



TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY

Budget Meeting

February 18, 2020 6:00 PM

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Allen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and declared a quorum.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Mayor Steve Allen

Vice Chairman Roger Jackson

Committee Member Tim Adkins

Committee Member Daniel Anderson

Committee Member Gerald Greer

Committee Member Chris Kerrigan

Committee Member Lisa Walker

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Committee Member Walker, seconded by Committee Member Anderson to approve the agenda with proposed changes made by Ms. Kellie Reed to strike Reports, Surplus Property Nominations, and Expenditure Requests from February 18, 2020 Budget Meeting agenda. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Budget Meeting Minutes 1-21-2020

A motion was made by Committee Member Adkins, seconded by Committee Member Jackson, to approve the 01/21/2020 meeting minutes as typed. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

2. Employee Manual and Wage and Salary Policy Updates

Ms. Kellie Reed stated she wanted to remove all verbiage dealing with wage and salary from the employee manual and move it to the salary policy. She said when verbiage is approved, on-call pay could be added to the salary section stating if an employee gets called in they would receive time and a half regardless of hours physically worked. Chief Walker said he is for this change but it will cost us. Committee Member Anderson stated that fire would be most affected by this change. Committee Member Jackson stated if an employee is taking time off that they do not have, such as out of sick and vacation time, then they do not get time and a half if called in after normal business hours during that time period. Mayor Allen stated they must have approved time off to receive on-call overtime pay. Ms. Reed stated Resolution 2017-31, wage and salary policy, would be on next month's agenda with the changes. Ms. Anita Justice asked to clarify the portion that deals with salaried employees and taking earned time within two weeks. After much discussion it was determined that per MTAS we are advised not to enter a salaried employees earned or taken comp time into our system and the best way to keep up with said time is by the individual. Committee Member Chris Kerrigan stated to strike the two-week verbiage and add verbiage about proper communication for calling out or taking time off. Ms. Reed stated hourly employees are to call or text their department head as stated in the employee manual. After much more discussion it was decided that salaried employees and department heads are to contact the mayor in any form such as text, phone call with voicemail, and or email when they are not going to be at work.

3. Grants/Projects Update

Ms. Reed stated Committee Member Walker requested a spreadsheet of current grants and projects and Ms. Reed provided this information on the overhead. Committee Member Walker asked how the new City Hall project was coming along. Mayor Allen stated Mr. Josh Wright will be present at the next meeting and will be ready to hear from financing.

NEW BUSINESS:

4. Staffing Report WWTP from MTAS

Ms. Reed stated Mayor Allen requested this in October 2019. Mayor Allen said MTAS sent Mr. Bret Ward to evaluate the WWTP and his findings/recommendations stated he would not make changes in current staffing with the current WWTP but may increase to four full time employee's when the name plant is built and he had great things to say about the WWTP. Committee Member Jackson stated he did read the letter sent from Mr. Ward and he is satisfied with the report, however he requested the Mayor look into the finding stating that any work that needs to be done should be supervised. He said whoever was supposed to be overseeing and supervising the work of the sewer mains did not do supervise and that is why there is now issues. He said if an outside company is hired to complete contracted work he would like a city employee to oversee and sign off on the completed work.

5. City Recorder & Financial Manager Position Discussion

Ms. Reed stated Mayor Allen wanted to discuss this topic. Ms. Reed stated changes have been made since Ms. Sandy Cannon left her position with the city and there have been improvements but there are still problems. Ms. Reed stated she asked for City Recorder duties to go with HR duties because the HR position needed a background in the finances of the city. Ms. Reed stated Mayor Allen was requested by Council to discuss the current work chart. Mayor Allen stated he wanted to create a Financial Department position and that role also to be a department head. Committee Member Daniel Anderson asked the role of City Recorder. Ms. Reed explained the role of City Recorder. Committee Member Walker asked who is the Mayor's assistant. Ms. Reed stated no one but she has been helping out. Mayor Allen stated Ms. Cannon went to the Mayors assistant and the duty of HR was put on her so therefore her pay went up. Committee Member Walker stated she thinks a lot of Ms. Cannon's HR responsibilities went to the ladies in the front office. Ms. Bowman stated yes, that was correct and they were given back to Ms. Reed when she moved positions. Committee Member Jackson stated HR is not supposed to hire new employees and that is the responsibility of the mayor and the department head. He said the general work day of HR is policy. Committee Member Anderson stated HR should never sit in interviews. Mayor Allen stated he agreed and hiring should be the recommendation of the Mayor and Department Head. Committee Member Anderson asked who is City Recorder. Ms. Reed stated she was City Recorder, Ms. Gayle Bowman was Financial Manager, Ms. Jamie Winslett, Ms. Rebecca Cohen and Ms. Alicia Young are Accounts Payable Clerks and Ms. Cynthia Hollingsworth and Ms. Alyssa Barnhill are Accounts Receivable Clerks. Committee Member Anderson asked Ms. Reed if the ladies up front do any HR responsibilities. Ms. Reed stated no. Committee Member Anderson asked Ms. Reed if she does it all. Ms. Reed stated yes. Committee Member Walker stated her main concern is that we are violating our charter. Ms. Bowman stated the way the charter reads the City Recorder has to be Chief Financial Officer. Ms. Reed stated Ms. Bowman is the Financial Manager and what is looking to be changed is to make her the Financial Director and be a department head. Mayor Allen stated council had to approve Financial Director position. Ms. Reed stated she called other cities to see how they run and some places have a City Manager who is the City Recorder and others have the Financial Director doing City Recorder. Committee Member Jackson stated we do not need a HR Director if they are just taking care of paperwork. Ms. Reed stated HR was eliminated from the pay scale and she handles the paperwork, training and FMLA. After much discussion it was determined Mayor Allen requested a full time assistant and to try to hire from within first. Committee Member Anderson stated the City Financial person should start attending the weekly department head meetings. He said hiring a true HR position would cost too much and he does not want the Mayor assistant to be HR. Ms. Reed requested a backup for her position, she suggested the new hire Mayor assistant can be taught her

position as well. Committee Member Jackson stated he agreed that Mayors assistant and HR do not need to be combined and the front office needs to take back HR duties for paperwork and Ms. Reed have duties of training and compliance. Committee Member Walker stated we needed to get our charter changed. Committee Member Adkins asked if we could get it done this session. Ms. Reed stated it shouldn't be a problem. Committee Member Walker stated we will wait to appoint the City Recorder and City attorney.

OTHER.

Mayor Allen stated at Christmas the City provided hams to all employees but a lot did not collect those hams. He said we donated the unclaimed hams adding to be over 20, to Safe Haven and they sent a thank you letter.

