

Jackson County
2015 Compensation & Benefits Report



Human Resources Department

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March 2015

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I. Executive Summary

This compensation and benefits report was written to provide information as it relates to the County's current total compensation system. The first section of the report reviews information regarding the total compensation of the average employee including assigning monetary values for benefits received and comparing it to the national average for total compensation. The later section includes information regarding salary ranges for regional benchmark positions, historical county salary adjustments by year, and a review of what neighboring counties and municipalities are proposing for this upcoming fiscal. The report also includes information about the Consumer Price Index.

Overall, Jackson County is successful in recruitment for new entry level positions as the starting salaries for these positions are market competitive and the County's benefit offerings are richer in comparison with other private and non-profit sector organizations; however an area of concern is the growing salary compression that has occurred since 2009 as adjustments within the salary grade have not been made and the long-term results this may have on retention if not addressed.

This report includes two proposals for general salary increases; one option includes a step increase (2%) for each employee and the other option proposes a tiered step adjustments based on an employee's hire date to remedy the salary compression issue currently facing Jackson County in addition to implementing a longevity bonus plan and continuation of 2.5 days of bonus leave. Either option includes a step increase that will at least differentiate between the salary minimum. Salary compression has impacted retention rates and employee morale, as all employees hired on or after July 1, 2009 make the same salary as an individual hired today starting at the salary minimum (Step 1). In the future, Jackson County may want to consider contributing to a 401(k) for every employee and reinstating a longevity bonus to improve our compensation program and reward employees for their hard work and dedication.

The County's total turnover rates have been below 10% over the last three years and this year we are currently at 7.5%, whereas compared nationally the average total turnover rate is much higher ranging from 18-24%. In the last year, the county has remained steady in all types of turnover (voluntary, involuntary, and retirements). It is projected that the number of retirements will continue to grow over the next decade as the workforce ages and an increasing number of employees become eligible for an unreduced retirement benefit.

II. County Salary & Regional Comparison

Total Compensation

Total compensation is more than a base salary; it includes benefits, retirement contributions, paid time off, and other fringe benefits afforded to each eligible employee. It is important for employees to be knowledgeable of the value of their employment in the terms of base pay, benefits, and other employer paid related employment costs. When analyzing compensation figures, base pay is often the benchmark used for comparison in determining market alignment; however, the associated benefits must also be considered into this evaluation as a competitive benefits package is a primary attractor in recruiting prospective employees and a driver of retention of current employees. Below is a calculation of benefits as a percentage of average base pay. Calculation based on salaries of permanent full-time employees. In 2014 the average employee salary was \$38,796.26 with an average of 9.21 years of service; these figures are slightly lower than last year's averages - \$39,149.71 and 9.35 years of service respectively.

Benefits as a Percentage of Average Salary

| Benefit Category | Percentage of Average Salary | Average Value |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Holidays | 4.62% | \$1,790.60 |
| Sick Leave | 4.62% | \$1,790.60 |
| Vacation Leave | 5.77% | \$2,238.25 |
| Bonus Leave | 0.96% | \$373.04 |
| FICA (Social Security and Medicare) | 7.65% | \$2,967.91 |
| Retirement | 7.07% | \$2,742.90 |
| Health & Dental Insurance | 23.72% | \$9,202.96 |
| Total Benefit Value | 54.41% | \$21,106.26 |
| <i>In determining the percentage of average salary, the average county employee's years of service are 9.21 years of aggregate service and average county salary is \$38,796.26. The total benefit value is added to employee's base pay to determine total compensation.</i> | | |
| Average Base Pay | | \$38,796.26 |
| Average Benefit Value | | \$21,106.26 |
| Average Total Compensation | | \$59,902.52 |

Calculated as of 02-05-15 for average county employee, retirement rate is not reflective of LEO contribution rate or LEO 401(k) contributions; these calculations do not take into consideration other fringe employee benefits or employer payments including free employee clinic, group term life insurance, worker's compensation insurance, unemployment insurance and tax, jury duty leave, bereavement leave, or anything not specifically stated.

