

AGENDA FOR BOARD DISCUSSION

BD DISCUSSION #1

Recommendations for Elected and Appointed Employee Compensation for Torch Lake Township 2022

Process: We have attempted to compile a comparative survey of compensation paid in Antrim County townships (Whitewater Township also included) for elected, appointed and hired employees. Information was gathered from township budgets available online, conversations with individuals in Torch Lake and Milton Townships, and a survey prepared by Katy Postmus, Treasurer of Banks Township approximately a year ago. We are assuming that the information we used is accurate and reasonably current, but we did not attempt to “audit” the information. Two spreadsheets summarizing our findings are attached.

Assumptions:

1. Torch Lake Township is the 9th largest township in terms of population, however its real estate tax base puts it in the top three. Ideally we would look at similar sized townships with a similar number of tax parcels (not just tax base info.). Because close comparisons are so difficult to make, we opted to focus on Milton and Elk Rapids (higher population but closer in terms of tax base) and Banks (close in population but significantly smaller tax base). Whitewater Township in Grand Traverse County was also included.
2. While descriptions of statutory duties exist for elected officials, how each township executes those duties varies between municipalities. In some cases several support staff may assist with Supervisor, Clerk or Treasurer duties. In others, only one individual completes all related tasks. Consequently, we attempted to look at both the individual position as well as a total “department” for each of the three positions.
3. Certain positions were not evaluated due to smaller budget impact and difficulty making comparisons between townships. These included positions related to cemetery, parks and recreation, scanning, and buildings and grounds.

Summary of Findings:

1. In general, Torch Lake Township elected and appointed positions tend to be compensated at the mid to high end of the range. Notable exceptions were Treasurer and Board of Review. Specifically we noted the following:
 - a. Supervisor. While the Supervisor position is only slightly higher than Elk Rapids and Milton Township, the other townships do not have a Deputy Supervisor position.
 - b. Clerk. While the Clerk individual position is slightly lower than others in our survey, the “department” including the Deputy and other supporting staff is the highest in the survey (outside of Whitewater).
 - c. Treasurer. The Treasurer individual position was compensated in line with others in the survey but when supporting positions were included, the “department” was lower than most.
 - d. Trustees. This position appears to be compensated at a rate somewhat higher than other townships.

- e. Planning and Zoning Chairs and Members. These positions appear to be compensated at a rate somewhat higher than other townships.
 - f. Board of Review. These positions appear to be compensated at the low end of the range.
2. Many positions enjoyed a significant increase in compensation in the most recent budget year which may have brought them to the higher end
 3. It should be stressed that differences between townships - in profile and how duties are executed - makes direct comparisons very difficult. Likewise, we recognize that small townships may have to pivot to address citizen needs not anticipated, or not occurring on a regular basis. This adds to staffing challenges.

Recommendations: Because it appears that most positions are fairly compensated per their peers in the area, we recommend that a modest increase, not to exceed 3%, be considered. Two exceptions to this recommendation are:

1. We suggest that the Treasurer be considered for a higher rate increase, perhaps in the 6% - 8% range to bring that position in line with peers.
2. We suggest that the compensation for the Board of Review be further evaluated to ensure that the figures we were provided were accurate. If our information is correct, an increase to \$100/meeting would bring them in-line with the Torch Lake Planning and Zoning positions and external peers.

We recognize that the Board will have access to job responsibility and performance information that we lack. This may impact their consideration of appropriate compensation for each position.

Respectfully submitted by: Peg Asmus, David Nussdorfer, Denise Walker
November 3, 2022

