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by Richard L. Stokes, Municipal Personnel Consultant

In 1992, salary increases for city employees slowed from the accelerated rate of last year to more accurately reflect the figures reported by Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index. This report summarizes the findings of the annual salary and fringe benefit survey conducted by The University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service.

Salaries for Tennessee cities’ and towns’ employees grew at a rate slightly lower than the rate of inflation as reported by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for cities in the Southeast. The CPI grew by 2.7 percent in the Southeast while Tennessee city salaries grew by 2.52 percent. (The Southeast includes the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware.) On the national level, the CPI indicates that the average rate of inflation was 2.9 percent.

The percentage of increase for Middle Division cities outpaced East and West division cities as compared to the Southeastern rate of inflation. Middle Tennessee cities and towns reported salary increases at a rate of 3.59 percent compared to 2.51 percent in East Tennessee and 1.45 percent in West Tennessee.

Several groups of positions reflected an average increase in salary percentages higher than the CPI. As a group, elected officials led the way with an average increase of 3.73 percent. In that group, judges had the highest with a 6.09 percent average increase over 1991 data. The other groups reported average salary increases as follows: clerical employees increased by 3.44 percent; professional employees increased by 3.18 percent; public safety employees increased by 3.04 percent; and administrative employees increased by 2.54 percent. Average salary increases below the CPI were found in the labor and trade group, where average employee salaries increased by 2.13 percent. Average salaries decreased for technical positions by 1.15 percent.

For individual positions, the largest increase went to head librarians. Cities reported increases of about 13.37 percent (average minimum salary changed from $13,708 to $15,522; average maximum salary changed from $16,879 to $19,269). Significant increases were also reported for bookkeepers (8.29 percent), utility managers (6.51 percent), fire chiefs (6.40 percent), purchasing agents (6.15 percent), aldermen (6.09 percent), and executive secretaries (6 percent).

The largest salary decrease was to waste water operator II positions. Cities reported a decrease of about 9.98 percent (average minimum salary changed from $18,112 to $16,246; average maximum salary changed from $21,050 to $19,293). Decreases in average salaries were also reported for city engineers (-0.11 percent), street foremen (-1.04 percent), secretary I's (continued on page 2)
The average number of employees increased from the 1991 report. The average number of employees increased about 2.27 percent for full-time employees and remained the same for part-time employees. This represents a change from an average of 129 full-time employees to 132. The largest decrease was seen in East Tennessee, where full-time and part-time averages decreased about 27.38 percent. The largest increase was seen in Middle Tennessee, where full-time and part-time averages for numbers of employees increased about 8.15 percent.

For regular users of our survey information, this document will look familiar. It’s our attempt to get the most basic — and most used — information into the hands of Tennessee city officials in a faster and more economical manner. But if you need more details, don’t worry. MTAS gathered the same amount of information as in past years, and it’s available quickly if you need it. In fact, data from the survey is entered into a database (RBASE for DOS) and reports can be generated in the format you’re used to from previous years.

The salary information and how it was gathered

MTAS received responses this year from 236 of the 341 Tennessee cities. Salary information was gathered in four categories: (1) number of employees, (2) hours worked, (3) minimum salary, and (4) maximum salary. In some instances, an employee may have held more than one position or a clerk/typist was also the secretary. For these cases, respondents were asked to report the salary for the position in which the employee spends more than fifty (50) percent of his/her time.

Some positions did not apply to all cities. If the job description did not closely fit the job for the employee, the respondent was asked to leave the category blank. If you are not sure that the duties of a position listed match those of the job title in your city, ask for a copy of the job description.

Several liberties were taken when only one salary was listed. If the city listed one salary and only one employee, we assumed the salary represented the minimum and maximum salary. If a city listed a minimum salary with more than one employee, no maximum salary was inferred. Blank spaces indicate that information was not provided.

We are capable of generating salary information based on populations. Population statistics used in the survey were obtained from the 1991 Directory of Tennessee Municipal Officials as certified by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (July 1, 1990). The groupings are:

- Group 1 — populations over 100,000;
- Group 2 — populations between 15,000 and 99,999;
- Group 3 — populations between 8,000 and 14,999;
- Group 4 — populations between 4,000 and 7,999;
- Group 5 — populations between 2,000 and 3,999; and
- Group 6 — populations under 2,000.

Salary data is also available by geographical and statewide averages, counties, or by selected cities.

Benefits information

MTAS also gathered extensive data on benefits of Tennessee municipal workers. A check mark or a category blank indicates that benefit information was not provided. Blank spaces indicate that information was not provided.

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Available by request is information on work week, hours, breaks, probationary periods, hours required for full benefits, longevity pay, cost-of-living increases, uniforms, moonlighting policies, health and dental insurance and deductibles, disability, holidays, vacations, sick leave, personal time, retirement, tuition reimbursement, drug testing, workers’ compensation, credits unions, child care assistance, deferred compensation, parking, and much, much more.

How to get more information

To understand the process of requesting additional salary or benefit information, you may need to understand a little about how the survey database is constructed. This will help you understand the constraints imposed on MTAS by the software used.

