

Date: January 28, 2025
To: Members of the Somerville City Council
From: Anne Gill, HR Director and Michael Mastrobuoni, Budget Director
Subject: Review of Non-Union Employees Classification and Compensation Structure

Dear Members of the Somerville City Council,

We are writing to provide an update on the classification and compensation structure for non-union employees. This study was performed for approximately 250 unique non-union positions in the City of Somerville, held by full and regular part-time employees with insurance benefits.

The City of Somerville conducted a classification and compensation study of all union and non-union positions in 2023-2024, through a contract with an independent compensation consultant. The work in this memo built upon previous wage studies of non-union positions, last surveyed in 2016.

Executive Summary

Mayor Ballantyne called for a wage and compensation study as a part of her initiative to address equity in compensation for all employees. This compensation study was launched by Human Resources to support the City's ability to attract and retain qualified candidates, promote equity, and retain staff. The objectives of the study were to classify and compensate positions and employees in a *fair* (consistent) and *equitable* (competitive) manner, both *internally* within the City of Somerville and *externally* in comparison to the marketplace, and in accordance with the Massachusetts Pay Equity Law.

As a result of this classification and compensation project, the City is proposing to increase the compensation of the lowest-paid non-union employees to a minimum salary of \$65,000 per year. Once implemented, employees earning less will benefit the most from the proposed plan.

This proposal for classification and compensation of non-union employees has been presented to the City's Municipal Compensation and Advisory Board (MCAB), and is recommended for City Council approval.

Methodology

- 1. Job Description Review:** The study reviewed all non-union job descriptions in the City of Somerville. Human Resources shared current job descriptions with the compensation consultant. Employees were invited to participate in the vendor's review process by filling out a position analysis questionnaire survey. Managers were invited to review staff surveys for accuracy. The vendor's goal was to engage in an interactive process to describe the current essential functions (what an employee is required to do) and the minimum qualifications (knowledge, skills, and abilities under similar working conditions) that are required to complete assigned job duties for each job position.
- 2. Classification Plan (Internal Equity):** To compare positions to one another based on the application of a universal set of position evaluation criteria (or job factors) that describe the minimum level of knowledge, ability and skill that is required to carry out the essential functions of each position. Positions were allocated to classification bands based upon the compensation consultant's best

practices and analysis of job duties. Positions were classified into six (VI) bands. This simplified the current salary structure for non-union employees from fourteen (14) grades into six (VI) bands.

- 3. Compensation Plan (External Equity):** To establish a competitive salary range in a consistent manner based on the classification of positions to recruit and retain a well-qualified work force.

The compensation consultant worked with Human Resources to compile a survey instrument of City positions, including non-union positions, to send to comparable communities. The following municipalities were surveyed:

- Arlington
- Boston*
- Brookline
- Brockton
- Cambridge
- Framingham
- Malden
- Melrose
- MWRA*
- Newton
- Quincy
- Waltham
- Weymouth
- Worcester

*Data from Boston and MWRA was collected and analyzed for Water & Sewer positions.

Salary data was collected, analyzed, and compared with municipal counterparts. The consultant suggested pay bands for the City's review.

Recommendation

The classification of each position was used to create a compensation plan that is consistent with the organizational structure and internally equitable based on the comparable value of each position, not primarily market data.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the Council approve for funding the proposed Compensation structure for non-union employees, effective 1/5/25.