Once the Average Total Compensation is derived, salary and benefits can be in turn calculated as a Percentage of Total Compensation. This allows for comparisons to be made between the county's Average Percentage of Total Compensation and national trends. Analysis indicates that Jackson County's salary and benefits when expressed as a percentage of total compensation are equivalent to national averages for state and local governments.

| Compensation Component | Private Industry | State and Local Government | Jackson County |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Wages & Salaries | 69.8% | 64.0% | 64.8% |
| Benefits | 30.2% | 36.0% | 35.2% |
| Paid Leave | 6.9% | 7.3% | 10.3% |
| Supplemental Pay | 2.8% | 0.8% | - |
| Insurance | 8.3% | 12.0% | 15.4% |
| Retirement | 4.1% | 10.0% | 4.6% |
| Legally Required | 8.1% | 5.9% | 4.9% |

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.htm>

Market Compensation Survey

When comparing Jackson County to other WNC counties and municipalities a brief market compensation survey was completed using the salary information collected in the 2014 University of North Carolina School of Government's Salary Compilation.

Market Survey Employer Selection:

In reviewing Jackson County's salary ranges to other counties, it is important to be aware of the County's size, location/geographic proximity, and nature of the services provided. Taking these items into consideration the following counties were used for comparison: Cherokee, Haywood, Henderson, Macon, and Transylvania.

Survey Benchmark Positions:

The benchmark positions selected are representative of position found throughout current local government classification systems and provide a reference point for reviewing the market competitiveness of current Jackson County salaries and to provide general recommendations for non-benchmark positions.

Benchmark positions are those which meet the following criteria: well defined positions that exist in other local governments, encompass a variety of skill levels within the organization, reasonable well known and understood positions which are clearly and concisely described, and represent a variety of pay level within the organization.

Forty six (46) benchmark positions were selected for the comparison survey. **Appendix A. 2014 Market Compensation Survey – Benchmark Positions** shows the collected salary information highlighting the minimum and maximum for each position and the overall regional minimum and maximum salary averages.

Market Compensation Survey Results:

After analyzing the data collected, the starting salaries for the benchmark positions appear to be market competitive as the 42 out of the 46 positions have an average starting salary that is 90% or greater than the regional average and of those, 28 positions have an average starting salary that is greater than the regional average. Four of the benchmark positions had starting salaries that were below 90% of the regional average: Elections Specialist, Computer System Administrator I, IT Director, and Finance Director.

History of Jackson County Increases

The following chart depicts a historical listing of salary increases/adjustments that were awarded to Jackson County employees since FY 2000-2001. In previous years, salary adjustments included a COLA increase and a career growth/step advancement increase (part of the previously adopted pay plan) in addition to other forms of monetary benefits of either 401(k) contributions or longevity pay plans. Since the implementation of the Mercer Classification and Pay Study there have been no step increases just overall COLA adjustments leading to six years of salary compression and no differentiation in employee salaries who were hire between 2009 and now.

| Year | Cost-of-Living Increase | Career Growth/ Step Advancement | Bonus Increase/Other Monetary Incentive |
|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 2000-2001 | 1.5% | 2.5% | 1% 401(k) contribution |
| 2001-2002 | 2.5% | DMG Implementation | 1% 401(k) contribution |
| 2002-2003 | - | One Step (2%) | Longevity Pay (\$50/yr.) |
| 2003-2004 | 1% | One Step (2%) | Longevity Pay (\$50/yr.) |
| 2004-2005 | 2% | One Step at Anniversary* | - |
| 2005-2006 | 2.5% | One Step at Anniversary* | - |
| 2006-2007 | 3.5% | One Step at Anniversary* | - |
| 2007-2008 | 3.4% | One Step at Anniversary* | - |
| 2008-2009 | 2.9% | Mercer Implementation | - |

| | | | |
|-----------|------|-----------------------|--|
| 2009-2010 | - | Mercer Implementation | - |
| 2010-2011 | - | - | - |
| 2011-2012 | - | - | - |
| 2012-2013 | - | - | \$650 one-time check for EEs with salaries <\$40,000 (this amount was not added to base salary) |
| 2013-2014 | 2% | - | - |
| 2014-2015 | 1.5% | - | 2.5 days of bonus leave |

* Career ladder implementation began in FY 2004-2005. All employees were given a step increase on the anniversary date of the position. LEOs were given the step advancement on the anniversary of their hire date.

