

WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP COMPENSATION COMMISSION 2017 RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2017 COMPENSATION COMMISSION consists of

Francis Seminski, Member	(term expires 2017)
Janet Kranz, Member	(term expires 2018)
James Conroy, Chairperson	(term expires 2019)
Robert Hayes, Member	(term expires 2020)
Kurt Shoecraft, Member	(term expires 2021)

Williamstown Township enacted a Local Officials Compensation Commission Ordinance in 2006, with the first Commission convening in January and February, 2007. The Commission has convened every odd-numbered year since: in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015. This year, therefore marks the sixth set of recommendations. This Commission marks the first for Francis Seminski and Robert Hayes, the second for Janet Kranz and Kurt Shoecraft, and the fourth for James Conroy.

The Commission accessed the Michigan Township Association research database, looking for relevant data on peer townships. When it became obvious that the data in the MTA database was insufficiently accurate, the Commission elected to create a survey document, and contact Peer Townships directly. Twenty-Five Townships were selected initially, based on similarity in 1) number of parcels, 2) population and 3) assessed valuation. Of these, five were eliminated for glaring dissimilarities: some were charter townships, and some—containing a significant percentage of waterfront property—could not be considered our 'peers'.

The Supervisors of the remaining 20 were contacted preliminarily by the Chair, notifying them of our process, and providing them with an advance copy of the survey. The townships were then contacted by phone, and their responses recorded, aggregated and shared among the members of the Commission.

Each Commissioner evaluated the results of the survey, discussed the weight we should place on these results, and presented a proposal for his or her recommended increases. The proposals were similar, and differences in dollar amounts were discussed, resulting in a unanimous agreement on the attached salary recommendations for elected officials.

As can be seen from the results of the survey, the actual salaries within our designated peer group vary widely. We learned during our discussions with the officials at the various townships that, while size and/or assessed valuations might be similar, the duties and expectations also vary widely. As one official said, comparisons among townships are like comparing apples to trucks.

While the salaries of Williamstown Township officials are clearly at the upper end of the chosen spectrum, there were many anecdotal references to salaries significantly higher (and lower) among townships not surveyed.

We are making the attached recommendations for Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer in recognition of the

excellence shown in the leadership of this Township.

In looking at the Trustee compensation, we recognized that there is less diversity of duties among various townships, but there is significant disparity in Trustee compensation. In fact, of the 20 townships within the peer group selected, only 14 provided annual salaries for Trustees. The remainder simply paid a per-meeting stipend, the size of which varied widely. Therefore, we were only able to do a comparison of the 14 townships paying an annual salary. Within those townships, Williamstown Township Trustee salary ranks at the top – especially when factoring in the extra meeting stipend. More on the stipend below.

Williamstown Township is unique among townships with annual salaries, in providing a stipend for additional meetings. While that feature pushed the aggregate compensation over the one other township whose base salary was higher, several townships reacted very positively to the idea, and it may become more prevalent in the future.

In our discussions, we realized that an inadvertent change was made in 2013. The language prior to 2013 called for an additional \$65 for each meeting beyond two meetings in each month. In 2013, it was changed to \$65 for the third meeting. There was no authorization for additional compensation beyond the third meeting. With this recommendation, we restore the original intent and authorize the additional stipend for all official meetings beyond two in a month.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve the township in this capacity, and thank you.

Respectfully,

James V. Conroy, 2017 Compensation Commission Chair