

CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION STUDY

TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD, MA

MARCH 2024

Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management



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Executive Summary

The Town of West Brookfield retained the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management (Collins Center) to conduct a classification and compensation study. The Collins Center Project Team (Project Team) conducted analysis into West Brookfield’s various municipal positions and achieved the following:

- Developed new descriptions for the positions studied, including clear definitions of essential functions, education and experience requirements;
- Evaluated and assigned all positions studied to appropriate classifications to assure internal equity; and
- Evaluated survey data to determine relative marketplace and recommend an equitable compensation structure.

Position Descriptions

The Project Team started with an evaluation of the Town’s current classification system in order to improve its viability. To facilitate this evaluation, the Town made available existing copies of positions descriptions. Position classification questionnaires (questionnaires) were distributed to incumbent personnel for the positions included in the review. The questionnaires elicit information including but not limited to the nature of the work performed, the complexity and scope of responsibilities and the requirements needed to fill the position.

After receipt of the questionnaires, interviews were conducted with employees to clarify information on the questionnaires and to understand the context of the positions. The information gained from the questionnaires, interviews and review of existing position descriptions was used to draft a position description for review. The drafts were submitted to the Town for distribution to employees and supervisors for comments. Comments were received and the majority were incorporated into the final recommended descriptions, the electronic provision of which have been provided under separate cover.

Rating of Positions for Classification & Internal Equity

Once descriptions were drafted, the Project Team 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 municipalities and other governmental organizations in the Commonwealth. Each position was assigned a point factor in a series of categories, including those listed below, to determine the groupings of positions. These categories include:

Supervision Received	Supervision Exercised	Accountability
Judgement	Complexity	Personal Contacts
Confidentiality	Education/Licenses	Experience
Work Environment	Physical Requirements	Motor Skills
Physical Skills	Occupational Risks	

Recommended Classification Structure

The review of position descriptions revealed that there was little standardization of descriptions, both in presentation and in information included. The position descriptions drafted as part of the project will

allow the town to communicate accurately to current and prospective employees what the expectations and requirements are for the positions. Having a standardized classification system will benefit the Town in recruitment efforts and in efforts to conduct comparisons to other municipalities for functions and compensation. The Collins Center recommends the following classification structure with notes on recommended title changes, including the standardization of administrative titles across departments.

Title	Recommended Title	Department	Grade
Town Administrator		Town Administrator/Board of Selectmen	Contract
Chief of Police		Police	A
Highway Superintendent		Highway	B
Water Superintendent		Water	B
Fire Chief		Fire	C
Treasurer/Collector		Treasurer/Collector	C
Town Accountant		Accounting	C
Senior Center Director		Senior Center	C
Library Director		Library	C
Town Clerk		Town Clerk	C
Water Operator		Water	D
Mechanic/Heavy Equipment Operator		Highway	D
Foreman		Highway	D
Executive Assistant to the TA/BOS		TA/BOS	D
Assistant Treasurer/Collector		Treasurer/Collector	D
Heavy Equipment Operator		Highway	D
Assistant Town Clerk		Town Clerk	E
Assistant to the Treasurer/Collector	Administrative Assistant	Treasurer/Collector	E
Accounting Assistant		Accounting	E
Outreach Coordinator		Senior Center	E
Administrative Assistant		Highway	E
Administrative Assistant		Police	E
Administrative Assistant		Water	E

Title	Recommended Title	Department	Grade
Assistant Senior Center Director	Program Coordinator	Senior Center	E
Administrative Assistant		Assessor	E
Assistant Librarian for Children's Services	Children's Services Librarian	Library	E
Assistant Librarian for Adult Services	Adult and Teen Services Librarian	Library	E
Administrative Assistant		Board of Health	E
Light Equipment Operator/Laborer		Highway	F
Cemetery Caretaker		Cemetery	F
Custodian		Library/Select Board	F
Board/Committee Clerk		Various	G
Drop-Off Center Monitor		Highway	G
Library Assistant		Library	G
Election Worker		Town Clerk	G
Sergeant		Police	P2
Officer		Police	P3

Stipend Positions
Building Inspector
Electrical Inspector
Plumbing/Gas Inspector
Zoning Enforcement Officer
Animal Inspector
Animal Control Officer

Call Positions
Deputy Fire Chief
Fire Captain
Fire Lieutenant
Call Firefighter

Market Salary Survey

After discussion with the Town, 20 labor market municipalities were selected. 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 municipalities have the same titles or definitions of duties under a specific title, which can make exact comparisons difficult.

