

HARTSVILLE/TROUSDALE COUNTY METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

JANUARY 11, 2022 | 6:00PM | TC COURTHOUSE

MINUTES

Members Present:

Dwight Jewell

Shane Burton

Gary Claridy

Bill Fergusson

Jerry Ford

T. Bubba Gregory

Richard Harsh

Gary Walsh

Mayor Stephen Chambers

Amy Thomas, Budget Director

Members Absent: Beverly Atwood, Ken Buckmaster, Landon Gulley, and Rachel Jones

Others in attendance: David Nollner, Sheriff Ray Russell, Cty Atty Branden Bellar, Chris Gregory, and members of the community.

Special guest from Burriss, Thompson & Associates – Steve Thompson and Beth Thomsen

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Dwight Jewell. Quorum was determined with 10 present / 4 absent.
2. Public Comments
Commissioner David Nollner approached asking about displaying the vote on the monitors.
- It is something that we are able to do, but it will take some time to learn that aspect of the system.
3. Presentation from Burriss, Thompson & Associates | Compensation Study. Steve Thompson is the lead consultant on the compensation study and benefits review for the County General employees and Water & Sewer Department.

Benefits Review

Mr. Thompson gave a brief overview of the benefits summary. HTCG contribution to the healthcare coverage was considered weak as compared to equivalent entities. The Vacation or PTO time is also considered a weak point, but it was noted that it is being addressed in the proposed employee handbook being presented to Commission at a later time.

Compensation Study

Steve Thompson went over the findings and recommendations of the study. The recommendations are not complete nor a final product. There are still adjustments to be made and discussed by the departments and committees.

Hartsville/Trousdale County was compared against several of the surrounding counties and other areas of comparable market base. Main focus areas are the ones attracting HTC employees. Data was collected from both private and public sectors. Data is of July 2021 and rates have increased 4.7% since this study was conducted.

Findings included more specified job titles and descriptions. This will help align positions to proper classifications in the market. Compared to the salary market index, HTC is 11% below the market rate. The data does not include Elected Officials. Chairman Jewell noted that this was strictly a salary review.

Recommendations included the reclassification of jobs in certain departments such as EMS, Jail, and the Water and Sewer Department. Department heads and supervisors were included in the discussions to create the new classifications for their respective departments.

Another recommendation is to recreate a pay plan with 15 pay grades each with 16 steps. Step increases are based on 2.36%. To provide a beginning point, positions were assigned to a Pay Grade that most closely matches the Job Market Rate. The step was assigned by what most closely matched the position's current salary. This allowed some hourly rates to increase if between steps. No rate was decreased for any position.

Mr. Thompson offered ways to implement the new system. It could be done over two years or all at one time. BTA can assist with interim pay scale and implementation of the full system. Can also be adjusted to more of a merit or performance based system if desired. Some entities alternated departments on who received increases from year to year. Bill Fergusson noted that it could include both the cost of labor adjustments (COLA) annually and also a merit increase.

Chairman Jewell asked the effect on the tax rate. If you were to take the full amount of implementation of $\$235,556 \times 12.65\%$ for benefits = $\$265,354$ divided by current penny value = 10.12 cents on the dollar. Mayor Chambers stated that we do need to protect the taxpayer, but we also need to take care of our employees who serve our taxpayers. Jerry Ford noted that surrounding counties have higher revenue streams than HTC and we need to take that into consideration.

Some employees have discussed health insurance coverage and needing more assistance in this field. HTCG may need to place more importance on the benefit side with the contribution to health insurance and flexible work schedules. Mayor noted that the Insurance Committee is reviewing submissions for an insurance broker.

Chairman Jewell asked the Committee to consider this and to continue discussion at later meetings.

4. Public Comments

Stephanie Urick commented that we need to be competitive with surrounding counties. Her kids are looking into summer jobs, and they can make \$2/hr. more in Gallatin than in Hartsville.

5. Adjourn

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by T. Bubba Gregory. Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm