

HARTSVILLE/TROUSDALE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 | 6:00PM | TC COURTHOUSE

Members Present: Bill Fergusson, Shane Burton, Rick Davis, Coy Dickey, Dwight Jewell, Vickie Howard

Members Absent: Richard Johnson, Mary Ann Baker, Amber Russell, Gary Walsh

Others in attendance: Tommy McFarland, Matt Batey, Rita Crowder, Kim Taylor, Rene Pridemore, Brandon Bellar, Chris Gregory, and Amy Thomas.

Special guests from Burris, Thompson, & Associates – Steve Thompson and Beth Thomsen.

Chairman Bill Fergusson called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and declared a quorum was present.

Minutes from the September 14, 2021 meeting were reviewed. Dwight Jewell made the motion to accept minutes as presented; second by Coy Dickey. MOTION CARRIED

Chairman Fergusson introduced Steve Thompson from Burris, Thompson, & Associates. Mr. Thompson is the lead consultant on the compensation study and benefits review for the County General employees and Water & Sewer Department.

Compensation Study Presentation

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 was as of July 1, 2021.

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.

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 presented the steps as possible annual increases. There have also been recommendations to have the steps be merit based increases for employees. In answer to a question on if an employee reaches their 16<sup>th</sup> step, Mr. Thompson suggested a longevity bonus could be implemented. Another idea would be a pay range basis instead of the step plan. Mr. Thompson said the step plan is more disciplined and structured, but a pay range could be configured.

The proposed plan includes full time and part time positions. The School system and the Highway Department were not included in the study due to those departments being under separate personnel policies.

It is suggested that any plan put in place be reviewed every two years to remain competitive in the market.

Mr. Thompson reiterated that what is being presented is a recommendation and feedback is needed to get to a plan that will work for HTCG.

#### Benefits Review

The main point of note of the benefits offered by HTC was the insurance coverage premium for families. This area does need to be reviewed by committees to see if more funding can be provided to increase this benefit item.

Another area was the vacation or personal time off (PTO) allowance. This is currently being discussed in the Committee as they review the proposed changes to the employee handbook.

Mr. Thompson is available to return at a later meeting to continue discussions and answer questions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:54pm.

[Video](#) and [handouts](#) are available on the County Website.