Area Increase Comparisons

Below is a summary of FY 2014-2015 salary and/or benefit increases for neighboring counties/municipalities and other public organizations. Included in this summary are proposed salary and/or benefit adjustments for FY 2015-2016 under consideration.

| County/Municipality/Org. | FY 2014-2015 | FY 2015-2016 |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Cherokee Co. | None. | Lump sum bonus: \$750 full-time, \$375 part-time |
| Haywood Co. | Continuation of: 1% 401(k) contribution for employees, Christmas bonus, 0-2% merit allocation, and longevity pay. | Continuation of: 1% 401(k) contribution for employees, Christmas bonus, 0-2% merit allocation, and longevity pay. |
| | Longevity: 5-9 years: 2%, 10-14 years: 2.5%, 15-19 years: 3%, 20-29 years: 3.5%, 30+ years: 4% | |
| Henderson Co. | 3% COLA, lump sum retention bonus, lump sum merit pay bonus, and continuation of 2% 401(k)/457 contribution for employees. | COLA, lump sum retention bonus, lump sum merit pay bonus, and continuation of 2% 401(k)/457 contributions for employees and adjustment of salary ranges. |
| | Longevity/Retention: 0-4 years: 0%, 5-9 years: 1%, 10-14 years: 2%, 15-19 years: 3%, 20-24 years: 5%, and 25+ years 7.5% | |
| Macon Co. | Continuation of 2% 401(k) contribution for all employees. | Unsure, possible Springsted pay plan implementation. |
| | Longevity: 10-14 years: 1.5%, 15-19 years: 2.25%, 20-24 years: 3.25%, and 25+ years: 4.5%. | |
| Town of Sylva | 1.5% COLA and continuation of 5% 401k match for all employees and longevity pay. | COLA and continuation of 5% 401k match and longevity pay. |
| | Longevity: 1- 4 years: \$100, 5-9 years \$400, 10-14 years \$600, 15-19 years \$750, and 20+ years \$1000. | |

| | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| Transylvania Co. | Compensation study implemented, part one. Minimum of 1% to each employee. Plus longevity bonus. | Compensation study implemented, part two. Minimum of 1% to each employee. Plus longevity bonus. |
| | Longevity: 5-10 years: 2%, 11-15 years: 3%, 16-20 years: 4%, 21+ year: 5%. Maximum longevity bonus is \$1,250 | |
| TWSA | 1.5% COLA and 0.5-2% merit allocation. | Chained-CPI and merit allocation amounts to be determined. |

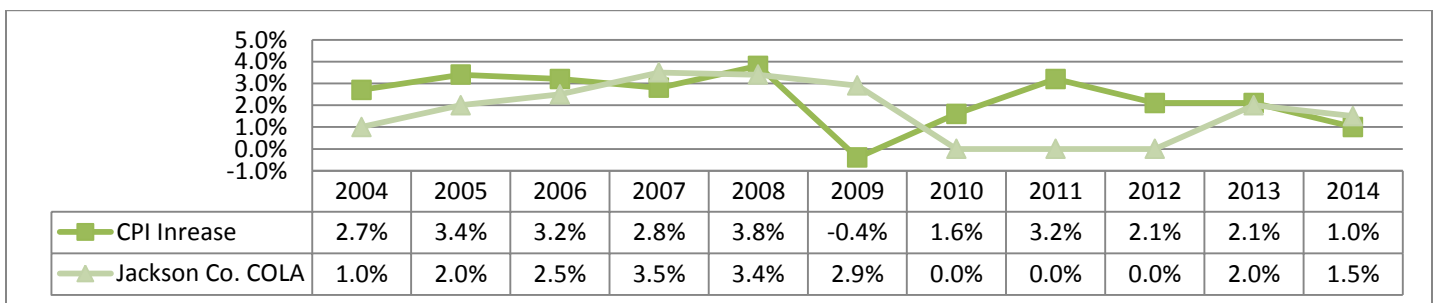
Source: Organization's HR and Finance Departments.