Committee Member Anderson requested the city make a donation to the new Veteran park at the library vs waiving fees only. Ms. Reed stated there are guidelines for making donations but there are other ways around that such as paying for something specific at the park and adding it to next year's budget.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Committee Member Walker, seconded by Committee Member to adjourn the meeting. All approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m

MAYOR STEVE ALLEN

CITY RECORDER KELLIE REED, CMFO, CMC



TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY

Budget Meeting

January 21, 2020 6:00 PM

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Allen called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chairman Mayor Steve Allen
Committee Member Tim Adkins
Committee Member Daniel Anderson
Committee Member Gerald Greer
Committee Member Chris Kerrigan
Committee Member Lisa Walker

ABSENT

Vice Chairman Roger Jackson

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Committee Member Anderson, seconded by Committee Member Kerrigan, to approve the agenda as written. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. 11-19-19 Budget Meeting Minutes. A motion was made by Committee Member Adkins, seconded by Committee Member Anderson, to approve the 11-19-19 meeting minutes as written. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

2. MTAS Training
Mr. Gary Jackel with MTAS, part of the UT Institute for Public Service, gave a training for new council members. He stated that their mission is to help cities in Tennessee only with any issues or questions they have regarding their Charter. Mr. Jackel went over the Sunshine Law, the ethics policy, and sections regarding city council members. He stated that Section 10, part C in our charter states "Notice of such special sessions shall be given to all Councilmen at least twelve (12) hours in advance of the meeting". Mr. Jackel stated that it should be updated to state "at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance" instead. Councilwoman Lisa Walker asked when the City should appoint the City Recorder and City Attorney. Mr. Jackel stated that they are appointed by council and could be appointed on an election cycle.
3. Proposed Employee Manual Changes Discussion
Mrs. Gayle Bowman stated that there are some changes to the employee manual she is proposing because of payroll issues. She stated these changes would pertain to overtime, use of vacation/sick/comp/holiday time, and salaried employees.

OTHER.

4. Mr. Scott Sampson stated he had catalogs for Christmas lights for next year that he would like Council to take a look at. Councilman Adkins asked if the money was already in the budget. Mr. Sampson stated it was.
5. Mrs. Bowman presented a letter from the auditor. She stated that if council was interested, she could give them monthly financial reports.

6. Mayor Allen stated that they are deciding whether to keep General Sessions or get rid of it. He stated that we should get rid of it if it will save the City money. He further stated that Dickson eliminated General Sessions and they saved \$250,000.00 the first year and over \$500,000.00 the next year.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Committee Member Walker, seconded by Committee Member Kerrigan to adjourn the meeting. All approved by voice vote and the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

MAYOR STEVE ALLEN

FINANCIAL MANAGER GAYLE BOWMAN

Changes to the Personnel Manual

HOURLY RATES

Employees paid on an hourly rate basis excluding salaried exempt employees as set out by the Department of Labor are paid for all time actually worked. The Board of Mayor and Council shall set by resolution all salaries paid by the city. Due consideration shall be given to duties performed, responsibilities, technical knowledge and skills required to perform the work satisfactorily, the labor market, and availability of people having the desired qualifications. **A work period may contain physical hours worked and/or non-working (sick/vacation/comp/holiday) hours but should not equal more hours than normally scheduled in the work period.**

OVERTIME PAY

When it becomes necessary for an employee to work overtime hours, regular employees, part-time employees, and temporary employees shall be paid according to the prevailing salary schedule. Overtime work will be compensated according to the FLSA provisions at a rate of 1 ½ times the employee's regular rate. Overtime work may also be paid with compensatory time at a rate of 1 ½ times the hours worked in accordance with the FLSA. **Overtime accrues at a rate of 1 ½ times the employee's regular rate only after the employee works the scheduled amount of hours in a work period. Overtime will be paid at straight time up to the normally scheduled hours when a work period includes non-working (sick/vacation/comp/holiday) hours.** Non-emergency overtime work must be authorized in advance by the Mayor or department head. Employees exempt from the overtime requirements of the FLSA will not receive overtime compensation, with the exception of emergency pay in the event of a disaster. All compensation time must be paid/used by the end of the fiscal year.

WORKDAY/WORKWEEK

The Mayor shall establish the hours of work per week for each position in the service of the town. All designated workdays and workweeks shall be in accordance with the FLSA.

Some departments allow irregular workweeks. The Department Head has the authority to schedule arrival and departure times and specific workdays for employees depending upon departmental need and approval of the Mayor. The use of flex and compressed work weeks is also subject to the approval of the Mayor.

An employee on an irregular work schedule must revert to a normal work week schedule when using a prolonged period of annual, sick and compensatory leave, when placed on extended leave without pay status, when paid through the sick leave bank, and when a holiday falls within a work week.

A work period may contain physical hours worked and/or non-working (sick/vacation/comp/holiday) hours but should not equal more hours than normally scheduled in the work period. Overtime accrues at a rate of 1 ½ times the employee's regular rate only after the employee works the scheduled amount of hours in a work period. Overtime will be paid at straight time up to the normally scheduled hours when a work period includes non-working (sick/vacation/comp/holiday) hours.

VACATION LEAVE

Annual/vacation leave will be granted to regular full-time and part time employees. An employee will earn annual vacation leave during his/her probationary period after completing 30 days. Annual vacation time will not accrue if an employee is not working for 30 consecutive days. Annual vacation leave will be given in January of every year. For new hires, vacation leave will be prorated from the first day of eligibility to the end of the calendar year. This shall also be applied for employees who have an increase in their leave based upon years of service and this shall be prorated as well. For all employees a maximum of 100 hours may be carried forward into the next year. **Vacation time will not be pre-paid or cashed out in lieu of time off.** Any remaining hours over 100 at the end of the year (December) will be transferred to sick time.

Annual Vacation time will be added to employee's first paycheck in January (new hires will be prorated thru end of calendar year) according to the following schedule:

<u>Years of Service Employees</u>	<u>Full Time Employees</u>	<u>Regular Part time</u>
0-5 years per paycheck)	2 weeks (3.08 hours per paycheck)	1 week (1.54 hours
6-15 years hours per paycheck)	3 weeks (4.62 hours per paycheck)	1-1/2 weeks (2.31
16+ years per paycheck)	4 weeks (6.15 hours per paycheck)	2 weeks (3.08 hours

Definitions of regular full time and regular part-time employees can be found in Section III, Subsection H of this manual.

Vacations of one week or more consecutive days will be scheduled at least one (1) month in advance for the mutual convenience of the employee and the city government so proper adjustments can be made in the work schedules. No employee may begin his/her annual leave until his/her request has been approved by the Mayor and/or Department Head.