Survey of Compensation for use by Torch Lake Township Board

Elected Officials	Torch Lake		Torch Lake		TLT		Milton		MT		Elk Rapids	
	3/31/22 ACTUAL	2022 - 2023 BUDGET	2022 - 2023 BUDGET	Details	Details	2022-2023 BUDGET	2022-2023 BUDGET	Details	2022-2023 BUDGET	Details	2022-2023 BUDGET	2022-2023 BUDGET
Supervisor	\$28,840	\$30,000				\$28,973					\$24,000	
Deputy Supervisor	1000/mo/variable	\$12,480		1040/mo.								
TOTAL Supervisor		\$42,480				\$28,973					\$24,000	
Clerk	\$26,480	\$26,480					\$30,899				\$27,000	
Deputy Clerk	15/hour	\$11,300		\$20/hour			\$10,400	\$20/hour			\$18,700	
Clerical Assitant		\$2,200		\$14/hour								
Clerk Acctg. Asst.		\$5,400		\$30/hour								
Payroll Clerk*		\$1,950		\$30/hour								
TOTAL Clerk		\$47,330					\$41,299				\$45,700	
Treasurer	\$28,840	\$30,000					\$34,958				\$24,000	
Deputy Treasurer		\$800		\$20/hour			\$10,400	\$20/hour			\$5,525	
TOTAL Treasurer		\$30,800					\$45,358				\$29,525	
Trustees (each)	\$5,360	\$5,575					\$3,193				\$4,500	
Appointed Positions												
Planning Com. Chair	\$167/meeting	\$200/meeting						\$140/meeting				
Planning Members	\$50/meeting	\$100/meeting						\$50/meeting				
Planning Secretary								\$115/meeting				
Zoning Chair	\$139/meeting	\$200/meeting						\$95/meeting				
Zoning Members, Alts.	\$50/meeting	\$100/meeting						\$50/meeting				
Zoning Secretary	\$169/meeting	\$80/meeting						\$80/meeting				
Board of Review	\$45/meeting	\$50/meeting						\$200/day				
Other Positions and Support Staff												
Assessor		\$27,500		Contracted			\$37,978	Contracted			40000	
Zoning Admin. Asst.		\$16,800		\$21/hr.+pens.			8000	\$24/hr.				
Recording Secty.				\$50/hour								
Ordinance Enforcemnt		\$14,500		\$30/hour				None, but considering			None noted.	
Sources	TLT Salary Schedule	TLT General Ledger	TLT Salary Schedule				MT Detailed Budget				ERT Budget	
* Assumptions												
	(1) Payroll Clerk estimated at 2.5 hours/biweekly pay period @ \$30/hour.											
	(2) Certain positions were not evaluated due to smaller budget impact and difficulty in making comparisons between townships. These included those related to building and grounds, cemetery/scanning, and parks and rec.											

Survey of Compensation for use by Torch Lake Township Board

Whitewater	Banks	BT	Notes
2022-2023 BUDGET	2022-2023 BUDGET	Details	
\$27,585	\$18,600		
\$27,585	\$18,600		No other townships. budget for Deputy High including Deputy
\$28,115	\$31,200		
\$22,500	\$5,500	\$16/hour	Used 2021 figure for Banks
			No other townships budgeted for these positions.
\$50,615	\$36,700		High relative to similar sized townships.
\$27,585	\$31,200		
\$17,880	\$200	\$16/hour	Used 2021 figure for Banks
\$45,465	\$31,400		Low end compared to similar townships
	\$2,900		High-end
\$100/meeting	\$50/meeting		TL is high end of \$50-\$200 range.
\$70/meeting	\$35/meeting		TL is at high end of \$35-\$100 range.
\$100/meeting	\$100/meeting		TL is at high end of \$95-\$200 range.
\$70/meeting	\$60/meeting		TL is at high end of \$50-\$100 range.
	\$17/hour		
	\$75 half day/\$125 full day		TL looks to be at low end.
	21784	Contracted	
	None noted.		
Online W/T Minutes	BT Survey		

Survey of Elected Officials in Antrim County Townships
for use by Torch Lake Township Board

	Mancelona	Elk Rapids	Milton	CL	Kearney	Forest Home	Banks	Torch Lake
Population	4400	2631	2204	2198	1765	1720	1609	1194
Supervisor	\$10,815	\$24,000	\$28,973	\$14,852	\$13,624	\$24,800	\$18,600	\$30,000
Clerk	\$19,795	\$27,000	\$30,899	\$25,295	\$25,140	\$28,850	\$31,200	\$26,480
Treasurer	\$28,310	\$24,000	\$34,958	\$24,047	\$25,140	\$28,850	\$31,200	\$30,000
Tax Revenue	Not online	\$280,257.00	\$372,714.00	Not online	Not online	Not online	\$104,713.00	\$289,528.00
Comments:								
<p>1. Torch Lake is the smallest of the townships surveyed. Other Antrim County townships smaller than TL were not included as their budgets were considered and not felt to be good comps.</p>								
<p>2. It is advised that all positions related to the duties of each position be considered in evaluating compensation. Stated differently, the "department" or may include paid personnel assisting with duties of each position. This varies greatly between townships. We attempted to look at this in the more detail provided.</p>								
<p>3. The source of information for Mancelona, Central Lake, Kearney and Forest Home was a survey prepared about a year ago by Katy Postmus, Treasurer Township. Consequently, the figures shown are not reflective of the current budget.</p>								