Consumer Price Index Information

Over the last ten years the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has increased an average of 2.17% each year. At the end of 2014, the CPI had increased by 1.0% since the end of 2013. Below is a brief overview of the last twelve years of CPI and changes in CPI; this percentage change measures the change over a year in the prices paid by consumers for goods and services. Historically Jackson County's annual salary increases has included a cost-of-living component, the chart included compares the change in CPI for the years indicated with the percent increase for the cost-of-living portion of any annual increases approved for the period of 2003-2014. The graphed data indicates the cost-of-living increases from 2004-2014 trailed the CPI changes for the same time period, with the exception of 2007-2009 and 2013-2014. This differential reflects that compensation for county employees has historically not kept pace with the CPI. Over the past five years, the CPI has increased 8.9% while county employee pay has increased 3.5%, effectively eroding the employee "buying power" by 5.4%.

| Year | Annual CPI | Change from Previous Year | Year | Annual CPI | Change from Previous Year |
|------|------------|---------------------------|------|------------|---------------------------|
| 2003 | 184.0 | 1.0% | 2009 | 214.537 | -0.4% |
| 2004 | 188.9 | 2.7% | 2010 | 218.056 | 1.6% |
| 2005 | 195.3 | 3.4% | 2011 | 224.939 | 3.2% |
| 2006 | 201.6 | 3.2% | 2012 | 229.594 | 2.1% |
| 2007 | 207.342 | 2.8% | 2013 | 232.957 | 1.0% |
| 2008 | 215.303 | 3.8% | 2014 | 234.812 | 1.0% |

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics



III. Turnover Rates & Retirements

Turnover Rates

The cost of turnover is difficult to measure however it is important to realize there is a bottom-line impact that occurs when employees leave and new employees come on board. Not only is organizational knowledge lost when an employee leaves the organization but turnover costs can include productivity losses during training, recruiting, and lost work while a position is vacant. According to industry experts, turnover costs can range from 20-80% of the departing employee's annual salary (20% is the commonly cited cost of turnover that can be broadly applied for most industries including government entities), this is heavily dependent on the type of positions and the performance level of the departing employee. There are various contributing factors when calculating the cost of turnover; the more obvious costs include advertising for vacant position, salaries of employees involved in search committees, and the manager's time spent interviewing and reviewing candidate information. Less apparent costs that are harder to quantify include loss of productivity (particularly when the position is vacant during recruitment), lost knowledge from exiting employee, orientation/training time for new employee, and increased workloads for other employees within the department. The cost of turnover may be difficult to assign a quantifiable number, however turnover should be monitored and is a clear motivator to engage in workforce succession planning.

Turnover rates are a measurement of employee separations; three types of turnover rates are reported below: voluntary turnover, involuntary turnover, and retirement turnover. Total turnover is the aggregate of voluntary, involuntary and retired turnover. Voluntary turnover includes separations when an employee leaves the organization on his own volition i.e. resignation; and involuntary turnover includes separations at the discretion of the organization i.e. dismissals or reduction-in-force.