All annual vacation leave must be used prior to the employee receiving long term disability benefits.

An employee who is separated from city employment shall be paid for his/her unused vacation leave. The termination date shall coincide with last day of pay. In no event will an employee who has not completed at least 90 days of satisfactory service receive terminal annual vacation pay.

Legal holidays falling within a vacation period are not to be counted as vacation days. There shall be no pay in lieu of vacation. When an employee is on "leave without pay" for 15 days during any calendar month, no vacation leave will accumulate. Employees may not borrow against future annual vacation or transfer earned leave to another employee.

If the employee has accrued compensatory time, the employee may be required to use compensatory time before using vacation leave or other types of leave.

Vacation leave can be taken in minimum increments of one hour. Vacation can only be used if vacation hours are available.

Vacation does not accrue while on short term or long term disability, leave without pay status, or FMLA, with the exception of Employees on Workers Compensation, who will continue to accrue vacation during the period of absence.

After twenty (20) working days of full compensation, members of any reserve component of the armed forces of the United States, including members of the Tennessee army and national guard, may use up to five (5) days of sick leave in lieu of annual leave for the purposes of not having to take leave without pay. (T.C.A. 8-33-109)

EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS:

1. **Exempt Employees** – An employee is exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, if they are classified as an executive, professional or administrative and meet specific criteria for exemption and must be paid at least \$684 weekly. All salaried positions are required to work a minimum of eighty (80) hours per pay period, at their office or city property unless otherwise approved by the Mayor. Any time less than eighty (80) hours is to be made up using leave (Vacation, Sick, or Holiday leave) with prior approval by the Mayor. Salaried employees who work additional time above the required eighty (80) hours in a pay period may only flex their time within the pay period or within two (2) weeks of the pay period which the additional time was worked after approval by their immediate supervisor or the mayor.
2. **Non-exempt Employee** – An employee who is not exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. A non-exempt employee is entitled to receive overtime for all hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek (except as FLSA allows for police officers and fire fighters.)

Overtime for non-exempt employees is paid for hours worked over 40 per week. Exceptions are made by FLSA for police officers and fire fighters on different shifts. Overtime must be authorized in advance. Sick time is not counted as hours worked for overtime calculations.

Compensatory Time – Overtime may be paid as monetary compensation, compensatory time or any combination of money and compensatory time equivalent so long as the premium pay is at least ‘time and one-half’. There must be an agreement of payment before the overtime is worked. An employee may not accrue more than 150 hours of compensatory time. Upon termination, an employee must be paid for compensatory time accrued.

3. **On-Duty** – An employee is considered ‘on-duty’ at any time for which the City compensates the employee, which includes lunch and breaks for police officers and fire fighters. All other employees are not compensated for lunch.

Emergency Pay – The city shall provide its employees who are considered “exempt” under the Fair Labor Standards Act with emergency pay for every hour worked in excess of forty (40) hours during their normal work when responding to an officially declared local, state or federal disaster or state of emergency. Emergency pay shall only be provided for performing essential services as approved by the Mayor at his or her discretion that the need for disaster or emergency response has ended.

Documentation – To assist the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement process, exempt employees receiving emergency pay shall maintain accurate and detailed documentation defining the duties performed and the hours worked.

Reasons for changes:

- Changes in FLSA – wage and hour – new minimum salary for exempt employees.
- Due to some issues we had with the 12/13/19 payroll, I would like to suggest the following changes be made to the employee manual concerning hours paid.
 - **Reason:** Some employees were paid for Holiday, Sick Time/Vacation Time/Comp Time, Regular Hours and Straight Overtime, which results in paying an active employee out for vacation, sick or comp time at the end of the calendar year.
 - **Example:** Employee is scheduled to work 40 hours per work week. Week 1 contained 2 holidays which equal 16 hours, employee worked 10 hours, employee marked 24 hours comp time to be paid. This resulted in 50 hours total for week 1. Pay was entered as 16 hours - holiday pay, 24 hours - comp pay, 10 hours – straight overtime pay. He should not have been eligible for any type of overtime pay until he physically worked 24 hours. Regularly scheduled week is 40 hours minus 16 hours of holiday pay equal 24 hours required for the week. Comp pay should have been changed to 16.

Resolution 2017-31

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY
UPDATING THE LONGEVITY PAYMENT SECTION IN THE WAGE AND
SALARY POLICY GOVERNING EMPLOYMENT WITH THE TOWN OF
ASHLAND CITY**

WHEREAS, the City Council for the Town of Ashland City has previously adopted Resolution 2017-04 establishing a Wage and Salary Policy designed to provide a means to select, develop and maintain an effective municipal work force; and

WHEREAS, the City Council for the Town of Ashland City wishes to amend the longevity payment schedule; and

WHEREAS, the Personnel System requires that the Wage and Salary Policy shall be updated and approved by City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY, TENNESSEE that the Wage and Salary Policy, attached hereto, is hereby amended and approved and shall become effective immediately following passage of this resolution.

We, the undersigned City Council members, meeting in Regular Session on this 10th day of October, 2017 move the adoption of the above Resolution.

Councilmember _____ moved to adopt the Resolution.

Councilmember _____ seconded the motion.

Voting in Favor _____

Voting Against _____

Attest:

Richard Johnson, Mayor

Kellie Reed, City Recorder

Town of Ashland City Wage and Salary Policy

I. Purpose

To provide guidelines for the administration of employee salaries, including starting pay rates, pay increases, promotional increases, and other salary adjustments.

II. Policy Objectives

This policy is intended to promote the following:

- A. Ensure competitive pay practices to allow the Town of Ashland City to effectively compete in the market for the talent needed to meet and exceed its performance standards.
- B. Ensure fair and unbiased treatment of employees relative to pay administration.
- C. Ensure that Town of Ashland City salary expense is consistent with taxpayers' expectations for reasonable labor costs.

III. Job Descriptions

A written job description is to be developed and maintained for each position recognized by the Town of Ashland City. Job descriptions are to follow the prescribed format (see Exhibit I). Once a year job descriptions are to be reviewed by incumbents and supervisors to ensure they are up to date. Supervisors are responsible for accurate up-to-date job documentation.

IV. Employee Classifications

1. Exempt Employees – An employee is exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, if they are classified as an executive, professional or administrative and meet specific criteria for exemption and must be paid at least **\$684 weekly**. **All salaried positions are required to work a minimum of eighty (80) hours per pay period, at their office or city property, unless otherwise approved by the Mayor. Any time less than eighty (80) hours is to be made up using leave (Vacation, Sick, or Holiday leave) with prior approval by the Mayor. Salaried employees who work additional time above the required eighty (80) hours in a pay period may only flex their time within the pay period or within two (2) weeks of the pay period which the additional time was worked after approval by their immediate supervisor or the mayor.**

2. Non-exempt Employee – An employee who is not exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. A non-exempt employee is entitled to receive overtime for all hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek (except as FLSA allows for police officers and fire fighters.)

