



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
NEW BEDFORD, MA
2022 OCT -6 PM 2:33
CITY CLERK

October 6, 2022

City Council President Ian Abreu and
Honorable Members of the City Council
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Council President Abreu and Honorable Members of the City Council:

I am submitting for your consideration an ordinance amending Section 19-7 of the Code of Ordinances: "Establishment of Unit C Classification and Salary Plan; procedures for advancement."

The enclosed memorandums from Human Resources Director Judith Keating and Chief Financial Officer Michael Gagne provide (1) background on the recruitment/retention challenges the ordinance is intended to address, (2) a description of the process used to ensure that the Plan reflects strong internal and external equity across all positions and departments, and (3) an explanation of certain revisions to the earlier reclassification proposal submitted to the Council.

Finally, please receive the attached supporting materials which were used in preparation of the ordinance. The data included in these documents reflect the most up-to-date information we possess on the compensation rates being offered by the range of localities used in the comparative analysis.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Jon Mitchell
Mayor

IN CITY COUNCIL, October 13, 2022

Referred to the Committee on Ordinances.

Dennis W. Farias, City Clerk

a true copy, attest:

Dennis W. Farias
City Clerk



City of New Bedford

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RELATIONS & PERSONNEL

Judith A. Keating
Director of Human Resources

MEMO

To: Mayor Jon Mitchel
From: Judi Keating, Director of Human Resources
Date: October 5, 2022
Re: Revisions to Unit C Reclassification Based on Additional "Comparables" Data

Since my previous memo of August 31, 2022, the Personnel Office has collected and analyzed additional data on compensation from other jurisdictions which was not available for use in the comparative analysis prepared for the previous reclassification proposal submitted to the City Council. (Data used in that analysis, in most cases, was collect in 2021 and early 2022.) The Personnel Office tracks compensation being offered at other jurisdictions on an ongoing basis (which is increasing in importance in the current inflationary environment). Based on new information, reconsideration of certain elements of the previous reclassification proposal is warranted.

The principal focus has been on reconsideration of compensation in the Solicitors Office. Further data and subsequent analysis have taken into account more recent postings for legal staff by the Massachusetts Municipal Association. In sum, the competition among localities for attorneys specializing in municipal law continues to escalate. The recent postings for vacancies at other cities and towns list salaries at rates well above the level proposed in the original reclassification proposal, making adjustments a necessity.

In addition, the recommendations for compensation in a number of other positions elsewhere in city government have changed based on new information. Some communities included in the original survey recently completed reclassification processes themselves. A new round of data collection was therefore conducted to capture new compensation rates in these communities, and this has allowed us to refine the proposal further to ensure that key positions in New Bedford remain competitive and equitable both inside and outside the organization.



City of New Bedford

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RELATIONS & PERSONNEL

Judith A. Keating
Director of Human Resources

MEMO

To: Mayor Jon Mitchel
From: Michael Gagne, CFO *MJG*
Judi Keating, Director of Human Resources *JK*
Date: August 31, 2022
Re: Overview of Unit C Reclassification Measure

The Management Level Hiring and Retention Challenge Confronting the City

The current competitive nature of recruiting and retaining employees, specifically within the municipal landscape has been challenging. We started tracking the loss of employees offered new positions in the Fall of 2021. We have lost over 40 candidates rejecting offers of employment. Some of these candidates had gone through the full onboarding process including pre-employment protocols due to receiving better offers from other communities close by. And, as you know well, the City has lost a significant number of department head and senior level management employees to retirement and other jurisdictions in recent years.

Background on Process

The development of Unit C Reclassification measure which you tasked to our respective offices is the result of a year-long process that included a comprehensive, department-by-department, position-by-position compensation assessment of 240 Unit C (non-union) positions. The assessment was assisted by an outside consultant and began with the collection and analysis of survey data from ten comparable municipalities in the region with similar size, service delivery, and complexity of operations. Goals and purposes of this effort were as follows:

- Create a structure that attracts top talent to the City of New Bedford and retain our current valued employees.
- Develop a process to pay positions in a fair and consistent manner that creates both internal and external equity.
- Provide a competitive based salary structure offering equitable salary ranges, growth and retention potential.
- Provide a structure for equal pay and an affirmative defense to possible claims of pay inequity.

Initial Findings and Follow-on Process

There were three take-aways from the initial compilation of survey data collected from the other jurisdictions:

- (1) The data argued strongly for the urgent need for multiple adjustments to our current compensation plan,
- (2) A thorough review was needed of each current Unit C employee's position, skills, level of responsibility, accountability, and experience.
- (3) These should be continued, regular attention and vigilance in the months and years ahead to promptly identify and address the potential development of internal inequities within the classification structure. In sum, while the current proposal represents a long-overdue reform, the City should move to adopt the best practice of other jurisdictions which conduct compensation/classification reviews as defined, periodic intervals.

Upon completion of each position review (item 2 above) the Personnel Office conducted a department-level position assessment and individual consultations with each department head. As a result of this work, multiple key positions were identified for upgrades which would bring them into alignment with external labor market conditions, as well as make them internally consistent across the organization.

In addition, using market data, the structure and salary ranges of the Unit C compensation table were updated to establish more competitive starting salaries and create growth and retention incentives for existing employees.