Turnover Rates for Permanent Full-Time Positions

| Turnover Type | FY 2012-2013 | | FY 2013-2014 | | FY 2014-2015 (to date) | |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|
| | Separations | Turnover Rate | Separations | Turnover Rate | Separations | Turnover Rate |
| Voluntary | 17 | 5.02% | 15 | 3.92% | 14 | 3.77% |
| Involuntary | 2 | 0.53% | 3 | 0.78% | 3 | 0.81% |
| Retirement | 7 | 2.12% | 13 | 3.39% | 11 | 2.96% |
| Total Turnover | 26 | 7.67% | 31 | 8.09% | 28 | 7.54% |

In comparison with national averages, Jackson County's total turnover rates are below half of those in the private sector (18-24% average) and marginally below those of the public sector (10-12% average). The turnover data to date shows that our turnover is marginally lower than last year, however there are a few months left in the fiscal year and this statistic is likely to increase slightly.

Turnover Rates by Department FY 2014-2015

| Department | Voluntary Separations | Involuntary Separations | Retirements | Total Separations | Department Turnover Rate |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Aging | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10% |
| Code Enforcement | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5.5% |
| Fire Services | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 28.6% |
| Health | 3 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 9.4% |
| Public Works | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 7.0% |
| Sheriff's Office | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3.9% |
| Social Services | 5 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 8.7% |
| Tax Admin. | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 23.1% |
| Tax Collections | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 25% |
| Transit | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 11.1% |
| Veterans Services | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 50% |

Retirement Eligibility of County Employees

Retirements continue to be a growing concern as those who are eligible for retirement hold the most senior positions within the County and possess an immense amount of departmental and functional knowledge critical to ongoing operations of the County. Within the next five years, 51 or almost 14% of County employees will be eligible for an unreduced retirement benefit; currently there are 25 County employees who are eligible for an unreduced retirement benefit this year.

Below are highlights of the retirement eligibility of current Jackson County employees:

- 4 employees plan to retire between 5/1/15-9/1/15
- 21 employees are eligible for unreduced retirement in 2015
 - Includes 6 Department Heads (Finance, Health, Tax Administrator/Assessor, Social Services, Register of Deeds)
- 51 employees are eligible for unreduced retirement within 5 years
 - Includes 3 Department Heads (IT/Computer, Sheriff, Transit)

As the above statistics only capture retirement eligibility based on age and creditable service years, it can be reasonably estimated that more than 20% of Jackson County’s workforce will be eligible for retirement within the next five years with an unreduced or reduced monthly benefit. See **Appendix B. LGERS Retirement Eligibility & Appendix B. LGERS LEO Retirement Eligibility** for the specific requirements for retirement eligibility.

Average Age of Workforce

Currently the average age of the Jackson County employee is 45.4 years. Below is information regarding the age of Jackson County employees versus industry averages for government employees and employees of all industries, Jackson County mirrors the national government employee trend in the age distribution of the workforce.

| | <24 years | 25-34 years | 35-44 years | 45-54 years | 55-64 years | 65+ years | Median Age |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Jackson County | 3.8% | 19.9% | 24.4% | 26.9% | 22.5% | 2.5% | 45.4 |
| Government Average | 3.9% | 19.3% | 24.5% | 28.6% | 19.2% | 4.5% | 45.6 |
| All Industries Average | 15.9% | 16.9% | 16.1% | 17.6% | 15.9% | 17.6% | 42.4 |

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Demographics, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/demographics.htm>

IV. Salary Adjustment Proposal

General Salary Adjustment

In review of our current pay plan and the pay/incentive plans of other counties, Jackson County needs to position itself to not only have market competitive starting salaries – but have rewards and incentives in place to motivate and retain current talent. Option One proposes a step increase to all employees (a step is equivalent to a 2% increase); however this option would not provide much differentiation from the starting salary and would skim the surface to addressing the salary compression that has occurred over the last six years but would be a move in the right direction. Option Two proposes giving one, two or three steps adjustments based on an employee's hire date. This option will alleviate the salary compression that has occurred and will differentiate employees from the starting salary. This option does not provide a step for each year since the last step adjustment but recognizes 50% of that time.

Option One:

Provide all employees a one (1) step adjustment effective 7/1/15.

Option Two:

Provide employees with a step(s) adjustment based on hire date effective 7/1/15.

