

Salaries of Municipal Officers in Towns.

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The average municipal councillor is seldom cognizant of the fact that the successful conduct of municipal business is due in a large measure to the careful, thoughtful work of the officials of the municipality, and, as a rule, he is not aware of how seriously the interests of the municipality may suffer through neglect or inefficient performance of any of the multifarious duties of the officers. Nor is he conversant with the great amount of skill, thought and special knowledge that is required to properly perform the duties pertaining to these offices.

Especially is this the case in the smaller towns, and rural municipalities.

Practical experience has shown that the injunction of the Municipal Act, forbidding the letting of offices by tender, while not perhaps disobeyed in the letter, is actually ineffective, for councils as a rule, will only pay an efficient and painstaking official the same salary as an incompetent or inefficient occupant of the same office with the result that either the municipality is poorly served, or the officer poorly paid.

In connection with the above subject, the writer recently obtained statistics from a number of the towns in the province, whose population is 2500 or less and the result is tabulated below. It may safely be presumed that the work of the officials in each of the municipalities is about equal

\$175.00, one pays \$180.00, one pays \$185.00, three pay \$200.00, three pay \$240.00, three pay \$250.00, one pays \$260.00, three pay \$300.00, four pay \$350.00, and one town, Walkerville, an exceptional case, pays \$575.00. A careful student of the annexed tables will see many anomalies. For instance, Durham, population 1,513, assessment \$299,245, pays its clerk, \$240.00, while Essex, population 1,450, assessment \$381,427, only pays \$120.00, and Forest, with population of 1,584, and assessment of \$330,000 only pays \$100.00. Similar variations will be found in the payment of treasurers, assessors and collectors of taxes, and the situation is still more complicated by the fact, that some municipalities supply their

TOWN.	POPULATION.	ASSESSMENT.	CLERK'S SALARY.	IS CLERK PAID EXTRA?	TREASURER'S SALARY.	ASSESSOR'S SALARY.	COLLECTOR'S SALARY.	REMARKS.
Alliston	1374	\$ 326,077 00	\$ 125 00	Yes.	\$ 80 00	\$ 40 00	\$ 30 00	
Amherstburg	2200	458,000 00	200 00	Yes.	200 00	(2) 40 00 each	180 00	Town supplies Clerk with office, etc.
Aurora	1800	237,864 00	125 00	Yes.	75 00	40 00		Officials supply their own offices, Constable collects taxes.
Aylmer	2300	709,860 00	300 00	Yes.	175 00	60 00	120 00	Town supplies Clerk with office, etc.
Dresden	1508	406,590 00	250 00	Yes.	50 00	60 00	40 00	Town supplies Clerk and Treasurer with offices, etc. —Collector is also Constable, hence low salary.
Durham	1513	299,245 00	240 00	Yes.	85 00	40 00		Town supplies Clerk's office, etc.—Treasurer collects taxes.
Essex	1450	381,427 00	120 00	Yes.	60 00	50 00	100 00	Town supplies all offices, etc.
Forest	1584	330,000 00	100 00	Yes.	40 00	40 00	50 00	Officials supply their own offices.
Harriston	1800	429,735 00	180 00	Yes.	65 00	65 00	70 00	
Kincardine	2172	606,838 00	175 00	Yes.	150 00	100 00	100 00	Town supplies Clerk's office, etc.
Meaford	2000	537,652 00	240 00	Yes.	150 00	65 00	85 00	
Milton	1321	417,685 00	300 00	Yes.	100 00	50 00	65 00	Town supplies Clerk's office, etc.
Mitchell	2000	672,344 00	350 00	Yes.	75 00	75 00	50 00	
Mt. Forest	2100	632,005 00	260 00	Yes.	100 00	80 00	112 00	Collector is paid three-quarters of one per cent. of roll, about \$112.00.
Niagara	1250	500,000 00	350 00	Yes.	250 00	35 00	50 00	Town supplies offices.—Clerk and Treasurer one person, paid \$600.00 in all.
North Toronto	1658	825,753 00	350 00	Yes.	250 00	200 00	400 00	Town supplies offices.—Clerk and Treasurer one person, paid \$600.00 in all.
Oakville	1800	449,450 00	200 00	Yes.	100 00	75 00		Taxes collected by Constable, salary \$475.00.
Palmerston	2000	450,550 00	250 00	Yes.	100 00	65 00	100 00	Officials supply offices, etc.
Parkhill	1346	247,000 00	100 00	Yes.	50 00	40 00	40 00	Town supplies offices, etc.
Parry Sound	2924	442,026 00	300 00	Yes.	225 00	100 00	100 00	Officials supply offices, etc.
Sandwich	1500	436,000 00	250 00	Yes.	150 00	(2) 75 00 each	100 00	
Sudbury	1800	343,000 00	350 00	Yes.	250 00	60 00	100 00	Offices of Clerk and Treasurer united in one person, salary, \$600.00, and allowance for office rent.
Vankleek Hill	1600	429,550 00	90 00	Yes.	30 00	35 00	20 00	Officials supply their own offices, etc.
Uxbridge	1700	501,300 00	200 00	Yes.	75 00	70 00	100 00	Officials supply their own offices, etc.
Walkerville	1592	2,105,516 00	575 00	Yes.	300 00	160 00	100 00	
Welland	1944	623,000 00	240 00	Yes.	400 00	75 00		Treasurer collects taxes.
Warton	2052	436,383 00	185 00	Yes.	135 00	70 00	100 00	

The extras paid the Clerk consist of Fees, for Vital Statistics, Revision of Voters' Lists, Selecting Jurors, etc., etc.

In the nine towns paying the lower salaries, under \$200, the average for the Clerk is \$133.32, while in 17 towns, excluding Walkerville, the average is \$271.76.

In many towns an endeavor is made to have the work performed as cheaply as possible, regardless of whether the officials are rendering efficient, careful service, or whether they are mere place-holders, intent upon giving the smallest return possible for the salaries received. If a municipality has efficient officials they should be paid for their services full compensation, just as every contractor or workman is paid for efficient work; but if, on the other hand, a municipality has inefficient or careless officials, they should be discharged and their places filled by men who are fitted both by their knowledge and industry, for such responsible positions even if larger salaries must be paid.

but a wide range of salaries is apparent. This should not be the case and would not be if there were any rule in the fixing of the salary, apart from "what can we get it done for?" Either some officials are paid insufficient salaries or some are paid too much. No one with experience in municipal matters will think that the latter conclusion is correct.

In the tabular statement the population and assessment of each town is set forth in order that a comparison may be made by the reader. It will be seen that one town, (Vankleek Hill) only pays its clerk \$90.00 per annum, two towns pay \$100.00, one pays \$120.00, two pay \$125.00, one pays

officials with offices, heat, light, telephone, etc., while in other cases and most often where the smallest salaries are paid the officials themselves have to supply these necessities.

No one, conversant with the duties of the different officials in towns of this class, will be inclined to dissent from the proposition that the services of the different officials in the towns indicated should be at least \$250.00 for the clerk, \$150.00 for the treasurer, \$100.00 for the assessor, and at least one per cent of the taxes for the collector. How then are salaries in the places paying the smaller amounts to be raised to the proper level?

It seems almost hopeless to expect