Selected Labor Market List		Data Received	Substitute Communities
1	Brookfield	Brookfield	Athol
2	New Braintree	New Braintree	Philipston
3	Palmer	Palmer	
4	Ware	Ware	
5	Amherst	Amherst	
6	Belchertown	Belchertown	
7	Brimfield	Brimfield	
8	Charlton	Charlton	
9	East Brookfield	East Brookfield	
10	Hubbardston	Hubbardston	
11	Ludlow	Ludlow	
12	Rutland	Rutland	
13	Wilbraham	Wilbraham	
14	Warren	Warren	
15	Hardwick	Spencer	
16	Spencer	North Brookfield	
17	Granby	Leicester	
18	Berlin		
19	North Brookfield		
20	Leicester		

The Collins Center evaluates both the average and the median pay to obtain accurate information. The analysis of median pay removes the outlying data points. West Brookfield does not currently have pay ranges for any of its non-union positions, which may hurt morale by compensating personnel with years of experience at the same rate of pay as a new hire. Additionally, it creates difficulties in the direct comparison of the existing pay structure to the market. It is also worth noting that there are instances where positions may not be an exact comparison. Given these factors, however, the Project Team was able to collect sufficient data to make recommendations that account for the classification and the compensation information.

In conducting a labor market survey, it is important to note that positions across municipalities are not all the same. The same title in one municipality can have different duties and responsibilities. The following table highlights some of the challenges when reviewing survey data and should be taken into consideration when making evaluative determinations.

FACTOR	DISCUSSION
Title Comparison	A survey of titles can be challenging. Oftentimes, the same title may have different levels of responsibility, which can skew the results.
Data Points	The Center provided analysis with three data points of greater. Only three data points can have a skewed average and median if there is an outlier. Also, the fewer the data points, the less accurate the analysis.
Organizational/Staffing Structure	Staffing levels and classification structures can impact salary survey results. For example, a large municipality may have more positions, which may be specialized, or have narrow responsibilities, whereas a smaller municipality,

FACTOR	DISCUSSION
	with fewer staff, may have broader responsibility.
Elected and Appointed Officials	It is common for appointed officials with the same title as elected officials to be compensated at a higher level because of the professional education and experience required to be hired into the job. Elected officials have no such minimum requirements and as such are oftentimes paid differently than their counterpart in other municipalities.
Reporting Relationship	Depending on the municipality and organizational structure, titles may not be truly comparable. In larger municipalities, the same title can be department head, division head, or professional staff.
Salary Ranges	It is common for salary ranges to be outdated, which contributes to data being skewed. Even though many municipalities report minimum salary ranges, it is not known if they actually hire or compensate employees at the minimum.

The industry standard for pay ranges is 25% to 30%. Because West Brookfield does not currently have set pay ranges for positions, the Project Team used the actual rates of pay of incumbent employees in the analysis of market data. Overall, West Brookfield appears to be compensating administrative staff below the market, and mid-tiered or management level positions at or above market. A few noted exceptions are the Senior Center Director, Library Director, and Town Clerk, which are historically under paid positions. The Fire Chief position is currently paid slightly below the market of the recommended grade, likely due to the unique nature of the supervisory responsibility being over an all-call department rather than career staff.

West Brookfield has several stipend and on-call positions serving the municipality. The stipend positions have set annual or monthly pay attached to the duties and responsibilities for the positions. The incumbents of stipend positions do not have an established number of hours per week or per month. The work appears to be completed on an as-needed basis when tasks, projects or incidents arise requiring the attention of the employee. When the stipend pay is not based on the existing market or average number of hours worked, it can create challenges for recruitment purposes. Moving forward, the Center recommends that West Brookfield adopt a pay range for each of the stipend positions, and calculate the stipend based on a rate of pay within that range, times the average number of hours worked per year to establish the stipend. Similarly, call positions should have associated pay ranges based upon the market, and incumbents should move through that range based upon policy guidelines. The Collins Center recommends removing the stipend for the Tree Warden and combining the amount into the base pay of the Highway Superintendent. The current stipend would amount to approximately a 3% one-time increase to the Highway Superintendent's base pay.

