



TOWN OF NEEDHAM

**TOWN HALL
Needham, MA 02492-2669**

2024 Annual Town Meeting

Article 3

Elected Officials' Salaries

What law governs elected officials' salaries?

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 41 Section 108, the salary and compensation of all elected officers of a town shall be fixed annually by vote of the town at an annual town meeting (but said salary or compensation may be revised by a two-thirds vote of any special town meeting called to conduct business later in the same fiscal year for which said salary or compensation was originally fixed; provided, however, that such salary revision occurs prior to the establishment of the tax rate of the town in said fiscal year).

Why has the Town Clerk Salary Structure Changed?

The Personnel Board (now the Human Resources Advisory Committee) recommends the salary amount for elected officers who are compensated – namely the Town Clerk and the Select Board. Traditionally, the Personnel Board has treated the elected Town Clerk in the same manner as appointed full-time staff. In 2000, recognizing that the annual warrant article did not include those benefits, the Personnel Board recommended a transition plan such that the existing Town Clerk would be eligible for leave accruals, sick leave buy-back, and longevity payments.

The Personnel Board also created a second-tier salary for a newly elected Town Clerk – recognizing that the Board would not have the opportunity to reevaluate the pay level until after an incumbent had been working and earning the salary.

The Personnel Board at that time intended that with the separation from service of the existing Town Clerk, the annual warrant article would set the full salary, and the new incumbent would no longer be eligible for benefits other than statutory benefits of participation in the contributory pension system and the Town's health insurance plans. The newly elected Town Clerk will use their own judgment with respect to the use of leave time, which will not accumulate from year to year. For context, the longevity program was eliminated for all newly hired department managers in 1994, and the non-occupational sick leave buy-back program was eliminated for all newly hired non-represented staff in 2008.

What is the current proposal?

At its meeting on March 5, 2024, the Personnel Board voted to implement the plan of action contemplated by the Board in 2000 – namely to set an annual salary for the role and leave it to the incumbent to establish their hours. The Board recommends that the FY2025 salary of the Town Clerk be pegged to grade 12 – similar to other department/division managers overseeing departments of relatively comparable size and

complexity – \$129,130 per year. Finally, the Board voted to eliminate the lower tier salary category, as it is no longer necessary because of the implementation of the 2000 changes.

How is the new article different from prior articles?

Here is an example of the prior article, from the 2023 Annual Town Meeting.

To see if the Town will vote to fix the compensation of the following elected officers of the Town as of July 1, 2023, as required by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, Section 108:

Town Clerk	\$77,610
Town Clerk with 6 years of service in that position	\$116,802 ⁽¹⁾
Select Board, Chair	\$1,800
Select Board, Others	\$1,500

- (1) In addition, such compensation shall also include payment of longevity in the amount of \$10,513, the accumulation of 15 days of non-occupational sick leave per fiscal year, and payment for 25% of unused sick leave at the time of retirement from Town Service in accordance with M.G.L. c. 32 or sooner, in an amount not to exceed \$80,326. The annual salary of \$116,801.85 includes compensation for seven (7) weeks of vacation leave, any unused portion of which will be paid at the time of separation from Town service in an amount not to exceed \$17,139. No later than the time of separation from Town service, the Town Clerk shall also be paid for seven (7) weeks of accrued, unused vacation time in an amount not to exceed \$17,139; or take any other action relative thereto.