Overtime for non-exempt employees is paid for hours worked over 40 per week. Exceptions are made by FLSA for police officers and fire fighters on different shifts. Overtime must be authorized in advance. Sick time is not counted as hours worked for overtime calculations.

Compensatory Time – Overtime may be paid as monetary compensation, compensatory time or any combination of money and compensatory time equivalent so long as the premium pay is at least 'time and one-half'. There must be an agreement of payment

before the overtime is worked. An employee may not accrue more than 150 hours of compensatory time. Upon termination, an employee must be paid for compensatory time accrued.

3. On-Duty – An employee is considered ‘on-duty’ at any time for which the City compensates the employee, which includes lunch and breaks for police officers and fire fighters. All other employees are not compensated for lunch.

Emergency Pay – The city shall provide its employees who are considered “exempt” under the Fair Labor Standards Act with emergency pay for every hour worked in excess of forty (40) hours during their normal work when responding to an officially declared local, state or federal disaster or state of emergency. Emergency pay shall only be provided for performing essential services as approved by the Mayor at his or her discretion that the need for disaster or emergency response has ended.

Documentation – To assist the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement process, exempt employees receiving emergency pay shall maintain accurate and detailed documentation defining the duties performed and the hours worked.

V. Pay Table

A. Number of Pay Grades

Pay is to be administered within ten classifications, or pay grades.

B. Pay Ranges

Each pay grade falls within a pay range. Pay ranges are intended to furnish administrative flexibility in recognizing individual differences among positions allocated to the same class and to provide employee incentives.

C. Adjustment of Pay Table

The pay table is subject to review on an annual basis and will be adjusted if necessary to ensure that the Town’s pay practices remain competitive with changes in labor market conditions. As appropriate, this review will consist of:

- Gathering comparative salary data for benchmark jobs from published sources or direct contacts with competing employers,
- Comparing market salary data obtained for each benchmark job with the corresponding pay range, and
- If necessary, adjusting the pay ranges approximate market value for jobs in each pay range, or, if appropriate, amending the pay range.

D. Assignment of Positions

Each position is to be assigned to the pay grade for which best matches the competitive market value for the job. Deviations may be made if strategic business considerations dictate that certain positions (not employees) should be valued differently than their market value.

VI. Rates of Pay

In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), no employee, whether full-time, part-time, or probationary, shall be paid less than the federal minimum wage unless they are expressly exempt from the minimum wage requirement by FLSA regulations.

A. Starting Rates

The minimum rate established for a class is the normal hiring rate except in those cases where unusual circumstances (such as inability to fill the position at the hiring rate or exceptional qualifications of an applicant) appear to warrant employing an individual at a higher rate in the pay range. Any department head desiring to appoint an applicant to start at a salary above the minimum must submit justification to the Mayor for approval. Such appointments shall be made only in exceptional cases as decided by the Mayor and/or governing body only after the current pay rates, qualifications, and skill levels of existing job incumbents are carefully considered.

B. Rates Above the Pay Range

Each pay range is intended to serve as a guide line for management for the highest pay rate the Town of Ashland City will normally pay an employee for a particular job.

C. Rates Below the Minimum

It is possible that employees' pay rates, probably for recent hires, will occasionally fall below the pay range upon adjustment of the pay table (see IV C above). Normally, the pay rates of such employees will be immediately adjusted to the new pay range at the time the new pay table becomes effective.

D. Hourly Rates

Employees paid on an hourly rate basis excluding salaried exempt employees as set out by the Department of Labor are paid for all time actually worked. The Mayor and City Council shall appropriate by budget all salaries paid by the city. Due consideration shall be given to duties performed, responsibilities, technical knowledge, and skills required to perform the work satisfactorily, the labor market, and availability of people having the desired qualifications.

VII. Pay Adjustments

A. Pay Increases

1. Eligibility

All non-probationary full-time and part-time employees in good standing whose current pay rate is within pay range are eligible for a pay increase in July each year, subject to appropriation by City Council as part of the annual budget process.

Employees who have been placed on disciplinary status or who have not received a good standing annual evaluation will not receive a pay increase. For recently hired employees still on probationary status, eligibility for pay increase is to be delayed until the end of their probationary period.

Note: Jobs requiring employees earn certification per state regulations- An employee who has **not** earned certification in a job that **requires** it. The employee will be ineligible for any pay increase until after the time frame in which certification is earned as stated in the job description. In such cases an employee's pay rate would be adjusted to the appropriate pay rate once the employee receives certification.

2. Pay Increase Amount

The base pay rate of employees eligible to receive a pay increase will be increase as determined and at the desecration of the department head and mayor based on

evaluation and merit. All pay increases will then be presented to the council for approval and justification during the annual budget appropriation process.

3. Pay Increases-Employees on Leave of Absence

Scheduled pay increases will be postponed for employees on approved non-job related medical or personal leave of absence until they return to work. Pay increases will be postponed beyond the date of return to work in cases where such absence exceeds four months (will normally be postponed one additional month for every month of leave beyond four). Pay increases will not be delayed for worker's compensation related medical leave of absence.

4. Pay Increases-Employees on Light Duty

Employees in light duty positions are eligible for a pay increase.

B. Pay Table Adjustment Increases

As indicated in IV C above, the pay table may be adjusted periodically to keep pace with the labor market. This adjustment will be effective July 1 (the beginning of the fiscal year) after receiving City Council approval voted on by resolution.

C. Longevity Payments

1. Eligibility

Full-time employees after three years of service will begin receiving a longevity payment of \$100 per year of service, subject to appropriation by City Council as part of the annual budget process.

Part-time employees after three years of service will begin receiving a longevity payment of \$50 per year of service, subject to appropriation by City Council as part of the annual budget process.

2. Payment Date

The longevity payment is to be paid in the month of November.

3. Withholdings

Longevity payments will be subject to standard tax withholding excluding retirement.

D. Promotional Increases

1. Definition of Promotion

Placement of an individual in a job which is in a pay grade that is higher than the individual's current pay grade will be considered a promotion. (Temporary job reassignments of less than six months will not normally be considered a promotion.)

2. Increase Amount

Upon promotion the individual's salary is to be adjusted to reflect the increased demands and responsibility of the new position. Normally, the employee's pay rate will be increased to represent at least a 5% increase over his/her current pay rate as determined appropriate by the mayor and department head.

