



TO: President Gardiner and Members of Town Council

FROM: Dustin Anderson, Town Manager

COPY: Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer
Mark Hajduk, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: Compensation Adjustments

DATE: September 6, 2022

Background

Council adopted Ordinance 1854: Amendment #1 to the 2022 Salary Ordinance at the February 21, 2022, meeting. The ordinance instituted a Grade and Step pay system for most non-Police employees. During implementation, employees were moved to the appropriate steps within the grade associated with their position title.

At the time, it was noted that the changes presented would not affect our firefighter pay scale. Rather, a solution would be presented during the third quarter of the year to address that class of wages.

Ordinance 1876 has been drafted for this purpose and is set to be effective upon passage.

Methodology

Chief Hajduk and Wendy Mis surveyed regional departments that also use a paid-on-call model for fire service. Results showed that we are in the bottom-third of departments for comparable pay. A table illustrating this is shown below.

On-Call Pay Rates								
Department	Deputy Chief	Battalion Chief	Captain	Lieutenant	Firefighter	Probationary	EMT Basic	EMT Paramedic
Highland	\$500.00 / yr	\$500.00 / yr	\$250.00 / yr	\$250.00 / yr	\$17.50 / hr			
Dyer	\$3,709.69 / tr				\$17.39 / hr	\$14.26 / hr	\$17.99 / hr	
Merrillville					\$19.09 / hr			
Griffith					\$12.00 / hr			
Schererville					\$16.12 / hr		\$18.07 / hr	\$20.70 / hr
Lake Hills							\$14.00 / hr	\$19.00 / hr
St. John					\$17.00 / hr		\$17.00 / hr	
Current Munster	\$4,484.60 / yr	\$3,590.65 / yr	\$2,765.32 / yr	\$1,489.90 / yr	\$16.86 / hr			
Proposed Munster	\$30.74 / hr	\$28.20 / hr	\$25.83 / hr	\$22.23 / hr	\$18.00 / hr	\$15.00 / hr	\$18.60 / hr	\$19.35 / hr

As you can see, the proposed changes to the compensation most immediately impact the paid on-call rates for firefighters, moving them from \$16.86 per hour to \$18.00. Another meaningful shift in compensation philosophy includes moving away from annual stipends for command staff and shifting their compensation to hourly as well. In the volunteer service model, this proportionally rewards those that routinely respond to call outs. Another change proposed includes creating an hourly probationary rate. Finally, the Town proposes to create the positions of EMT Basic and EMT Paramedic.

The Town secures daytime fire protection by paying a monthly stipend to those individuals who maintain regular availability for on-call status. Ordinance 1876 proposes to eliminate one category of stipend. The changes are illustrated in the following table.



Daytime Stipends					
	Daytime Firefighter 2 + 1	Daytime Firefighter 2	Daytime Firefighter 1 + 2	Daytime Firefighter 1	Daytime Probationary
Current Munster	\$223.01 / mo	\$192.87 / mo		\$168.77 / mo	\$124.50 / mo
Proposed Munster			\$223.01 / mo	\$192.87 / mo	\$124.50 / mo

The maximum and minimum stipend rates are not changed. However, the Town does suggest eliminating the Daytime Firefighter 2 and replacing it with Daytime Firefighter 1 with two or more years of experience.

Finally, this ordinance requests that non-probationary members of the Fire Department in good standing with their service requirements and certifications be allowed the same golf privileges that all other full-time employees enjoy.

Recommendation

By motion and voice vote, hear proposed Ordinance 1876 on first reading as presented and schedule second reading for September 19, 2022.