The database is divided into sections called tables. Each table is associated with a particular section (topic) of the questionnaire cities completed and returned. There is a General table that contains statistical information about every city in the state. Included in this table is information about population, grand division, county, the contact person and telephone number, and the MTAS municipal management consultant serving the city. We can certainly generate this report if you need it, but such information is available elsewhere in more usable formats. This table is what allows the computer to generate the rest of the reports.

Two tables are associated with the salary questionnaire. A Title table contains a listing of the benchmark positions (the listing appears on your request form). The Salary table includes salary information for all positions in each of the seven job categories: (1) elective, (2) administrative, (3) professional, (4) clerical, (5) technical, (6) public safety, and (7) labor and trade.

The remaining tables are associated with the benefits portion of the questionnaire. The tables are (1) staff information, (2) hours, (3) salary payment policies, (4) employee insurance, (5) holidays, (6) leave, (7) other leave, (8) retirement benefits, and (9) other benefits. Some information on part-time employees is also available.

Individual reports may be tailored and generated exclusively for a requesting city. This gives you more control over what information you receive and how that information is presented to you. Examples of acceptable database requests are: (1) salary data for the city manager for cities with populations between 15,000 and 25,000 in West Tennessee, or (2) all clerical salaries in population group 4, or (3) police chief salaries for Maryville, Hendersonville, Jackson, and Clarksville, or (4) cities that pay less than 75 percent of an employee’s insurance premium.

Use the forms on pages 4 and 5 to prepare your information request(s). Just clip and mail. Feel free to duplicate the form as often as necessary. Please note that there are limits on the kind of requests MTAS can handle. (A request for all salaries in all population groups will not be honored because of the amount of time necessary to run such a request.) However, you may request as many reports as you need. All requests will be processed as they are received.

For help formulating your request, for assistance in better understanding the search and printing limitations, for other questions regarding the survey, or to get additional information, contact Richard L. Stokes, MTAS Municipal Personnel Consultant, 226 Capitol Boulevard Building, Suite 402, Nashville, Tennessee, 37219 or at (615) 256-8141 or (615) 741-6661.
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The largest salary decrease was to waste water operators. Cities reported a decrease of about 9.98 percent (average minimum salary changed from $16,122 to $16,246; average maximum salary changed from $21,050 to $19,293). Decreases in average salaries were also reported for city engineers (-0.11 percent), street foremen (-1.04 percent), secretaries (-1.11 percent), public works directors (-1.15 percent), and city managers (-1.57 percent).

Generate a report from _________ (positions). "**NOTE**" You may request all positions from a table or list those you want. Indicate below how you would like your report(s) sorted:

1. By population between _________ and _________.
2. By population group _________ (1 - 6 or All).
3. By Grand Division _________ (E, M, W, or All).

Please explain any special request here: ________________

continued on page 2
Request Form for Benefits Information from 1992 MTAS Survey

Staff and Hours
1 - 13
Total # Employees
Dept. Totals
Personnel Costs
Hours Worked
Fire Cycle
Police Cycle
Shifts
Weekends
Holidays
Weather
Lunch
Paid Breaks
Probation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff and Hours</th>
<th>Insurance</th>
<th>Salary Payment</th>
<th>Holidays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 13</td>
<td>23 - 34</td>
<td>14 - 22</td>
<td>35 - 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # Employees</td>
<td>Ind. Health Coverage</td>
<td>Longevity</td>
<td>Total # Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. Totals</td>
<td>% Premium</td>
<td>% COLA</td>
<td>New Year's Eve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Costs</td>
<td>Deductible</td>
<td>Uniforms</td>
<td>New Year's Day</td>
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<td>Amount</td>
<td>Allowance</td>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pre-Certified</td>
<td>Superv. Uniforms</td>
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<td>Police Cycle</td>
<td>Elected Officials</td>
<td>Paydays</td>
<td>Columbus Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifts</td>
<td>% Premium</td>
<td>Wages</td>
<td>Washington Birthday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekends</td>
<td>Retirees</td>
<td>Second Job</td>
<td>Presidents Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>% Premium</td>
<td>Flexible Hours</td>
<td>Fourth of July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>Family Coverage</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>% Premium</td>
<td>53 - 57</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Breaks</td>
<td>Waiting Period</td>
<td>% Payroll</td>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>Major Medical</td>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>Day After Thanksgiving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leave
37 - 46
Annual/Vacation
# Days Granted
Carryover
Cash-In
Waiting Period
Sick Leave
# Days Granted
Carryover
Cash-In
Waiting Period
Public Safety
Abuse Policy

Part-Time
Pd. Benefits/Prorated
Hours for Eligibility
Eligible Full Benefits

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Jury Duty
Voting
Marriage
Maternity
Paternity
Adoption
Family Illness
Death
Dental Appointment
Doctor Appointment
Military Leave
Personal Business Lv.
The Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) is a statewide agency of The University of Tennessee’s Institute for Public Service. MTAS operates in cooperation with the Tennessee Municipal League in providing technical assistance services to officials of Tennessee’s incorporated municipalities. Assistance is offered in areas such as accounting, administration, finance, public works, communications, ordinance codification, and wastewater management.

MTAS Technical Bulletins are information briefs that provide a timely review of topics of interest to Tennessee municipal officials. Bulletins are free to Tennessee local, state, and federal government officials and are available to others for $2 each. Contact MTAS for a list of recent Bulletins.

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