E. Temporary Reassignment

Adjustments to pay rates of employees assigned temporarily (for less than six months) to perform work of higher level jobs will be made at the discretion of management.

F. Lateral Job Reassignments

Reassignment from one job to another in the same pay grade will be considered a lateral move. No immediate adjustment to pay will be made.

G. Demotions or Reassignment to a Lower Pay Grade

Demotions occur when an employee is returned or transferred to a position in a lower pay grade. Additionally, employees may voluntarily ask to move to a job in a lower pay grade, perhaps through the job posting/bidding process. If an employee was promoted and subsequently returns to the original (lower) job, his/her pay rate would be adjusted to the rate it would equal if the promotion had not occurred. Whether or not a reduction in pay should occur in other situations depends on consideration of the following:

1. Was the demotion related to employee's performance or to a reduction in force or organizational change?
2. How will the employee's pay rate compare with pay rates of other incumbents in a lower graded job or similar jobs?
3. How long has the employee been in the higher level job?
4. What has been the Town of Ashland City's past practice in similar situations?

It is often sound practice to reduce the employee's pay rate to be consistent with rates of pay of other incumbents in the new job who possess similar skills and tenure.

H. Re-Classification of Position

A review of market salary data for the purpose of adjusting the pay table or at any other time may suggest that a job should be re-classified to a higher or lower pay grade.

Normally, consistent data obtained for two periods over a span of eighteen to twenty-four months are required to confirm such a trend and justify re-classification. This may occur as the job responsibilities evolve over time. Section "G" above would apply to re-classification of a job to a lower pay grade. For an employee whose position was re-classified to a higher pay grade, the employee's pay would be adjusted in the pay range closest to but no less than his/her current pay rate. Significant changes in job responsibilities within a short time period will normally be treated as a promotion.

VIII. Paychecks

All employees of the Town of Ashland City shall be issued pay on a biweekly basis. If you have questions about your work time, salary or paycheck, call it to the attention of the City Clerk/Recorder within the pay period in question or immediately thereafter. Checks are picked up from each department by department head each pay day. If you are absent on payday and wish to have someone else obtain your check for you, you may give a verbal confirmation authorizing the city to give your check to the bearer.

1. Final Paycheck – The final paycheck for a resigning employee will be made available on his/her regular payday.
2. Lost Paychecks – Employees are responsible for their paychecks after they have been issued. Checks lost or otherwise missing should be reported immediately to the City Recorder so that a stop payment order may be initiated. The Recorder will determine if and when a new check should be issued to replace a lost or missing check. Cost of stop payment of check will be paid by the employee.
3. Unclaimed paychecks – Paychecks not claimed by employees within ten (10) days of the date issued must be returned by the supervisor to the City Recorder.

IX. Payroll Deductions

The following deductions will be made when authorized by an employee:

1. Federal Income Tax: Federal taxes are withheld from employees' paychecks based on the number of dependents claimed by each individual. Employees are required to keep on file with the municipal government a copy of the W-4 form. In the event of changes in the employee exemption status, a revised W-4 must be filed before payroll deduction adjustments will be made.

2. Social Security/Medicare: Social Security payments and deductions will be made according to the Social Security Act. The City Recorder shall keep such records and make such reports as may be required by applicable state and federal laws or regulations.

3. Other: Other City authorized deductions will be made from an employee's pay only with the employee's signed consent or as required by law.

- a. Medical insurance
- b. Life insurance
- c. Vision insurance
- d. Supplemental insurance
- e. Additional life insurance
- f. Deferred compensation payments
- g. Dental insurance
- h. Child support garnishments
- i. Any other garnishments or deductions agreed to or required by law
- j. TCRS Retirement will be taken out of an employee paycheck after 30 day's employment at a rate of 5% of gross total per paycheck.
- k. Any court order for garnishments or child support will be taken as ordered by the court.
- l. Other city-authorized deductions may be made from an employee's pay only with the employee's signed consent.

If all leave has been exhausted, an employee must make arrangements to cover any premiums or deductions not covered by the city's umbrella plan. Additional coverages being paid by the city is done as a courtesy and benefit for the employee, but is not the responsibility of the city. These are the responsibility of the employee. Arrangements must be made with the City Recorder before the leave is exhausted. The city will not continue to pay additional premiums or deductions, if the employee has made no arrangement. Any arrangement for repayment will not exceed 6 months without approval from the Mayor.

EXHIBIT 1
The Town of Ashland City Job Description Format

JOB DESCRIPTION

Town of Ashland City
(Department)
(Location)

CLASSIFICATION TITLE:	(Job Title)
DEPARTMENT:	(Department)
REVISION DATE:	(Last date of Council Approval)
REPORTS TO:	(Department Head's Title)
EMPLOYMENT STATUS:	(Full-time or Part-time)
FLSA STATUS:	(Exempt or Non-exempt)
PAY RANGE:	(Pay Grade)

JOB SUMMARY

(A brief one or two sentence description of the purpose of the job)

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Brief statements, in descending order of importance based on frequency and impact, of the essential job functions. Essential function are those:)

- (For which the position exists to perform ex: data entry operator job exists to operate computer keyboard to input data)
- (For which there are a limited number of other employees available to perform the function)
- (Highly specialized in nature requiring incumbents to be hired specifically because of the skill or ability to perform them)

QUALIFICATIONS

(Brief description of the following job requirements)

- (Education)
- (Experience)
- (Certificates, Licenses, Registrations which include time allowed to become certified)
- (Special Requirements)

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

(Brief description of required knowledge, skills, and abilities)

EQUIPMENT OPERATED

- (Computer, printer, various office machines (phone, calculator, copier, etc.)
- (software)
- (Microsoft Office Suites)
- (Cell phone)

WORKING CONDITIONS

- (Working conditions are in an office environment)
- (Working environment is office setting with some lifting of office supplies weighing up to 20lbs)
- (Located in a busy office, faced with constant interruptions)

USUAL PHYSICAL DEMANDS

(Brief description of requirements for lifting, walking, sitting, seeing, hearing, reaching, feeling, and talking)

EMPLOYEE AWARENESS

- Implement and assure adherence to The Town of Ashland City policies and procedures regarding Equal Employment Opportunity.
 - Adheres to The Town of Ashland City initiative on business ethics and conduct.
 - Adheres to federal/state laws and relations regarding MSDA, OSHA and EPA compliance.
-

This is not necessarily an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, skills, duties, requirements, efforts or working conditions associated with the job. While this is intended to be an accurate reflection of the current job, management reserves the right to revise the job, or to require that other, or different tasks be performed when circumstances change (i.e. emergencies, changes in personnel or workload, etc.).

