



To: President and Members of the Munster Town Council

From: Jim Marino
Town Manager

Date: August 18, 2025

Re: Town Manager's Office Staffing

After three months as town manager, I want to share with you what I observed about the operations and staffing in the town manager's office. I created the attached assessment based on what I noticed in eight categories.

Some of these findings you are already aware of and some align with strategies outlined in the draft strategic plan. Examples are included to provide context. This document is not intended to be a comprehensive evaluation, but rather a basis for initiating improvements.

The Town Manager's office handles many important tasks to keep daily operations running smoothly. Additional effort is needed to improve our operations and to undertake the new projects and initiatives outlined in the strategic and communication plans and to advance economic development. Munster is recognized as good community. We want to make it even better. The extra work and added staff are crucial to becoming the best community we all desire.

Running day-to-day operations alone is difficult to accomplish with only two employees in the Town Manager's office, myself and an administrative secretary. Additional staff is needed to perform the current and future functions of this office. One position that is needed is an assistant town manager. The function of this position would be to assist the Town Manager with managing operations and implementing the policies, initiatives and programs established by the Town Council. A primary responsibility is to serve as the human resource manager. A full list of duties is shown in the attached assessment.

Another vital role is the position of director of communications and community relations. This position would be responsible for all aspects of the Town's communications and community relations coordination. Areas of responsibility would be internal and external communications, community outreach, media and public relations, marketing. Duties include creating communication materials to educate the public and promote the amenities of Munster to various audiences, collaborate with every level of the organization to achieve brand consistency in content and messaging, and provide support for messaging and

marketing efforts related to the Town's services, events, initiatives, programs and economic development. A full list of duties is shown in the attached assessment.

A key responsibility of this role is to carry out the communications plan created by American Structurepoint. If hiring for this position begins soon it will be filled while American Structurepoint is working on the communications plan. This would enable the director of communications and community relations to collaborate with them on developing and implementing the plan.

The third role in the town manager's office is the economic development director. Since there are many projects underway and more planned it's clear that we need someone to oversee these until they are finished, and at the same time actively seek out new businesses.

The assessment also contains a list of the responsibilities of the town manager. I present this to illustrate my role in a reorganized town manager's office and how it connects with the positions of the assistant town manager, director of communications and community relations, and economic development director.

The economic development director position is in the salary ordinance at grade 7. Comparable salaries for the assistant town manager position are in the range of \$90,000 - \$115,000, which equates to grade 9. Comparable salaries for the director of communications and community relations position are in the range of \$70,000 - \$90,000, which equates to grade 7.

The expense of salaries is distributed among eight funds as shown in the tables and chart below. The total cost for the salaries of regular full/part-time employees including firefighters is \$10,708,117. The midpoint of the salary range for these three position totals \$242,300, which amounts to 2.26% of the cost for all salaries. It's not known at what salary individuals hired for these three positions would receive upon hire, so I am using the midpoint salary amount for this calculation.

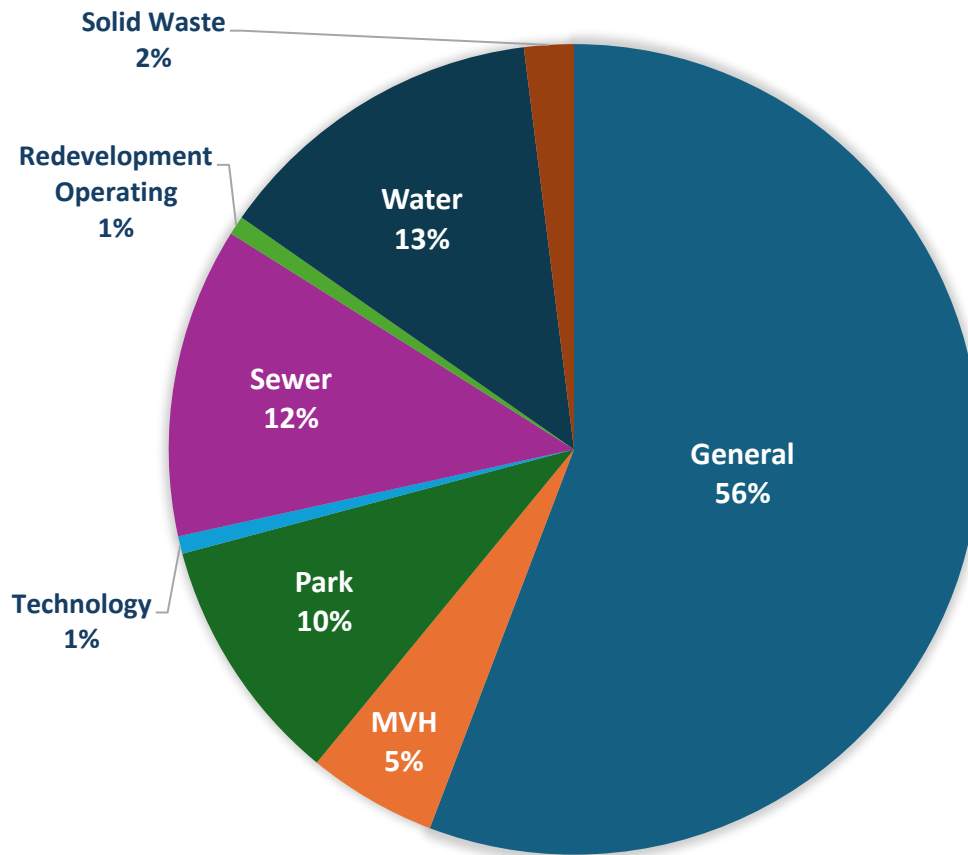
The cost for these salaries is partially offset by two vacant positions. The data processing specialist and administrative assistant positions in the Town Manager's office are vacant and will not be filled. The salary cost for these two positions amounts to \$128,312. This reduces the financial impact on the budget from \$242,300 to \$113,988.

I would conduct the recruitment for the economic development director and director of communications and community relations in-house. Because the nature and significance of the assistant town manager position, this position is typically filled through an executive recruiting company.

Recommendation:

By motion and roll call, hear Ordinance #1989 on first reading as presented and schedule second reading for the September 4, 2025, meeting.

SALARY EXPENSE BY FUND



Fund	Salary Budget	% of Total Salary Budget
General	5,973,822	55.8%
Water	1,427,005	13.3%
Sewer	1,325,819	12.4%
Park	1,061,454	9.9%
MVH	551,896	5.2%
Solid Waste	211,914	2.0%
Redevelopment Operating	80,957	0.8%
Technology	75,250	0.7%
	\$ 10,708,117	100%

Position	Range	Min	Mid	Max	% of Total Salaries
Assistant Town Manager	9	\$ 70,609	\$ 91,700	\$ 112,791	0.86%
Economic Development Director	7	\$ 57,981	\$ 75,300	\$ 92,619	0.70%
Communications & Community Relations	7	\$ 57,981	\$ 75,300	\$ 92,619	0.70%
Total Midpoint Salaries			\$ 242,300		2.26%