**Minutes**
**Joint Pay & Benefits Committee Meeting**
**March 25, 2026**

The Joint Pay & Benefits Committee met on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. in the GUC Board Room, located at 401 S. Greene Street, Greenville, North Carolina.

Committee Members Present
Commissioner Wanda Carr, Greenville Utilities Commission
Commissioner Justin Fuller, Greenville Utilities Commission
Council Member Arjenae Jones, City of Greenville
Council Member Seth Hardee, City of Greenville

Committee Members Absent
None

Greenville Utilities Commission Staff Present
Tony Cannon, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer
Chris Padgett, Assistant General Manager/Chief Operating Officer
Andy Anderson, Chief Administrative Officer
Richie Shreves, Director of Human Resources
Cortney Bazemore, HR Business Partner
Phil Dixon, General Counsel
Steve Hawley, Communications Manager/PIO
Leah Herring, HR Business Partner
Lou Norris, Secretary to the General Manager/CEO
Lena Previll, Senior Human Resources Manager
Amy Wade, Executive Assistant to the General Manager/CEO

City of Greenville Staff Present
Michael Cowin, City Manager
Ken Graves, Deputy City Manager
Dené Alexander, Assistant City Manager
Leah Futrell, Director of Human Resources
Adam Baugh, Human Resources Manager
Glen Buck, Human Resources Manager
Valerie Shiuwegar, City Clerk

Others present
Mary Ann Edwards, Segal Consulting
Patrice Glasthal, Segal Consulting

I. Call to Order
City Manager Michael Cowin called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. Approval of the Agenda
Council Member Hardee made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Council Member Jones seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously, 4:0.

Safety Brief
Mr. Tony Cannon, General Manager/CEO of Greenville Utilities Commission, provided a safety brief and explained the plan of action should there be an emergency at today's meeting.

III. Approval of the Minutes
Council Member Hardee made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2025, Joint Pay & Benefits Committee meeting. Commissioner Carr seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously, 4:0.

IV. Consideration of Recommendations from Classification and Compensation Study Consultant
Mr. Cowin welcomed Mary Ann Edwards and Patrice Glasthal from Segal and an overview of the classification and compensation study was provided.

Ms. Edwards began with an overview of Segal and shared its long-standing relationship with the City and GUC, and as such, they have a deep understanding of the City's and GUC's jobs and pay structures.

She stated the purpose of the study is to maintain a competitive compensation plan that has been long standing with both the City and GUC. Segal completed a market true-up study for the City and GUC as recent as 2022; this is first time in a number of years to do a comprehensive classification analysis.

Classification Analysis
Ms. Glasthal provided information on the job description questionnaire (JDQ) process. Segal developed a JDQ, conducted orientation and training with employees, supervisors, managers and department heads, and the JDQs were distributed to employees for completion. There were 599 JDQs completed covering 401 job titles. She noted that sworn police and fire/rescue employees did not complete JDQs.

Segal analyzed all JDQs to determine appropriate groupings, assigned each job and applied Segal Evaluator™ to establish internal equity. Once analysis of JDQs was completed, the Consultants worked with the City and GUC HR staff to simplify the classification structure and recommended standardized titles that included 95 new job titles.

The Consultants identified benchmark jobs, looked at comparable public sector and utility peers, and reviewed additional published survey resources.

The data was analyzed, and the City and GUC's base salary market positions were calculated for every job title. Segal designed market-competitive salary structures and implementation costing options.

Through this process, Segal, the City, and GUC identified 140 benchmark positions that are representative of the City's and GUC's workforce.

Ms. Glasthal shared the selection of peer organizations and published survey sources. Based on the results of the market study, Segal designed a recommended salary schedule, recommended placement of jobs on the salary schedule (i.e. assigned jobs to pay grades), and conducted compression analysis. She noted that the recommendations are tailored to the City's and GUC's unique needs and operating environment.

The market analysis results summary of findings showed the City and GUC were 98% overall competitive to market average midpoint.

Ms. Edwards stated that a salary structure defines ranges of pay for jobs within an organization and encompasses minimum and maximum pay for a group of jobs and defines salary progression for jobs. She noted that the City and GUC are in decent shape with only some fine tuning needed.

She talked about the difference in paying for the job verses the individual. The salary structure is developed with the focus on the job, and the implementation of the salary structure is focused on the individual.

In order to support the City of Greenville's and Greenville Utilities' ability to attract and retain highly qualified employees, Segal designed competitive market salary structures for general employees. Segal provided the findings of the compensation study and recommendation.

Here are the key updates to the General structure (Pay Grades 106-128):

- Designed to be market competitive with flexibility to adjust the structure based on the desired market position to support recruitment and retention goals
- Increased the structure to 100% of the overall market average midpoint, and 2% increase, ensuring competitiveness with prevailing market pay levels
- Adjusted the range width to 59% to better reflect the market (current range width is 55%)
- Progressive midpoint differentials ranging from 6% to 10% to accommodate greater variation in market data and provide more growth opportunities
- Built in the flexibility to easily add additional pay grades as organizational needs evolve
- Revised the grade placement for 125 positions (about 28% of roles) to more accurately reflect market-aligned values

In addition, Segal recommended updates for the Police and Fire/Rescue structures to reflect the current market conditions.