MANAGEMENT APPROVAL

Manager's Signature

____/____/____
Date

EMPLOYEE UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT

Employee's Signature

____/____/____
Date

Grants

Grant	Acronym	Project	Grant Total	City Match	Status	Assigned to: NOTES
Traffic Signal Modernization Grant	TSMG	Updating Traffic Signalization and Crosswalk at North Main/Stratton Blvd		\$0.00	Waiting for awardal	Brian Stinson
TAP Grant	TAP	Crossover at Chapmansboro Road for Trail connection possible bridge or crosswalk			Waiting for awardal	Brian Stinson, Scott Sampson, and Kellie Reed
Surface Transportation Block Grant	STBG	Engineering for TAP Grant		\$0.00	Application Process	Brian Stinson Working with the state to see if this grant can cover engineering for the TAP grant. We do not have any other projects that will qualify and we need to secure the money before we lose it.
Multi Modal Access Grant	MMAG				Waiting for awardal	Brian Stinson and Kellie Reed
Community Development Block Grant	CBDG	Sewer Lift Stations	\$630,000.00	\$130,000.00	Application Process	Kellie Reed and Clint Biggers
Economic Development Fast Track Grant		AO Smith Berm Project	\$1,200,000.00	\$0.00	AO Smith is awaiting final approval before biding process/construction can begin	Clint Biggers, Chuck Walker, and Kellie Reed
State Industrial Access Road Grant with TDOT		Construction of Road beside Caymas Boats and J-turn project on Hwy 12	???	\$0.00	Phase I to start soon (surveying, environmental)	Clint Biggers, Chuck Walker, and Kellie Reed
Department of Justice		Bullet Proof Vest Grant for full-time officers	\$4,800.00	\$2,600.00	Grant awarded awa	Kenny Ray
Tennessee Housing Development Authority	THDA	Provide housing rehabilitation for citizens within the city limits who qualify	\$500,000.00	\$0.00	Application Process	Kellie Reed

Project

Project

Total

Smoke Testing/TV/GPS Project

Sewer Treatment Plant

City Hall

Fire Hall

Fire Truck

Army National Guard Project Labor
to construct extension of trail
behind Boarders Inn

Red Light- Tennessee Waltz
Parkway/Highway 12

STATUS	NOTES
In Progress	Waiting for awardal
In Progress	Working with Neal Westerman on Site and Vance Hamilton on grant possibility and financing
Deferred	Josh Wright is meeting with department heads and mayor to finalize the floor plan
In Progress	Waiting for awardal
In Progress	waiting on approval
In Progress	Currently in the design phase. We have received one bill for the engineering and have forwarded to AO Smith for reimbursement

November 1, 2019

The Honorable Steve Allen, Mayor
The Town of Ashland City
P.O. Box 101
Ashland City, Tennessee 37015

Re: Wastewater Plant Staffing Report

Dear Mayor Allen:

It was great to be able to meet you last week and visit with your staff. This is the first time I have worked with anyone at Ashland City and look forward to serving you in the future.

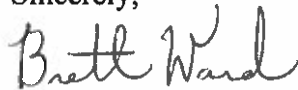
In short, I found the plant well-staffed, and well cared for. I would not make any changes in the present staffing level at the treatment plant. The Town is fortunate to have three capable workers who show through their work that they care about their jobs and the Town's citizens.

Over the past several months the staffing issues that I'm generally asked to assist with involve shortages of skilled workers. With our booming economy and very low unemployment rates, everyone who wants a job has one. This leaves employers to sift through those who have little interest in work, especially work that requires effort, discipline or discomfort.

Ashland City is fortunate to have the three workers presently at the plant. Don't do anything to jeopardize their long tenure.

I will stay in contact with Mr. Harris in the future.

Sincerely,



Brett Ward
Utility Operations Specialist

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Billy Harris
Mr. Gary Jaeckel, MTAS

Ashland City

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Staffing Evaluation-October 2019

Brett Ward, UT-MTAS

Summary

The current staffing situation at the Ashland City wastewater treatment plant is appropriate and robust. The staff is knowledgeable, capable and diligent in completing necessary work and progressive as they use the resources available to lessen the Town's regulatory and financial risk.

Background

Early in September, Mayor Allen requested a staffing evaluation for the Ashland City wastewater treatment plant. The staff at the plant has recently been increased from 2 to 3 full-time persons. A two-step approach was taken during this evaluation. First the chief operator, Mr. Billy Harris, was sent and asked to complete a staffing benchmark worksheet from the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission. This Commission has a history of producing high quality materials and training for wastewater operators and it is the only known document of its kind. The second step was an onsite visit from Mr. Brett Ward, who is the MTAS wastewater specialist. Mr. Ward holds a Grade IV wastewater license, Grade II collection license, a Grade IV water plant license and has 23 years of experience with MTAS working at treatment plants across the state.

Current Operations

Currently the treatment plant is staffed by three persons. Mr. Harris is chief operator and holds a Grade III treatment plant certification. Mr. Jim Stinnett holds a Grade IV treatment plant certification and Grade II collection license. Mr. Thomas Royal is the newest addition to the staff and is currently working toward certification.

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission staffing worksheets which list each treatment plant unit, the maintenance and testing tasks estimated that the plant would need 4 full-time employees. See the attached staffing guide. It should be noted this is just a guide. It is based upon what other plants, in the northeastern states, are actually doing. All plants are different, though the treatment units are similar, regulatory burdens can be a bit different, and climate differences will result in differing labor requirements. Beginning with this information, Mr. Ward made a site visit on October 21, 2019, to see first-hand the plant, its appearance, equipment condition, effluent quality and operations. Two key questions to answer were 'is there anything that is being left undone' and 'is there evidence of inefficiency?' The answer to each of these questions is 'no.'

The treatment plant was found to be in the care of diligent operators who are making use of the tools provided to produce a substantially compliant effluent, caring for the physical assets, and preparing for the challenges of tomorrow economically.

Plant staffing needs in 2019 are different from just a few years ago, and the current staffing level appears to have positioned the Town much better from a regulatory point of view. In 2012, only two years after the 'flood,' a TDEC inspection contained ten pages of deficiencies-many operator related. In

an internal TDEC memo, the inspector Ms. Ann Rochelle, cited staffing as an issue stating 'Plant staffing will improve soon.' The TDEC inspection occurring in 2017 was far shorter but highly critical of the collection system conditions, the inflow and infiltration (I/I) that was occurring and the ensuing overflows. It can be assumed that TDEC saw an improvement in the plant operations between 2012 and 2017. This recent inspection would most likely have resulted in only minor enforcement from TDEC except for the Notice of Intent filed by the Tennessee Riverkeeper which forced TDEC into a higher level of enforcement, the Consent Order.