Stipend Data:

Position	Town	Annual Amount	West Brookfield Annual
Electrical Inspector	Brimfield	\$11,601.00	\$4,747.92
	North Brookfield	\$12,000.00	
	East Brookfield	FEE BASED	

Position	Town	Annual Amount	West Brookfield Annual
Animal Control Officer/Animal Inspector	Brookfield	\$13,627.92	\$5,717.28
	Brimfield	\$2,254.00	
	Leicester	\$12,405.12	
	Warren	\$10,000.00	
 			
Tree Warden (incorporate into base pay of Highway Superintendent)	Brimfield	\$679.00	\$2,500.00
	North Brookfield	\$1,000.00	
 			
Building Inspector	Brookfield	\$20,176.68	\$17,298.96
	North Brookfield	\$15,816.84	
	Warren	\$15,358.00	
	East Brookfield	\$17,823.00	
 			
Plumbing/Gas Inspector	North Brookfield	\$7,000.00	\$3,132.96
	East Brookfield	FEE BASED	
	Spencer	\$12,444.86	

Recommended Stipend Wages

Stipend Positions	Current Pay (Monthly)	Recommended Minimum (Hourly)	Recommended Maximum (Hourly)
Building Inspector	\$1,441.58	\$33.00	\$39.60
Electrical Inspector	\$395.66	\$26.00	\$31.20
Plumbing/Gas Inspector	\$261.08	\$26.00	\$31.20
Zoning Enforcement Officer	\$902.92	\$30.00	\$36.00
Animal Inspector	\$119.92	\$20.00	\$26.00
Animal Control Officer	\$356.25	\$20.00	\$26.00
Tree Warden	\$208.33	Incorporate into base pay of Highway Superintendent	

Recommended Call Position Wages

Call Positions	Current Pay	Recommended Minimum	Recommended Maximum
Deputy Chief	\$27.62	\$29.10	\$32.01
Fire Captain	Vacant	\$25.98	\$28.58
Lieutenant	\$22.06	\$21.92	\$25.87
Call Firefighter	\$15.00	\$18.50	\$21.83

Development of the Salary Schedule

In classification evaluation, it is important to note that each municipality is different and the comparability within an organization is as important, if not more so, than external comparability. In developing the recommended salary schedule, the Project Team coalesced the data from classification groupings and the market survey to establish salary ranges for each of the grades. The salary ranges were established by evaluating the median and average maximum pay of the survey data pay with respect to the existing pay of the positions in each grade. The following table represents the Project Team's recommendations for ranges by classification using a 30% range and providing 2% annual steps:

GRADE	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
A	\$43.32	\$57.19
B	\$36.71	\$48.42
C	\$30.59	\$40.37
D	\$25.49	\$33.63
E	\$21.24	\$28.03
F	\$18.00	\$23.76
G	\$15.25	\$20.12

In a few instances, the current pay of an incumbent is above the recommended pay rates. In these instances, it is recommended the incumbent of the position be "red-circled" and have the rate be frozen until such time as the position is vacated, while still receiving any across the board or "cola" adjustment.

Implementation

The Project Team recommends placing employees on the scale that provides for an increase. The Town will need to make policy decisions on any other adjustments such as length of service in position and in regard to applying across the board or cost of living adjustments (COLA) to the entire pay scale. The Center has provided a sample step system that contains 2% steps, which would enable the Town to consider both step increases and across the board, or "cola" increases with each budget cycle.

Conclusion

The Project Team would like to thank the Town for welcoming the Collins Center. We believe the recommended position descriptions and classification plan will serve the Town well for many years to come.

