

HABERSHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUBJECT: Classification and Compensation Study

DATE: February 3, 2021

☒ **RECOMMENDATION**

☐ **POLICY DISCUSSION**

BUDGET INFORMATION:

☐ **STATUS REPORT**

ANNUAL- \$15,500

☐ **OTHER**

CAPITAL-

COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED ON: February 15, 2021

PURPOSE: To obtain Commission approval of the proposal received from Carl Vinson Institute of Government to provide a classification and compensation study to Habersham County. To authorize the County Manager to sign the related documents.

BACKGROUND / HISTORY: In 2016, the Carl Vinson Institute of Government prepared our most recent classification and compensation study. The implementation process took place in three phases from October 31, 2016 through July 1, 2018. Per County policy, a compensation study shall be completed every two years.

FACTS AND ISSUES:

Due to the ever-changing state, federal and local government policies regarding human resource laws, it is very important to maintain a current classification and compensation plan. The Carl Vinson Institute of Government conducted prior comprehensive classification and compensation studies in 2002 and again in 2016.

- A. The Carl Vinson Institute of Government has been contacted and will agree to provide the following comprehensive classification & compensation study for Habersham County.
 - B. The information that they will provide includes the following:
 - 1. A written summary analysis of the employee benefits and salary surveys conducted for the project will be produced.
 - 2. An electronic (Microsoft Word) job description for each new position will be produced.
 - 3. A revised electronic (Microsoft Word) job description where significant position evolution or change in duties was documented in the job description review form will be produced.
 - 4. A written report outlining the revised classification and compensation plan will be produced.
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- C. A fixed fee of \$15,500 will be charged for the study and due in two equal installments. The first payment of \$7,250 will be due on Monday, May 3, 2021 and the remaining balance due on February 28, 2022.
- D. Timeline for results of this study – Start date of the project will begin Monday, May 3, 2021, Preliminary cost estimate and report to be submitted by September 30, 2021 with final classification and compensation plan completed by Friday, October 29, 2021. CVIOG involvement in the implementation of the study will end by Monday, February 28, 2022.
- E. Tentative Schedule Dates of Project

Steps	Tentative Dates	Tasks	Description
Step 1	Monday, May 3, 2021	Begin project orientation meetings	Orientation #1 Meeting with County Manager and Human Resources Director.
			Orientation #2 Meeting with Department Directors and Assistant Department Directors
			Orientation #3 Meeting with Constitutional Officers
Step 2	Monday, June 21, 2021	Distribution of Materials	Develop detailed position description questionnaire for new positions created since 2017
			Distribute existing job descriptions and review forms to Department Directors
Step 3	Monday, July 12, 2021	Collect Data	Collect questionnaires, gather data
Step 4	Monday, August 2, 2021	Interviews	Interview employees and department directors
Step 5	Wednesday, September 1, 2021	Analysis of data	Develop new job descriptions, evaluation positions
Step 6	Thursday, September 30, 2021	Preliminary reporting	Provide preliminary report and recommendations along with cost estimates
Step 7	TBD	Implementation	Implementation dates are set after approval

OPTIONS:

- 1) Approve the recommended Classification and Compensation study proposed by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government and to authorize the County Manager to sign the related documents.
- 2) Deny the recommended Classification and Compensation study proposed by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government and to authorize the County Manager to sign the related documents.
- 3) Commission defined alternative.

RECOMMENDED SAMPLE MOTION:

To approve the recommended study with Carl Vinson Institute of Government and authorize the County Manager sign the related documents.

DEPARTMENT:

Prepared by: Vinita Robinson, *MPA, PHR*

Director: Human Resources

**ADMINISTRATIVE
COMMENTS:**

_____ **DATE:** _____

County Manager



**Carl Vinson
Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

P r o p o s a l f o r S e r v i c e s

**HABERSHAM COUNTY
FOLLOW-UP CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION STUDY**

February 8, 2021

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

This scope of work is responsive to Habersham County's (County) request to have the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (Institute of Government) review and update the Institute of Government's 2016 classification and compensation plan.

SCOPE OF WORK:

The scope of work will derive information from data sources provided by the County. The Institute of Government and the County will cooperate in guiding project evolution and direction.

The Institute of Government will take several steps or phases to update the job classification system and compensation plan for all positions covered under the County's classification and compensation plan. The following steps summarize the tasks to be undertaken:

1. The Institute of Government will conduct three project orientation meetings via video conferencing with administrative staff, constitutional officers, and supervisors from the County. The orientation meetings will describe in detail the activities that will be required to successfully update the job classification system and compensation plan for all positions covered under the County's personnel plan.
 - *Orientation Meeting #1* – Video conference orientation meeting with the County Manager and Human Resources Director to review the final report and related documents from the Institute of Government's 2016 classification and compensation study and develop the work plan for the follow-up project.
 - *Orientation Meeting #2* – Video conference orientation meeting with department directors and assistant department directors (or equivalent positions).