In 2019 there are new laboratory requirements that take extra time. Mr. Royal manages the Fat-Oil-Grease (FOG) program which is part of the Consent Order. There are also several other recordkeeping and reporting burdens imposed upon the Town because of the Order.

The plant is now well kept from a general appearance to equipment maintenance to added operations that save equipment failures. One of the major challenges of wastewater systems and operators is the removal of the trash which finds its way into the influent sewage. The Ashland City plant has a reasonably good mechanical 'bar' screen that removes most trash but there was always enough small fibrous "rags" which entered the plant to clog clarifier valves and the return sludge pumps. The plant staff took the initiative to make and install an additional screen to help remove these rags. The screen is successful, it protects the valves and pumps but it is high maintenance. The screen must be cleaned manually. This task is time consuming and dirty, but well worth the efforts because it protects the valves and pumps.

Another initiative the staff have taken is to install a simple and low cost SCADA system for monitoring pump performance. This system allows remote monitoring of key equipment and thus plant performance.

The staff have also taken steps to maintain partial operation of the PistaGrit system. This equipment was designed to remove sand, gravel, and other dense 'gritty' materials. These are historically very high maintenance units. Because of failure of the grit dewatering system, the operators make use of a local septic pumper to remove the collected grit. This keeps the removal system operating and protecting other downstream equipment without spending large amounts of money on rehabilitating a piece of equipment that will be abandoned in just a few years.

Another key piece of information that relates to the diligence of the staff is the belt press condition. The press was purchased used in about 2006, was flooded in 2010, is still operating, and is on track to be moved to the new plant all because of regular and diligent care by the operators. If a new press was to be purchased for the new plant the cost could easily exceed \$500,000.

The latest TDEC inspections, the appearance of the plant and equipment, the extent and level of regulatory "paperwork" and reporting all support the conclusion that current plant staffing is appropriate.

Can improvements be made? Of course they can. Mr. Biggers and Mr. Harris should be constantly working to improve operations & maintenance and to do that work more economically. The specific areas for improvement are:

Regulatory Compliance- Everything is regulated in the water and wastewater department. What actions and resources are needed to achieve full compliance now and into the future?

Care of the physical assets- Both water and wastewater systems are very capital intensive enterprises. What can be done to better care for, thus extend the useful life of these staggeringly expensive pieces of public infrastructure?

Prepare for tomorrow- This includes planning for tomorrow's work, training for tomorrow's challenges and tracking system capacity. The planning horizon is different for different persons. Mr. Royal should plan today for tomorrow's lab testing. Mr. Harris should be planning for the upcoming winter weather. Mr. Biggers, the Mayor, and the entire Council should be preparing for the next 20-50 years.

Economy of operations-How can everyone do the above listed responsibilities more economically? This is a stewardship issue, care of the ratepayer's money.

Risk Factors

It is increasingly common, in 2019, for cities to be struggling to keep competent staff because of competition from private business and the very low unemployment rates. This is not the case at the Ashland City wastewater plant. There are three qualified and capable workers. But there are some other areas where the Town is at risk.

As noted in the Consent Order, the sanitary sewer system is in need of rehabilitation. This is the case in many cities. Over the years these very important pieces of public infrastructure have been poorly constructed and poorly maintained.

First, whenever any sanitary sewer pipes are extended, that work should be inspected by a qualified inspector who is onsite 100% of the time. Sadly it is reported that the "new" pipes leak worse than the "old" ones. Contractors are struggling just like everyone else to keep enough qualified workers. This also applies to any rehabilitation work. The Town's present consulting engineer reports that recently completed rehabilitation work is failing. This is either a design or construction issue that should not be repeated. Careful oversight of all construction is very important. Every sanitary sewer system in the state could benefit from a higher staffing level.

During construction of the new wastewater plant all current staff will be stretched and stressed. Startup of the new plant will be challenging. Though new and "fully automated" the new plant will impose a steep learning curve upon the present staff. The treatment technology is quite different, the equipment is quite different and there are always the startup failures and breakdowns which must be overcome.

Also looming on the horizon is the possibility of new regulations. Some cities have nutrient limits being added to their NPDES permit. The design of the new plant will easily remove total nitrogen, but phosphorus can be a challenge. This is not a critical issue, but one for plant operators to be aware of.

The Town's regulatory compliance is being watched by the Tennessee Riverkeeper, and perhaps other third party "activists." This scrutiny has cost the Town some fines, but mostly through extra regulatory work. Because of the trend by EPA and TDEC toward full electronic reporting, all the Town's permit violations are now very easily visible by these third party "watchers." It is imperative, to avoid further regulatory or legal risk, to be in full compliance with all permit requirements.



Municipal Technical Advisory Service
INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

November 1, 2019

The Honorable Steve Allen, Mayor
The Town of Ashland City
P.O. Box 101
Ashland City, Tennessee 37015

Re: Wastewater Plant Staffing Report

Dear Mayor Allen:

It was great to be able to meet you last week and visit with your staff. This is the first time I have worked with anyone at Ashland City and look forward to serving you in the future.

In short, I found the plant well-staffed, and well cared for. I would not make any changes in the present staffing level at the treatment plant. The Town is fortunate to have three capable workers who show through their work that they care about their jobs and the Town's citizens.

Over the past several months the staffing issues that I'm generally asked to assist with involve shortages of skilled workers. With our booming economy and very low unemployment rates, everyone who wants a job has one. This leaves employers to sift through those who have little interest in work, especially work that requires effort, discipline or discomfort.

Ashland City is fortunate to have the three workers presently at the plant. Don't do anything to jeopardize their long tenure.

I will stay in contact with Mr. Harris in the future.

Sincerely,

Brett Ward
Utility Operations Specialist

Enclosures

cc: ✓ Mr. Billy Harris
Mr. Gary Jaeckel, MTAS

Ashland City

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Staffing Evaluation-October 2019

Brett Ward, UT-MTAS

Summary

The current staffing situation at the Ashland City wastewater treatment plant is appropriate and robust. The staff is knowledgeable, capable and diligent in completing necessary work and progressive as they use the resources available to lessen the Town's regulatory and financial risk.

Background

Early in September, Mayor Allen requested a staffing evaluation for the Ashland City wastewater treatment plant. The staff at the plant has recently been increased from 2 to 3 full-time persons. A two-step approach was taken during this evaluation. First the chief operator, Mr. Billy Harris, was sent and asked to complete a staffing benchmark worksheet from the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission. This Commission has a history of producing high quality materials and training for wastewater operators and it is the only known document of its kind. The second step was an onsite visit from Mr. Brett Ward, who is the MTAS wastewater specialist. Mr. Ward holds a Grade IV wastewater license, Grade II collection license, a Grade IV water plant license and has 23 years of experience with MTAS working at treatment plants across the state.

