factors such as the employee's education, the number of employees they need to supervise, and their longevity all taken into consideration. Ms. Stapczynski stated that a pay equity study was not included in the scope of services for this project.

Mr. Enos displayed the Classification Chart and Compensation Chart for the Board to review. He stated that based on previous workshop meetings and discussions by the Board, some positions were moved from the original classification as recommended by HRS. For example, the Library Director and the Council on Aging Director were placed in same category, whereas the COA Director was once a classification step below. Ms. Stapczynski recommended the Board reconsider keeping the Town Administrator on the same category as the Police Chief and Fire Chief. HRS recommended that position as being on the top of the Classification Chart. Ms. Stapczynski informed the Board that overall, the goal is for the compensation chart to be about ten steps with room for financial growth in the position. The Board will have to make some policy decisions, but overall, the calculation for the position should fit the market. She cautioned the Board that overinflating any compensation.

Chairman Rose opened the meeting for questions from the audience. Ms. Barry asked why this project has taken so long given that it commenced in January 2020. Mr. Enos informed the Board that there were delays due to COVID such as difficulty in many towns providing the information needed for the wage analysis portion of the study. Ms. Barry stated her disappointment that many department heads have contractual obligations for a merit-based performance review as of July 1st, which is now five months overdue. Mr. Borden asked for the list of communities reviewed for the pay analysis study. He was under the impression that the first list of towns studied by HRS was discarded. Mr. Enos informed Mr. Borden that Norton and Hanover were removed as comparable towns. Ms. Stapczynski stated that even when some towns were swapped for other towns, it did not make a huge impact on the figures. Mr. Borden expressed his dissatisfaction that department heads have made many sacrifices such as giving up

vacation time and not being paid their increases, while union employees have already received their compensation. Mr. Borden stated that he feels disrespected as a department head and it affects morale. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the unknown of when or if a manager will receive an increase impacts morale. Mr. Morin expressed concern that if this study is not finalized and compensations not adjusted, it will be very difficult to get qualified candidates when employees retire. Ms. Bessette stated that the department managers for the town are dedicated employees and deserve their increases and for their pay to be adjusted accordingly.

Chairman Rose thanked the department managers for their feedback. He stated that the Board will work to address their concerns and devise an evaluation for managers who are due for an increase. The plan of action includes an agreement on the minimum and maximum base pay for the compensation chart, a final review and adjustment for any positions that need to be reclassified, and the agreement that current employees will be placed on approximately Step 5 of the chart, place them accordingly and review the financial impact. Mr. Enos stated that he will work on this plan of action and schedule another Workshop Meeting to finalize this study.

Adjournment

Mr. Beckerman made a motion to adjourn the Workshop Meeting at 8:40 p.m. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Mr. Beckerman voted aye. Chairman Rose voted aye. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Shanna M. Faro
Executive Assistant

List of Documents

1. Proposed Classification Chart
2. Compensation Chart