



TOWN OF EAST HADDAM

2021-2022 BUDGET

PUBLIC HEARING FOLLOW-UP

Introduction

East Haddam values our dedicated employees. We know that it is critical that we attract and retain qualified individuals to work for our community and to compensate those individuals in a fair and equitable fashion.

We understand that many of our citizens are on fixed incomes or are facing financial challenges of their own making the suggestions of salary adjustments difficult for some. Please be assured that we use our resources carefully and strive to limit the financial impact to our citizens.

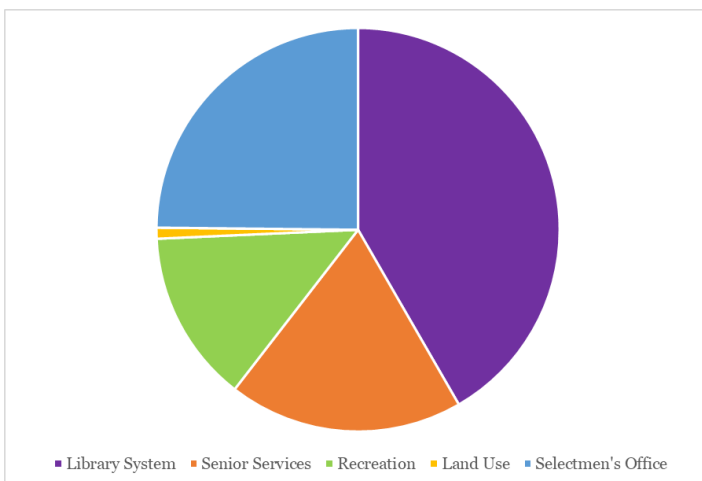
Wage Adjustments

The 2021-2022 budget includes wage adjustments for 20 non-union town positions. Of these adjustments—one is the elected First Selectman position, five are exempt (salaried) positions and 14 non-exempt (hourly) positions.

Other than the First Selectmen position, the individuals who will potentially be affected have not been personally identified. The purpose of not identifying individuals was to not give false hope of potential wage adjustments.

The wage adjustments include bringing five positions to above the minimum wage rate effective August 1, 2021.

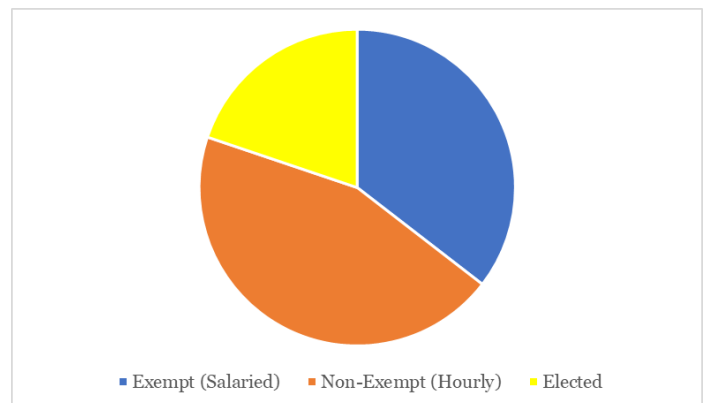
The impact to the 2021-2022 budget is \$49,732 or 2% of the total budget increase or further stated as .13% of the total proposed budget. The pie chart below shows the allocation of the adjustments by department.



East Haddam's Library System, Recreation Department and Senior Services play an integral role in providing vital services to our citizens. These three areas continue to expand upon the programs, resources, and activities available for East Haddam citizens of all ages.

The wage adjustments are proposed in three increments—in fiscal year 2021-2022, 50% on July 1, 2021 and 25% on January 1, 2022 and in fiscal year 2022-2023, 25% on July 1, 2022.

Below is a pie chart that reflects the distribution of adjustments between elected, exempt, and non-exempt employees.



Historical Perspective/Background

In 2007 a Compensation and Classification Study was completed for town department heads and supervisors. The study was conducted by Randi Frank LLC. The purpose of the study was to analyze position classifications and to recommend wage adjustments that needed to be addressed. The recommendations of that study were not funded.

Exempt Employee 2018 Classification and Compensation Study

In 2018, the town once again engaged the services of Randi Frank LLC to conduct a Compensation and Classification Study for town department heads and supervisors. One component of the study was a compensation comparison. The towns that were used were the same one used in the 2007 study—Essex, Durham, Haddam, Hebron, Killingworth, Lebanon, Marlborough, Old Lyme, East Hampton, Portland, and Westbrook. The Randi Frank firm also reviewed other locations that could provide pertinent information in preparing the study.

Another component of the study was a position classification analysis. We recognize that while the position title may be the same from town to town, that may not be the case for the requirements or responsibilities for each position. The classification study reviewed the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) for each position. Everyone completed a questionnaire that included the following factors:

- Minimum education required for the position.
- Years of experience required to perform the position.
- Licenses and certifications required for the position.
- Specific skills or abilities required to perform the position.
- Levels of public contact.
- Levels of contact with other departments, outside agencies or organizations.
- Supervision received or required.
- Supervisory responsibilities.
- What the impact would be if the employee made an error and the consequences of that error to East Haddam.
- Work environment.
- Physical activities.
- Operation of equipment.

Upon completion of the questionnaire everyone was interviewed by a member of the Randi Frank firm. The responses were weighted to provide a template for position classifications.

The outcome was a schedule that includes a wage grade classification with a minimum, midpoint, and maximum salary range. The new wage template revealed that there were positions that East Haddam had not classified properly or that the responsibilities of the position had evolved over time or that the position was not compensated at the minimum recommended salary. Of important note, there are no positions currently being compensated over the recommended midpoint. In addition, the proposed budget does not fully achieve the minimum wage recommendation. The affected positions will receive 75% of the recommended adjustment in fiscal year 2021-2022.

We have used the information from this study as a guide and not an absolute. The Boards of Finance and Selectmen weigh several factors in determining what are acceptable wages for town positions. The point of this study was to give the town the necessary information to evaluate wages paid.

The study referenced that communities with a First Selectman determine the salary based on politics, not on authority and responsibility. The point system used resulted in the salary recommendation. Current First Selectman Robert Smith is not seeking re-election and has stated that he will not accept the salary adjustment as he completes his term.

It has been asked why these adjustments took so much time to recommend. It was recognized that there would be a change in First Selectman in 2019 and virtually immediately following that transition the unanticipated COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on all our lives. At the outset of the 2021-2022 budget process, implementation of the recommendations was a priority for the First Selectman.

Non-Exempt Employee Salary Evaluation

The non-exempt hourly position evaluations that are part of the Library System were reviewed utilizing data from the American Library Association for our population, economic information and our neighboring towns, and a position at the Senior Center was weighted utilizing other town positions with similar responsibility levels.

Future Plans

East Haddam will publicize the wage schedules for all the town positions as part of our annual budget. It is essential that our citizens as well as current and future employees have full access to this information.

All wage schedules will be published using the following categories:

- Elected Officials
- Hourly/Non-Union (Non-Exempt)
- Professional Staff (Exempt)
- Collective Bargaining by Unit:
 - Clerical
 - Firefighters
 - Police
 - Public Works
 - Transfer Station

A system will be implemented for diligent and regular review of salary data to ensure that East Haddam is being equitable and competitive in order to attract and retain employees to serve our community.

Questions Comments Concerns



Please contact us via email at:

budget.questions@easthaddam.org

We look forward to hearing from you!