Current Operations

Currently the treatment plant is staffed by three persons. Mr. Harris is chief operator and holds a Grade III treatment plant certification. Mr. Jim Stinnett holds a Grade IV treatment plant certification and Grade II collection license. Mr. Thomas Royal is the newest addition to the staff and is currently working toward certification.

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission staffing worksheets which list each treatment plant unit, the maintenance and testing tasks estimated that the plant would need 4 full-time employees. See the attached staffing guide. It should be noted this is just a guide. It is based upon what other plants, in the northeastern states, are actually doing. All plants are different, though the treatment units are similar, regulatory burdens can be a bit different, and climate differences will result in differing labor requirements. Beginning with this information, Mr. Ward made a site visit on October 21, 2019, to see first-hand the plant, its appearance, equipment condition, effluent quality and operations. Two key questions to answer were 'is there anything that is being left undone' and 'is there evidence of inefficiency?' The answer to each of these questions is 'no.'

The treatment plant was found to be in the care of diligent operators who are making use of the tools provided to produce a substantially compliant effluent, caring for the physical assets, and preparing for the challenges of tomorrow economically.

Plant staffing needs in 2019 are different from just a few years ago, and the current staffing level appears to have positioned the Town much better from a regulatory point of view. In 2012, only two years after the 'flood,' a TDEC inspection contained ten pages of deficiencies-many operator related. In

an internal TDEC memo, the inspector Ms. Ann Rochelle, cited staffing as an issue stating 'Plant staffing will improve soon.' The TDEC inspection occurring in 2017 was far shorter but highly critical of the collection system conditions, the inflow and infiltration (I/I) that was occurring and the ensuing overflows. It can be assumed that TDEC saw an improvement in the plant operations between 2012 and 2017. This recent inspection would most likely have resulted in only minor enforcement from TDEC except for the Notice of Intent filed by the Tennessee Riverkeeper which forced TDEC into a higher level of enforcement, the Consent Order.

In 2019 there are new laboratory requirements that take extra time. Mr. Royal manages the Fat-Oil-Grease (FOG) program which is part of the Consent Order. There are also several other recordkeeping and reporting burdens imposed upon the Town because of the Order.

The plant is now well kept from a general appearance to equipment maintenance to added operations that save equipment failures. One of the major challenges of wastewater systems and operators is the removal of the trash which finds its way into the influent sewage. The Ashland City plant has a reasonably good mechanical 'bar' screen that removes most trash but there was always enough small fibrous "rags" which entered the plant to clog clarifier valves and the return sludge pumps. The plant staff took the initiative to make and install an additional screen to help remove these rags. The screen is successful, it protects the valves and pumps but it is high maintenance. The screen must be cleaned manually. This task is time consuming and dirty, but well worth the efforts because it protects the valves and pumps.

Another initiative the staff have taken is to install a simple and low cost SCADA system for monitoring pump performance. This system allows remote monitoring of key equipment and thus plant performance.

The staff have also taken steps to maintain partial operation of the PistaGrit system. This equipment was designed to remove sand, gravel, and other dense 'gritty' materials. These are historically very high maintenance units. Because of failure of the grit dewatering system, the operators make use of a local septic pumper to remove the collected grit. This keeps the removal system operating and protecting other downstream equipment without spending large amounts of money on rehabilitating a piece of equipment that will be abandoned in just a few years.

Another key piece of information that relates to the diligence of the staff is the belt press condition. The press was purchased used in about 2006, was flooded in 2010, is still operating, and is on track to be moved to the new plant all because of regular and diligent care by the operators. If a new press was to be purchased for the new plant the cost could easily exceed \$500,000.

The latest TDEC inspections, the appearance of the plant and equipment, the extent and level of regulatory "paperwork" and reporting all support the conclusion that current plant staffing is appropriate.

Can improvements be made? Of course they can. Mr. Biggers and Mr. Harris should be constantly working to improve operations & maintenance and to do that work more economically. The specific areas for improvement are:

Regulatory Compliance- Everything is regulated in the water and wastewater department. What actions and resources are needed to achieve full compliance now and into the future?

Care of the physical assets- Both water and wastewater systems are very capital intensive enterprises. What can be done to better care for, thus extend the useful life of these staggeringly expensive pieces of public infrastructure?

Prepare for tomorrow- This includes planning for tomorrow's work, training for tomorrow's challenges and tracking system capacity. The planning horizon is different for different persons. Mr. Royal should plan today for tomorrow's lab testing. Mr. Harris should be planning for the upcoming winter weather. Mr. Biggers, the Mayor, and the entire Council should be preparing for the next 20-50 years.

Economy of operations-How can everyone do the above listed responsibilities more economically? This is a stewardship issue, care of the ratepayer's money.

Risk Factors

It is increasingly common, in 2019, for cities to be struggling to keep competent staff because of competition from private business and the very low unemployment rates. This is not the case at the Ashland City wastewater plant. There are three qualified and capable workers. But there are some other areas where the Town is at risk.

As noted in the Consent Order, the sanitary sewer system is in need of rehabilitation. This is the case in many cities. Over the years these very important pieces of public infrastructure have been poorly constructed and poorly maintained.

First, whenever any sanitary sewer pipes are extended, that work should be inspected by a qualified inspector who is onsite 100% of the time. Sadly it is reported that the "new" pipes leak worse than the "old" ones. Contractors are struggling just like everyone else to keep enough qualified workers. This also applies to any rehabilitation work. The Town's present consulting engineer reports that recently completed rehabilitation work is failing. This is either a design or construction issue that should not be repeated. Careful oversight of all construction is very important. Every sanitary sewer system in the state could benefit from a higher staffing level.

During construction of the new wastewater plant all current staff will be stretched and stressed. Startup of the new plant will be challenging. Though new and "fully automated" the new plant will impose a steep learning curve upon the present staff. The treatment technology is quite different, the equipment is quite different and there are always the startup failures and breakdowns which must be overcome.

Also looming on the horizon is the possibility of new regulations. Some cities have nutrient limits being added to their NPDES permit. The design of the new plant will easily remove total nitrogen, but phosphorus can be a challenge. This is not a critical issue, but one for plant operators to be aware of.

The Town's regulatory compliance is being watched by the Tennessee Riverkeeper, and perhaps other third party "activists." This scrutiny has cost the Town some fines, but mostly through extra regulatory work. Because of the trend by EPA and TDEC toward full electronic reporting, all the Town's permit violations are now very easily visible by these third party "watchers." It is imperative, to avoid further regulatory or legal risk, to be in full compliance with all permit requirements.