Recommendations for Fire and EMS Employee Compensation for Torch Lake Township 2022

Researching nearby townships regarding compensation led to the conclusion that graphing comparables would not be appropriate. Therefore the narrative that follows gives the findings at hand and insight that may lead the commission to come to fiscally responsible, equitable decisions regarding compensation for Fire Protection and EMS employees. Each community in our northern Michigan region uses funding in ways that best fits their own budget and community values. These findings were based on interviews with Torch Lake Township fire and EMS employees as well as information received from Elk Rapids Fire Department and Charlevoix Fire Department.

The following is a comparative statement for full time salaried employees in Fire departments for Torch Lake Township, Elk Rapids Fire Department and Charlevoix Fire Department.

*Torch Lake Township Fire chief is a part time employee. His part time salary is 15,910 and is a 2.9% increase from 2021 (11.6% increase since 2020) Keven Lane TLT Fire Chief expressed interest in becoming a full time position and feels the work warrants it.

*The Assistant Fire chief has a half time position with the fire department but is able to combine a half time position with Ambulance/EMS Services, earning \$56-60,000 for a total of 40 hours work per week. *[Information from township budget documents as well as reports from Sharon Shultz and Robert Cook]*

Run pay is \$22.25 6AM-10PM and \$39 10 PM-6AM

*EMS/Ambulance is difficult to compare with local communities. TLT ranges from \$14 to \$20 per hour based on class: Basic-Advanced-Paramedic. Statewide average is \$20.76 per hour, low hourly wage being \$14.02 per hour, high being 30.72 per hour. In all categories TLT is below average in hourly pay.

Per conversation with Mike Bertram EMS/Ambulance starting to feel the effects of declining workforce, so new employees are given a \$1000 signing bonus and another \$4000 after 6 months employment. EMT are offered paid training classes as well as \$12,000 for Paramedics training with a 3-5 year commitment. These incentives can be effective in keeping the workforce stable but attracting workers is concerning based on our low hourly rate range.

The only comparison for EMS/Ambulance that was made available is Kalkaska. \$20-\$23 /hr for EMT and \$22-\$28 for paramedics . Again we are well below hourly pay to this nearby community.

Charlevoix Fire chief is a part time employee at \$11,000 per year. Their assistant is considered full time at \$55,000 per year. Firefighter run pay is straight forward at \$30 for the first hour or part thereof and \$20 for each hour after. This information was given by Dan Thorp/Fire Chief

Elk Rapids Fire Department has a full time fire chief paid \$56,000 per year (no additional run pay) and all other firefighters run pay is a straight \$15.50 per hour. This information was given by Ken Williamson, Fire Chief.

Best practices in salary increases

Through our research these suggestions were found that may be helpful:

Salaried, part time and volunteer firefighters, as well as EMS workers need a high level of expertise to be effective. These areas of employment are trending toward exhibiting shortages across the country. When an employment niche can not always meet its demand, the competition locally is worth paying attention to. We should be proactive in our recruitment while attending to keeping our valued service providers.

Being transparent with our workers of what our budget is, is recommended. If the 3% annual average increase is not feasible, workers should know they are getting the highest pay increase possible.

Continuing to offer benefits for advance training at no cost with a commitment to stay with TLT for a specified period of time is highly recommended. The current TLT benefit package shows respect for workers and their need for quality of life in our community.

Cost of living increases are appropriate but should also include increases based on performance assessments and/or experience.(of course while following the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Time should be spent on clear criteria for pay raises. Predictability for income is highly valued by workers.

In conclusion; because all our workers in Fire/EMS are at the low end or average pay scale of our neighboring communities, a 3% raise would be reasonable. We may consider in the future to have more options to offer increases to our employees when they reach a meaningful goal or milestone,instead of scheduling all our pay increases at a specific date.