Summary of Salary Survey Minimum

Position	Department	West Brookfield Minimum	West Brookfield Maximum (Actual)	Survey Average Minimum	Survey Median Minimum
Administrative Assistant	Assessors, Board		\$21.47	\$20.33	\$20.30
Clerk	Boards/Committees		\$18.00		
Assistant Director	COA-Senior Center		\$19.30		
Director	COA-Senior Center		\$22.67	\$31.44	\$29.40
Outreach Coordinator	COA-Senior Center		\$15.89	\$23.37	\$21.38
Accountant	Finance		\$39.80	\$37.12	\$38.04
Accounting Assistant/Dept. Asst.	Finance		\$20.41	\$22.74	\$22.48
Assist. to the Treasurer/Collector	Finance		\$19.29	\$21.44	\$21.37
Assistant Treasurer/Tax Collector	Finance		\$19.29	\$23.74	\$22.48
Treasurer/Collector	Finance		\$57.09	\$41.94	\$37.95
Call/Volunteer Firefighter	Fire		\$15.00	\$21.26	\$20.78
Captain	Fire			\$27.60	\$28.90
Chief	Fire		\$27.30	\$45.69	\$45.69
Deputy Chief	Fire		\$27.62	\$43.67	\$43.26
Lieutenant	Fire		\$22.06	\$28.90	\$28.90
Administrative Assistant	Board of Health		\$24.78	\$22.01	\$21.11
Administrative Assistant	Highway		\$24.15	\$22.25	\$22.31
Driver/Heavy Equip. Operator	Highway			\$24.14	\$24.45
Foreman	Highway		\$30.59	\$28.80	\$28.44
Operator/Driver/Laborer	Highway		\$24.31	\$21.20	\$21.63
Mechanic/Heavy Equip. Oper.	Highway		\$31.63	\$24.88	\$26.84
Superintendent	Highway		\$48.30	\$37.10	\$33.35

Position	Department	West Brookfield Minimum	West Brookfield Maximum (Actual)	Survey Average Minimum	Survey Median Minimum
Building Inspector	Inspectional Serv.		Stipend	\$35.10	\$34.54
Electrical Inspector	Inspectional Serv.		Stipend	\$27.59	\$27.59
Plumbing/Gas Inspector	Inspectional Serv.		Stipend	\$27.59	\$27.59
Zoning Enforcement Officer	Inspectional Serv.		Stipend	\$29.40	\$29.40
Assistant Librarian-Adult	Library		\$24.15	\$27.48	\$27.99
Assistant Librarian-Children's	Library		\$21.48	\$27.28	\$26.72
Custodian	Library		\$16.22		
Director	Library		\$27.35	\$34.35	\$34.48
Library Assistant	Library		\$15.30	\$18.79	\$17.15
Animal Control Officer/Inspector	Misc.		Stipend	\$21.77	\$21.37
Cemetery Caretakers/Groundskeeper	Misc.		\$21.55	\$20.10	\$20.10
Drop-Off Center Monitor	Misc.			\$19.05	\$18.56
Tree Warden	Misc.		Stipend	\$22.07	\$22.07
Administrative Assistant	Police		\$19.29	\$24.82	\$23.83
Chief	Police		\$48.84	\$45.42	\$45.69
FT Officer	Police		\$32.25	\$26.82	\$28.23
PT Officer	Police		\$26.26	\$22.07	\$22.07
Sergeant	Police		\$42.02		
Custodian	Select Board		\$16.03	\$20.69	\$16.54
Executive Assistant	Select Board		\$36.99	\$22.90	\$22.91
Assistant Town Clerk	Town Clerk		\$19.68	\$23.60	\$22.50
Election Workers	Town Clerk		\$15.00	\$18.64	\$14.05
Town Clerk	Town Clerk		\$26.64	\$31.19	\$31.14
Administrative Assistant	Water		\$19.29	\$28.30	\$26.53

Position	Department	West Brookfield Minimum	West Brookfield Maximum (Actual)	Survey Average Minimum	Survey Median Minimum
Laborer-Part-time Operator	Water		\$30.00	\$21.39	\$21.39
Operator	Water		\$29.77	\$24.91	\$24.91
Superintendent	Water		\$37.14	\$35.27	\$35.27
Town Administrator	Select Board		\$40.87	\$40.38	\$43.49