- Hired before 6/30/11: 3 Steps = 6%
- Hired between 7/1/11 – 6/30/13: 2 Steps = 4%
- Hired between 7/1/13 - 6/30/15: 1 Step = 2%

In this option 68.6% of employees would receive a 6% increase, 13.2% of employees would receive a 4% increase, and 18.2% of employees would receive a 2% increase; for an overall average of 5% increase for each employee using a weighted average. In following fiscal years, it is proposed to make step adjustments on the anniversary date pending a satisfactory performance evaluation.

Longevity Pay

In addition to the step adjustments, Jackson County should consider implementing a longevity payment for employees. Currently Haywood Co., Henderson Co., Macon Co., Town of Sylva, and Transylvania Co. all have a longevity plans in place to recognize continuous service. Below is a proposed longevity pay plan for Jackson County. Longevity will be calculated based on years of continuous service at the beginning of the fiscal year.

- Less than 5 years: \$100
- 5-less than 10 years: \$400
- 10-less than 15 years: \$600
- 15-less than 20 years: \$750
- 20+ years: \$1000

Eligibility: To be eligible to receive longevity pay the employee must meet the following requirements:

1. An employee must be a regular full-time or regular part-time employee of Jackson County in a permanent position.
2. Credit for the service requirement shall not be given for temporary full-time or temporary part-time employment. Periods of leave without pay in excess of one-half the workdays in a month with the exception of Family Medical Leave (FMLA), Military Leave and Worker's Compensation leave will not count toward service credit.
3. County service is the time for **continuous** regular, trainee and probationary period employment for a permanent position.
4. Regular part-time employees will receive longevity pay in proportion to their percentage of base pay.

Bonus Leave

Last year the Board of Commissioners granted 2.5 days of bonus leave for Jackson County employees who were employed in permanent positions prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. The bonus leave was issued in addition to regularly accrued vacation and sick leave. The intent of the bonus leave was to provide employees with additional paid leave in order to cover unforeseen absences such as inclement weather. All bonus leave was to be taken within the fiscal year; any unused bonus would not carry over into the next year.

This additional leave type was received favorably by all employees and would advocate continuing to issue 2.5 days of bonus leave to provide additional paid time off for unforeseen absences and encourage employees to save these days for wintry weather and possibly County delays or closures.

V. Reclassification & Position Change Recommendations

Below are the recommendations for reclassifications based either on market compensation or due to significant changes in duties and responsibilities for specified positions. The information also includes requests for new positions or increases in full-time equivalents (FTEs). Each Department has developed justification for these requests and will present as part of their 2015-2016 departmental budget request. The intent of this summary is to inform the Board of Commissioners in advance of upcoming requests. Option One is included in the listing for each employee providing a one-step increase in addition to any reclassification.

Board of Elections

The starting salary of the Elections Specialist position was found to be marginally below 90% of market average. After review of the Elections Specialist positions with the Director of the Board of Elections, it is recommended to continue to monitor the Elections Specialist position regionally as Election laws are continually changing and being implemented, changing how work is done. In review of the two Elections Specialists duties and responsibilities were analyzed and it was identified the duties and responsibilities significantly changed for one individual. It is recommended to reclassify one of the Elections Specialist positions to an Elections Systems Specialist due to the increased responsibility for maintaining all elections laptops, voter software, and role in training precinct and poll workers. This would bring the position to a Grade 17 which is equivalent to an entry level computer or IT position (Computer Support Technician I).

| Name | Current Position | Current Grade | Current Step | Current Salary | Proposed Title | Proposed Grade | Proposed Step | Proposed Salary |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Cauley, Lindsy | Elections Specialist | 15 | 1 | \$25,340 | Elections Systems Specialist | 17 | 2 | \$28,496 |

Finance Department

The starting salary of the Finance Director position was found to be below 90% of market average. Recommend reclassifying the Finance Director position from a Grade 34 to a Grade 35 to bring it to a market competitive range.