- Police salary structure will maintain current 8 grades with some adjustments being made within the ranges.
- Fire/Rescue structure will maintain current 12 grades with some adjustments being made within the ranges.

Ms. Edwards reviewed the four salary structure implementation options. After discussion with both Human Resources teams by Segal, the recommended plan is to move forward with Option 1b, bring employes to 5% above the new minimum of the proposed pay range for their position. While structure provides some guidance for compensation in the form of defined ranges, individuals should be placed in the new pay ranges based on criteria such as experience, performance, time in role, internal equity and expertise and content knowledge, if the budget allows.

Greenville Utilities Commission General Manager/CEO, Tony Cannon, shared that steps taken by the joint committee, the GUC Board and the City Council are working as the analysis shows good results as compared to market.

City Manager Cowin shared that the GUC Board of Commissioners and City Council should be proud of their efforts in the past relative to the structure and evaluation process in place for this extensive analysis shows close track to the market.

Recommendation:
Mr. Cowin stated that based on the analysis staff recommends Option 1b to:

- Implement the recommended salary structure and based on market data, current midpoint and internal equity considerations, place all employees in the appropriate pay grade
- Bring employees who are below the minimum of their assigned pay grade up to 5% above the minimum of the assigned/new pay grade

After discussion, Commissioner Carr made a motion to approve staff's recommendations. Commissioner Fuller seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously, 4:0.

V. Consideration of Market Adjustment/Merit Program for FY 2026-2027
City of Greenville Director of Human Resources Leah Futrell announced that the City and GUC annually review the competitive pay posture of the joint pay plan with the objective of maintaining an effective pay system that is internally equitable and compatible and is as competitive as possible in relation to the external marketplace. Staff analyzed data from 7 national surveys from well-known compensation consultant companies, including Catapult, a survey largely focused on North Carolina. She presented data from these 7 surveys showing an average projected 3.5% increase in pay. In addition, 26 public sector benchmark organizations were surveyed. Thirteen of the 26 responded with average 4.6% actual increase for FY 2025-26. Five of those responded with a 4.0% average projected increase for FY 2026-27.

There were 19 local private sector employers surveyed with only 3 responding with a 3.7% average actual increase for FY 2025-26 and projected a 4.0% increase for FY 2026-27.

Ms. Futrell reviewed the City/GUC pay increases for the past 5 years compared to market along with the projections for FY 2026-27 as follows:

| Actual % | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FY** | **Catapult** | **Private Sector** | **Public Sector** | **City/GUC** |
| **21/22** | 3.1% | 2.7% | 3.9% | 2.0% |
| **22/23** | 3.8% | 4.8% | 5.2% | 4.0% |
| **23/24** | 4.2% | 3.7% | 5.5% | 2.0% |
| **24/25** | 3.9% | 3.4% | 4.6% | 4.0% |
| **25/26** | 3.9% | 3.7% | 4.6% | 4.0% |

Projections:

| FY | Catapult | Private Sector | Public Sector | City/GUC |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26/27 | 3.4% | 4.0% | 4.0% | TBD |

Recommendation:
Ms. Futrell stated that based on the analysis and available budget, staff recommend a 3.25% pay adjustment for FY 2026-2027, applied as deemed appropriate by each entity, to better mirror the market and to pay competitively.

After discussion, Council Member Hardee made a motion to approve staff's recommendations. Commissioner Carr seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously, 4:0.

VI. Review of 401(k) Employer Contribution

GUC Human Resources Director Richie Shreves stated that back in March 2024 the Joint Pay and Benefits Committee and then full boards approved to increase the 401K contribution for employees. At the time the employer contribution was a flat $40 per pay period and the City and GUC approved a 3% 401(k) employer contribution for FY 2024-25. The City and GUC both saw a positive impact and the committee and both boards agreed to accelerate the plan with a 4% increase for FY 2025-26 and 5% in FY 2026-27 which will take effect on January 1, 2027.

Ms. Shreves provided a handout with a listing of the top 20 largest municipalities in North Carolina and regional/county peers, including cities, showing their 401(k) employer contribution percentage.

The 5% employer contribution that will be effective in January 2027 will keep the 401(k) contribution in line with average and will assist in recruitment and retention efforts.

VII. Next steps

Council Member Hardee made a motion to cancel the April 6, 2026, Joint Committee meeting. Commissioner Fuller seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously, 4:0.

Mr. Cowin reminded the Committee members that these recommendations will be presented to the City Council and the GUC Board of Commissioners at the Joint Board meeting scheduled for Monday, April 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

VIII. Adjournment

Without objection, Mr. Cowin adjourned the Joint Pay and Benefits Committee meeting at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Wade

Amy Wade
Acting Secretary