**Note: Public Safety survey comparisons may be skewed by factors such as educational incentive, shift differentials and holiday pay. The Town should evaluate the source data for accurate analysis.*

**Note: No minimum analysis is run on wage data that does not contain a minimum wage for the corresponding position. Positions that have actual wage rates for current incumbents are analyzed using the maximum wage data set on the next page.*

Summary of Salary Survey Maximum

Position	Department	West Brookfield Actual Pay	Survey Average Maximum	Survey Median Maximum	West Brookfield Actual Minus Average Maximum	West Brookfield Actual Minus Median Maximum
Administrative Assistant	Assessors, Board	\$21.47	\$25.33	\$25.73	\$3.86	\$4.26
Clerk	Boards/Committees	\$18.00	\$19.52	\$19.52	\$1.52	\$1.52
Assistant Director	COA-Senior Center	\$19.30	\$12.86	\$12.86	\$6.44	\$6.44
Director	COA-Senior Center	\$22.67	\$35.63	\$34.71	\$12.96	\$12.04
Outreach Coordinator	COA-Senior Center	\$15.89	\$26.25	\$26.40	\$10.36	\$10.51
Accountant	Finance	\$39.80	\$46.29	\$46.20	\$6.49	\$6.40
Accounting Assistant/Dept. Asst.	Finance	\$20.41	\$28.81	\$31.11	\$8.40	\$10.70
Assist. TO the Treasurer/Collector	Finance	\$19.29	\$26.32	\$26.69	\$7.03	\$7.40
Assistant Treasurer/Tax Collector	Finance	\$19.29	\$30.12	\$29.45	\$10.83	\$10.16
Treasurer/Collector	Finance	\$57.09	\$42.54	\$40.70	\$14.56	\$16.39
Call/Volunteer Firefighter	Fire	\$15.00	\$26.00	\$28.16	\$11.00	\$13.16
Captain	Fire	Vacant	\$34.93	\$35.85		
Chief	Fire	\$27.30	\$55.47	\$57.87	\$28.17	\$30.57
Deputy Chief	Fire	\$27.62	\$48.69	\$52.01	\$21.07	\$24.39
Lieutenant	Fire	\$22.06	\$32.87	\$29.94	\$10.81	\$7.88
Administrative Assistant	Board of Health	\$24.78	\$27.29	\$26.69	\$2.51	\$1.91
Administrative Assistant	Highway	\$24.15	\$28.99	\$29.77	\$4.84	\$5.62
Driver/Heavy Equip. Operator	Highway		\$28.76	\$28.84	\$28.76	\$28.84
Foreman	Highway	\$30.59	\$34.80	\$35.51	\$4.21	\$4.92
Operator/ Driver/Laborer	Highway	\$24.31	\$26.12	\$26.29	\$1.81	\$1.98
Mechanic/Heavy Equip. Oper.	Highway	\$31.63	\$32.28	\$33.94	\$0.65	\$2.31
Superintendent	Highway	\$48.30	\$42.36	\$41.40	\$5.94	\$6.91
Building Inspector	Inspectional Serv.	Stipend	\$42.55	\$42.41		

