

July 16, 2021

Ms. Jessie Lillibridge  
Human Resources  
CITY OF MANITOWOC  
900 Quay Street  
Manitowoc WI 54220

RE: Municipal Court Clerk Salary Category

Dear Ms. Lillibridge:

I write this letter in support of the request to re-categorize the Municipal Clerk position to a higher level on the salary schedule. The Municipal Court Clerk exercises significantly more autonomy and decision-making power than a parallel position in the Circuit Court Clerk's office. In the Circuit Court, clerks are mostly limited to record-keeping duties, with major decisions made by the full-time Circuit Judges themselves. The Circuit Court Clerk office has some 12-15 employees serving three Circuit Judges and two Court Commissioners. By contrast, the sole Municipal Clerk does everything needed to serve one Municipal Judge. Some years ago I had a conversation with then Circuit Judge Gary Bendix. In that discussion Judge Bendix noted he handled some 1500 cases annually - Municipal Court handles about 4300 cases annually, although the complexity of Municipal Court cases is significantly less. Nonetheless, each and every case requires proper recording and reporting to other authorities.

The Municipal Court Clerk is full-time while the Municipal Judge is only part-time. This means many issues arise while the Judge is not present. As a result, the Municipal Court Clerk is given significant decision-making powers to lift Jail Commitments, suspend or un-suspend drivers licenses, enter into payment plans, refer cases for alternative adjudication, etc.

Unbeknownst to many, the Municipal Court Clerk also serves as the Municipal Judge's Judicial Assistant, although that title is not included in the position. Each Circuit Judge has a full-time Judicial Assistant who handles the Judge's schedule, drafts and responds to routine correspondence, handles calls from attorneys and the prosecutor's office, etc. The Municipal Court Clerk does the same for the Municipal Judge.

I highly support moving the Municipal Court Clerk to a higher level on the salary schedule and also recommend the position title be changed from Municipal Court Clerk to Municipal Court Clerk/Judicial Assistant.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve Olson  
Municipal Court Judge