



*Milwaukee County*  
**Department of Human Resources**  
INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

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TO: Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, Board of Supervisors  
FROM: Kerry Mitchell, Chief Human Resources Officer *KM*  
DATE: March 1, 2018  
SUBJECT: **Informational Report: Compensation study of Airport Maintenance positions in response to 2018 Budget Amendment 1A011**

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This memo is in response to a 2018 Budget Amendment (1A011), in which Supervisor Weishan requested that a compensation study be completed of Airport Maintenance positions.

**Background**

As you are aware, Milwaukee County has faced significant challenges with regard to compensation for the past several years. Human Resources, DAS, and the Compensation Workgroup established by the County Board have all made recommendations to fix these issues through modernized compensation plan design and incremental pay improvements over the past several years. Below are links to some of these reports and requests:

- 15-238: Eliminate grades/steps and move to ranges. Proposed to the Board on 3/19/15.  
<https://milwaukeecounty.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2241323&GUID=C29EF534-9266-4E06-B9D3-B3CF6E402F3E&Options=ID|Text|&Search=15-238>
- 15-191: Proposed a comp plan that included salary ranges. Board rejected the proposal  
<https://milwaukeecounty.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2251621&GUID=C4CF0959-2BAD-4CFE-97A5-9EC649F410CC&Options=ID|Text|&Search=15-191>
- File 16-73: Recommendations to move from pay steps to pay ranges, implement administrative procedures to implement range changes and clarify roles and responsibilities, create a method of using performance evaluations in compensation decisions, and update County ordinances to reflect the recommendations of the Compensation Workgroup. The item was laid over to the call of the Chair.  
<https://milwaukeecounty.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2563884&GUID=810170C0-6604-4167-8FD1-229A0486CFCF>
- 16-77: Approximately 500 salary adjustments were recommended for employees paid below new recommended range minimum.  
<https://milwaukeecounty.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2554269&GUID=8FCD8F78-2335-4CAA-A119-161DB4E697B1&Options=ID|Text|&Search=16-77>
- 17-307: Requested the release of \$1.2 million in contingency funds for employee Compensation. Board denied.  
<https://milwaukeecounty.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3023781&GUID=A5B0C1CE-15D5-40A4-AD83-B41C82A0A4E4&Options=ID|Text|&Search=17-307>

As identified and outlined in multiple reports between 2014 - 2017, there are significant competitive pay issues across the County, with some of our biggest groups being Corrections Officers, Victim Witness Advocates, Highway & Airport Workers, and Administrative Support staff.

### **Departmental Pacing**

As reported to the Personnel Committee October 23, 2017, the Administration has encouraged all departments to continue to submit urgent compensation requests in a manner that keeps each department in pace with all departments.

(<https://milwaukeecounty.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3190663&GUID=1FE9EB77-6109-49F1-A722-39EDBA2C8003>) This process has continued, with checks and balances in place to ensure departments do not “outpace” each other, to ensure we are making incremental progress without giving preferential treatment to any given area. Equity issues worsen and trust erodes further when certain departments or areas receive special consideration with regard to compensation actions.

Although this approach does not address the widespread compensation issues as quickly as anyone would like, it at least addresses the fairness issue that we saw in the employee engagement survey.

### **Airport Compensation Analysis**

Our Compensation team worked closely with Airport/DOT leadership and finalized the analysis requested in Budget Amendment 1A011. The result was as follows:

**Total Cost: \$801,590**

The Administration is looking for ways to accommodate this request, as well as those from other departments. The goal is to accommodate all requests that will solve the County’s compensation problems in an equitable fashion.

In addition, DOT leadership has been engaging in additional activities to improve the workplace, such as updating decades-old employee work rules to provide clarity to employees and ensure safety, and implementing new programs and activities as a result of employee input from the employee engagement initiative. With the County Board’s support, DOT also implemented seasonal compensation programs, such as the seasonal bonus and shift differential.

CC: Chris Abele, County Executive  
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