| Name | Current Position | Current Grade | Current Step | Current Salary | Proposed Title | Proposed Grade | Proposed Step | Proposed Salary |
|--------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Fox, Darlene | Finance Director | 34 | 34 | \$123,087 | Finance Director | 35 | 35 | \$131,826 |

Department on Aging

As the services at the Department on Aging continue to grow throughout the county, an increase in their staffing levels will be needed to continue to provide much needed programming and services to seniors in our county. The request to increase staffing includes transitioning one Adult Day Care Activities Manager/Substitute from temporary part-time to permanent part-time and increasing the Cashiers Senior Services Manager from 0.725 FTE to 1 FTE. Further the Senior Health & Wellness Manager position was found not to have a market competitive salary based on other positions that provide health education and recommend reclassifying the position from a Grade 16 to a Grade 17.

| Name | Current Position | Current Grade | Current Step | Current Salary | Proposed Title | Proposed Grade | Proposed Step | Proposed Salary |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Griffin, Marsha | Adult Day Care Act. Mgr. | - | - | \$10.35/hr. | Adult Day Care Act. Mgr. | - | - | \$11,422 |
| Buchanan, Linda | Cashiers Senior Svs. Mgr. | 17 | 1 | \$20,255 (72.5%) | Cashiers Senior Svs. Mgr. | 17 | 2 | \$28,496 (100%) |
| Rodi, Laura | Senior Health & Wellness | 16 | 1 | \$26,607 | Senior Health & Wellness | 17 | 2 | \$28,496 |

Public Works Department

Last year the Public Works Department underwent a restructuring of their department to include the positions that had split responsibilities to include Solid Waste/Housekeeping and Grounds/Maintenance and the restructuring process implemented two Assistant Directors. During this process, the department was reduced by one FTE. After operating for a year with one less FTE, the request is to add 1 FTE in the position of General Utility Worker III in the Maintenance Division, this position would have a payroll distribution of 80% maintenance and 20% grounds in order to perform duties in both divisions as needed. Since 2012, the number of work orders has increased by 52%. In 2012 there were a total of 586 work orders and this increased to 890 work orders in 2013. In 2015, we are currently averaging 100 work orders per month and are on track to have approximately 1200 work orders this year. The additional increase in work orders has created difficulty for maintenance to designate time to devote to preventative maintenance (scheduled painting, roof repairs, air filter replacements, etc.). The additional FTE would provide an opportunity for more time to be spent on preventative measures and provide additional support to the garage staff who have seen a 12% increase in work orders.

Additionally, the Public Works Department will be requesting a permanent part-time Housekeeper (50%) to work at in the Cashiers area if the Cashiers Senior Center provides full time operating hours as the housekeeping duties would no longer be provided by the Department on Aging staff. This position would also be required to assist in maintaining the Cashiers Library and the Cashiers/Glenville Recreation Center.

| Name | Current Position | Current Grade | Current Step | Current Salary | Proposed Title | Proposed Grade | Proposed Step | Proposed Salary |
|------|------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| - | - | - | - | - | Vacant | 17 | 1 | \$27,937 |
| - | - | - | - | - | Vacant | 13 | 1 | \$11,492 (50%) |

Parks & Recreation Department

Last year the Parks & Recreation Department focused on developing its outdoor programming offerings with hiring a new Outdoor Recreation Manager. There has been an increased number outdoor programs and learning opportunities for County residents of all ages. Upon review of the Andrews Park Assistant Manager position and its duties and responsibilities, the position closely matches the General Utility Worker III position with the Grounds Division of Public Works requiring similar work for maintaining the grounds and making maintenance improvements for the campground, in addition to providing overnight hours and acting as Campground Manager in his absence. Recommend reclassifying the position from a Grade 16 to a Grade 17 as General Utility Worker III's are classified.

| Name | Current Position | Current Grade | Current Step | Current Salary | Proposed Title | Proposed Grade | Proposed Step | Proposed Salary |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Broom, Lynn | Andrews Park Asst. Mgr. | 16 | 1 | \$26,607 | Andrews Park Asst. Mgr. | 17 | 2 | \$28,496 |

