



Municipality of Thames Centre 2024 Compensation Review Fire Services Summary Report

**ML Consulting
Council Meeting
July 15, 2024**

Background

- ▶ A market review for the Volunteer Fire Service has not been conducted for some time.
- ▶ There is no uniform method of compensation in the municipal sector for the Volunteer Fire Service; some municipalities pay hourly rates, others pay on points, others use stipends/honorariums, and some use a combination of these elements of pay.
- ▶ Thames Centre's Volunteer Fire Service is paid on a point system with additional annual stipends/honorariums provided to the Officers.
 - ▶ 1 point = \$25.00
 - ▶ Emergencies = 2 points first hour; 1 point each additional hour or part thereof
 - ▶ Non-Emergencies and Training = 1 point per hour or part thereof
 - ▶ Honorariums: District Chief \$3,500; Deputy District Chief \$3,500; Captain/Training Officer \$1,500; Acting Captain/Fire Investigator \$1,000; Committee Chair \$500
- ▶ Market data was collected from Fire Services that use hourly base rates for all positions; 4 comparators were selected considering size/scope of service, geographic location and proximity to the 401 corridor: **King, Puslinch, Port Hope and Hamilton Township.**

Recommended Changes in Compensation

Thames Centre Fire

2024 Market Summary--Volunteer Fire Service (King, Port Hope, Hamilton Township, Puslinch)

			2024 MARKET SUMMARY - HOURLY JOB RATE RATE (_%) = above market +_% = below market				
Job Title	Hours of Work	2024 Job Rate \$P.HR	No. of Obs.	Market Median \$P.HR	Market P55 \$P.HR	Market P60 \$P.HR	Market P65 \$P.HR
DC			3	\$67.60	\$70.42	\$73.24	\$76.05
DDC			2				
Cap/TO			4	\$46.13	\$51.67	\$57.20	\$59.24
AC			3	\$33.45	\$37.68	\$41.91	\$46.14
Fire Invesitgator			0				
Com Chair			0				
Firefighter	2	\$50.00	4	\$41.93	\$46.97	\$52.00	\$52.62

- ▶ The minimum call-in rate for a Volunteer Suppression Firefighter at Thames Centre is low compared to the external pay market (60th percentile pay target) considering that there is a 2X payment for the 1st hour of attendance.
- ▶ It is recommended that the point value of \$25.00 be increased to \$26.00 to reflect the 60th percentile minimum call-in rate, and that a pay structure be introduced for Officer positions based on a percentage of the First Class Firefighter rate. This is a common compensation framework used in the Ontario Fire Service.

Recommended Changes in Compensation

Thames Centre Volunteer Fire Service--Proposed 2024 Compensation Structure		
Position/Rank	2024 Pay Schedule based upon a 1st Class FF Wage	2024 Pay Schedule for Emergency Reponse (first hour)
District Chief	130% of 1 st Class FF = \$33.80	\$67.60
Deputy District Chief	120% of 1 st Class FF = \$31.20	\$62.40
Captain/Training Officer	110% of 1 st Class FF = \$28.60	\$57.20
Acting Captain/Fire Investigator	105% of 1 st Class FF = \$27.30	\$54.60
1st Class FF/Committee Chair	100% of 1 st Class FF = \$26.00	\$52.00
2nd Class FF	90% of 1 st Class FF = \$23.20	\$46.80
3rd Class FF	80% of 1 st Class FF = \$20.80	\$41.60
4th Class FF	70% of 1 st Class FF = \$18.20	\$36.40

- ▶ Details of recommended changes are included in the Staff Report.

Pay Practice and Future Considerations

- ▶ It is recommended that Council give consideration to implementing the 2024 Salary Grid effective January 1, 2024
- ▶ It is recommended that methodology of compensation (i.e., point/stipends) be further reviewed during the 2025 budget process.
- ▶ It is recommended that the following pay practices be continued to build resilience in pay policy, supported by prevailing practice in the sector:
 - ▶ That Thames Centre continue the practice of undertaking a periodic market review of all positions on a 3 to 4-year cycle in order to ensure competitive pay practices in light of changing demographics and work practices in the municipal sector.
 - ▶ This has become a best practice in the sector, providing analysis that supports adjustments to the salary grid to ensure an organization is not overpaying or underpaying positions.
 - ▶ That annual increases to the Salary Grid be determined by conducting a review of the comparator organizations to determine an average of the comparator group projected salary grid increases. This information, together with information relating to CPI increases and locally negotiated increases will inform the appropriate salary grid adjustments having regard to maintaining a sustainable compensation framework.
 - ▶ That new and changed positions continue to be evaluated using the job evaluation system; and that pay equity compliance be reviewed annually.