

Project Overview

In 2022, Beaver County Council expressed a desire for an independent review of the wage/salary ranges for both unionized and non-unionized employees to ensure equity, competitiveness, and the attraction/retention of qualified employees.

It was also determined the County would benefit from a human resources strategy that identifies current and future human resource needs for the County to achieve its goals, and links human resources management with the overall strategic plan for the County (as identified in the 2021 Corporate Governance Review).

Daryl Johnson of Johnson and Associates was engaged as the 3rd party independent consultant to conduct both components of the project review. Daryl has 27 years of extensive human resources leadership and senior management experience with extensive involvement in total compensation and incentive program design, strategic HR planning, and HR consulting.

Project Scope

Key deliverables of the review included comparing wages and benefits to comparable municipalities and recommending adjustments; recommending attraction/retention incentives; and reviewing and recommending new/amended human resource policies.

Compensation Program Review

The Union employees' compensation is determined by negotiated collective agreements, whereas Non-union employees' compensation is determined by policy (last independent review conducted in 2015).

Approximately 30 selected "benchmark employee positions" were identified (not all positions), representing various departments and programs, as well as varying levels of responsibility. The Consultant identified 10 comparator municipalities similar to Beaver County in organizational structure and services, and geographic proximity.

The comparator municipalities were asked to provide their respective salary ranges for benchmark positions, and the quality of job match was reviewed to ensure accuracy and integrity. All 10 comparator municipalities responded to the County survey, which is an exceptional response.

Non-Union (out-of-scope) - For out-of-scope (non-union) positions, approximately 90% of positions fell within comparable ranges.

A salary range structure has been designed and will be implemented January 1st. This new structure aligns with competitive market practices and will enable transparent and consistent salary administration now and into the future; and provides a framework to align with, and support, the Long-Term Strategic Plan 2022-2040.

Union – Four (4) benchmark Positions were used as comparators, and all benchmark positions ranged between 92% and 104% of comparable municipalities.

The County is committed to keeping a close eye on COLA adjustments to ensure the County stays competitive in terms of attraction and retention now and into the future.

Employee Benefits

Beaver County's benefit plan is deemed to be very comprehensive and competitive. The review reflected key plan components and strengths such as:

- 100% employer-paid premiums align with market.
- Long Service Recognition is better than comparative municipalities.
- Beaver County offers more General and County holidays (stats) than most comparators.
- Paid time off options either align with comparators or are better.
- Flexible work arrangements should be explored.
- Short-term disability plan options that bridge the gap between regular medical leave and long-term disability should be explored.

Human Resources Policies

A review of 33 human resource policies was conducted to ensure currency and consistency, with 3 policies deleted that are no longer relevant. The policy review also resulted in the following:

- 8 new policies were developed.
- 6 policies were reviewed with major amendments.
- 3 policies were revised with minor amendments.
- 16 policies had changes in format only.

Performance Development

The performance development process has been refined to enable clear and consistent communication with respect to annual performance goals, objectives and measures, as well as aligning behaviours and competencies with our Vision and Values. The primary purpose of the Beaver County Performance Development program is to develop and measure the "on-the-job" performance levels and behaviours of employees.

In-depth orientation and training will be conducted for all County employees providing the benefits of performance development, and an introduction of supporting tools and templates.

Succession Planning

A succession planning framework was also designed and presented to the CAO and leadership to plan the process of identifying key or important positions in the organization and creating a talent pipeline, by proactively identifying and preparing employees to fill vacancies in the organization as others retire or move on.

Council Approval

Council accepted the report and approved the human resources policies on August 16, 2023.