Tax Collections Department

The starting salary of the Deputy Tax Collector position was found to be market competitive when looking at all WNC counties, however with Haywood County increasing its starting salary for this position, the market competitiveness of our starting salary will drop below 90% of market average. After review of the Deputy Tax Collections positions with the Tax Collector, it is recommended to reclassify the position from a Grade 15 to a Grade 16 to be market competitive in relation to both Haywood and Macon counties. The starting rate for a Grade 16 is also market average for entry level and starting tellers in financial institutions.

| Name | Current Position | Current Grade | Current Step | Current Salary | Proposed Title | Proposed Grade | Proposed Step | Proposed Salary |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Queen, Linda | Deputy Tax Collector | 15 | 1 | \$25,340 | Deputy Tax Collector | 16 | 2 | \$27,139 |
| Smith, Mary | Deputy Tax Collector | 15 | 1 | \$25,340 | Deputy Tax Collector | 16 | 2 | \$27,139 |

Section 3: Qualifying for Benefits

Vesting

You become vested in LGERS once you have completed a minimum of 5 years of creditable service. This means that you are eligible to apply for lifetime monthly retirement benefits based on the retirement formula in effect at the time of your retirement and the age and service requirements described in this handbook provided you do not withdraw your contributions.

Service Retirement (Unreduced Benefits)

You may retire with an unreduced service retirement benefit after you:

- reach age 65 and complete 5 years of creditable service
- reach age 60 and complete 25 years of creditable service
- complete 30 years of creditable service at any age

Early Retirement (Reduced Benefits)

You may retire early with a reduced retirement benefit after you:

- reach age 50 and complete 20 years of creditable service
- reach age 60 (age 55 if you are a firefighter or rescue squad worker) and complete 5 years of creditable service

Your early retirement benefit is calculated using the same formula as a service retirement benefit multiplied by a reduction percentage based on your age and/or service at early retirement. Because your benefit may be paid over a longer period of time than if you had waited until being eligible for service retirement, your benefit will be reduced. The tables on [page 11](#) show the effects these reductions would have on your benefit.

Vested Deferred Benefit

If you leave LGERS for any reason other than retirement or death, you can either receive a refund of your contributions and interest, or leave your contributions in LGERS and keep all the creditable service you earned to that date.

You may be entitled to apply to receive a deferred benefit at a later date once you meet eligibility requirements after you have completed 5 years of creditable service provided you do not withdraw your contributions. Your benefit is calculated using the formula in effect on your retirement date. It is based on your average final compensation and years of creditable service at that time.



Section 3: Qualifying for Benefits

Vesting

You become vested in LGERS once you have completed a minimum of 5 years of creditable service as an officer. This means that you are eligible to apply for lifetime monthly retirement benefits based on the retirement formula in effect at the time of your retirement and the age and service requirements described in this handbook provided you do not withdraw your contributions.

Service Retirement (Unreduced Benefits)

You may retire with an unreduced service retirement benefit after you:

- reach age 55 and complete 5 years of creditable service as an officer
- complete 30 years of creditable service at any age

Early Retirement (Reduced Benefits)

You may retire early with a reduced retirement benefit after you reach age 50 and complete 15 years of creditable service.

Your early retirement benefit is calculated using the same formula as a service retirement benefit multiplied by a reduction percentage based on your age and/or service at early retirement. Because your benefit may be paid over a longer period of time than if you had waited until being eligible for service retirement, your benefit will be reduced. The table on [page 11](#) shows the effect these reductions would have on your benefit.

Vested Deferred Benefit

If you leave LGERS for any reason other than retirement or death, you can either receive a refund of your contributions and interest, or leave your contributions in LGERS and keep all the creditable service you earned to that date.

You may be entitled to apply to receive a deferred benefit at a later date once you meet eligibility requirements after you have completed 5 years of creditable service provided you do not withdraw your contributions. Your benefit is calculated using the formula in effect on your retirement date. It is based on your average final compensation and years of creditable service at that time.