Position	Department	West Brookfield Maximum (Actual Pay)	Survey Average Maximum	Survey Median Maximum	West Brookfield Minus Average Maximum	West Brookfield Minus Median Maximum
Electrical Inspector	Inspectional Serv.	Stipend	\$31.45	\$31.45		
Plumbing/Gas Inspector	Inspectional Serv.	Stipend	\$33.35	\$33.35		
Zoning Enforcement Officer	Inspectional Serv.	Stipend	\$36.49	\$36.49		
Assistant Librarian-Adult	Library	\$24.15	\$27.77	\$25.28	\$3.62	\$1.13
Assistant Librarian-Children's	Library	\$21.48	\$31.45	\$29.84	\$9.97	\$8.36
Custodian	Library	\$16.22	\$16.31	\$16.31	\$0.09	\$0.09
Director	Library	\$27.35	\$40.66	\$39.73	\$13.31	\$12.38
Library Assistant	Library	\$15.30	\$23.04	\$21.53	\$7.74	\$6.23
Animal Control Officer/Inspector	Misc.	Stipend	\$24.77	\$24.63		
Cemetery Caretakers/Groundskeeper	Misc.	\$21.55	\$20.48	\$20.05	\$1.07	\$1.50
Drop-Off Center Monitor	Misc.		\$21.89	\$19.48	\$21.89	\$19.48
Tree Warden	Misc.	Stipend	\$27.40	\$27.40		
Administrative Assistant	Police	\$19.29	\$31.42	\$31.46	\$12.13	\$12.17
Chief	Police	\$48.84	\$60.44	\$62.50	\$11.60	\$13.66
FT Officer	Police	\$32.25	\$32.76	\$33.02	\$0.51	\$0.77
PT Officer	Police	\$26.26	\$20.49	\$20.49	\$5.78	\$5.78
Sergeant	Police	\$42.02	\$38.41	\$37.53	\$3.61	\$4.50
Custodian	Select Board	\$16.03	\$21.31	\$20.99	\$5.28	\$4.96
Executive Assistant	Select Board	\$36.99	\$30.15	\$30.23	\$6.84	\$6.76
Assistant Town Clerk	Town Clerk	\$19.68	\$28.73	\$28.41	\$9.05	\$8.73
Election Workers	Town Clerk	\$15.00	\$18.84	\$18.34	\$3.84	\$3.34
Town Clerk	Town Clerk	\$26.64	\$37.67	\$39.07	\$11.03	\$12.43
Administrative Assistant	Water	\$19.29	\$28.21	\$29.01	\$8.92	\$9.72
Laborer-Part-time Operator	Water	\$30.00	\$27.17	\$26.87	\$2.83	\$3.13
Operator	Water	\$29.77	\$32.91	\$33.32	\$3.14	\$3.55
Superintendent	Water	\$37.14	\$41.54	\$41.49	\$4.40	\$4.35

Position	Department	West Brookfield Maximum (Actual Pay)	Survey Average Maximum	Survey Median Maximum	West Brookfield Minus Average Maximum	West Brookfield Minus Median Maximum
Town Administrator	Select Board	\$40.87	\$64.95	\$60.58	\$24.09	\$19.71

**Note: Public Safety survey comparisons may be skewed by factors such as educational incentive, shift differentials and holiday pay. The Town should evaluate the source data for accurate analysis*

**Note: West Brookfield does not have pay ranges associated with positions, therefore the analysis conducted in the chart above reflects West Brookfield's actual current rates of pay against the market maximums.*

Recommended Compensation Schedule

Grade/Step	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
A	\$43.32	\$44.19	\$45.07	\$45.97	\$46.89	\$47.83	\$48.79	\$49.77	\$50.77	\$51.79	\$52.83	\$53.89	\$54.97	\$56.07	\$57.19
B	\$36.71	\$37.44	\$38.19	\$38.95	\$39.73	\$40.52	\$41.33	\$42.16	\$43.00	\$43.86	\$44.74	\$45.63	\$46.54	\$47.47	\$48.42
C	\$30.59	\$31.20	\$31.82	\$32.46	\$33.11	\$33.77	\$34.45	\$35.14	\$35.84	\$36.56	\$37.29	\$38.04	\$38.80	\$39.58	\$40.37
D	\$25.49	\$26.00	\$26.52	\$27.05	\$27.59	\$28.14	\$28.70	\$29.27	\$29.86	\$30.46	\$31.07	\$31.69	\$32.32	\$32.97	\$33.63
E	\$21.24	\$21.66	\$22.09	\$22.53	\$22.98	\$23.44	\$23.91	\$24.39	\$24.88	\$25.38	\$25.89	\$26.41	\$26.94	\$27.48	\$28.03
F	\$18.00	\$18.36	\$18.73	\$19.10	\$19.48	\$19.87	\$20.27	\$20.68	\$21.09	\$21.51	\$21.94	\$22.38	\$22.83	\$23.29	\$23.76
G	\$15.25	\$15.56	\$15.87	\$16.19	\$16.51	\$16.84	\$17.18	\$17.52	\$17.87	\$18.23	\$18.59	\$18.96	\$19.34	\$19.73	\$20.12