- *Orientation Meeting #3* – Video conference orientation meeting with constitutional officers and chief deputy (or equivalent position).
2. The Institute of Government will develop a detailed position description questionnaire to be distributed by administrative personnel from the County after the orientation sessions and to be completed by incumbents in new positions established since the development of the Institute of Government's 2016 classification and compensation plan.
 3. Administrative personnel from the County will distribute existing job descriptions and job description review forms to be completed by constitutional officers, department directors or department supervisors for each existing job description within their supervisory area.
 4. The Institute of Government will interview an incumbent employee in each position identified in Step 2 via video conference or telephone. The information collected from the interviews and the position description questionnaires will be utilized to generate a new job description and job classification for each position identified in Step 2.
 5. The Institute of Government will conduct video conferences with the County Manager, Human Resources Director, constitutional officers, and department directors to review the existing job descriptions, completed job description review forms, and discuss classification and compensation information for their supervisory areas. The information collected from the meetings and the job description review forms will be utilized to update job descriptions and job classifications for existing positions.
 6. The Institute of Government will develop new job descriptions for all positions identified in Step 2.
 7. The Institute of Government will update existing job descriptions for select current positions in the County. *The Institute of Government will only update existing job descriptions where significant position evolution or change in duties has been identified in the job description revision and review forms.*
 8. The Institute of Government will update the classification system for all positions identified in Step 2 and existing positions covered under the County's personnel plan. Most classifications will be evaluated with a point factor comparison job evaluation system as a method to rank positions and measure differences in position content.
 9. The Institute of Government will utilize market based pricing techniques (organize positions for compensation purposes based on external market conditions) to classify administrative and executive positions (e.g., department directors, etc.) in the County.

10. The Institute of Government will collect published wage survey data. In a joint effort with appropriate County administrative staff, the Institute of Government will collect published wage survey data covering public and private organizations. It is believed that published wage survey data will be derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor (BLS), International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and the State of Georgia's Department of Community Affairs (DCA).
11. The Institute of Government will design and administer a custom salary survey specifically for this project. The purpose of the custom salary survey is to collect data on compensation practices for benchmark positions jointly identified with appropriate County administrative staff from benchmark organizations selected by the County. The custom salary survey will include up to 15 organizations and 30 benchmark positions.
12. The Institute of Government will design and administer a custom benefits survey specifically for this project. The purpose of the custom benefits survey is to collect information on health insurance (e.g., types of plans offered, premiums, deductibles), retirement (e.g., defined benefit or defined contribution), and paid time off offered by external organizations. The Institute of Government will work with the County to identify up to 15 organizations to include in the custom benefits survey.
13. The Institute of Government will analyze and format the wage survey data for use in analyzing existing pay levels and updating the existing compensation plan to desired market position and salary structure design. The updated compensation plan can include either pay steps or pay bands for each position. Furthermore, the Institute of Government will provide the associated costs for implementing the recommended compensation plan.
14. The Institute of Government will develop and submit a final written report outlining the updated classification and compensation plan.
15. The Institute of Government will present report findings and the updated classification and compensation plan recommendations to the Board of Commissioners.
16. The Institute of Government will remain available for a reasonable level of follow-up technical assistance.

DELIVERABLES:

1. A written summary analysis of the employee benefits and salary surveys conducted for the project will be produced.

2. An electronic (Microsoft Word) job description for each new position will be produced.
3. A revised electronic (Microsoft Word) job description where significant position evolution or change in duties was documented in the job description review form will be produced.
4. A written report outlining the revised classification and compensation plan will be produced.
5. Carl Vinson Institute of Government faculty and staff will make a presentation to the Board of Commissioners outlining the final report recommendations.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

The Institute of Government will commence activities related to the classification and compensation study on Monday, May 3, 2021. Initial activities include multiple video conference orientation sessions with administration and human resources staff, constitutional officers and department directors from Habersham County. During the orientation sessions, the Institute of Government will discuss the project methodology and provide instructions on how to distribute project materials to departmental supervisors and employees.

The next phase will involve video conference or telephone job analysis interviews with county employees in positions identified in Step 2 in the scope of work section. The purpose of the job analysis interviews is to review the contents of their questionnaires and gain additional insight into their positions. Furthermore, Institute of Government faculty and staff will conduct video conference or telephone job analysis discussions with the County Manager, Human Resources Director, Constitutional Officers, and Department Directors to review existing job descriptions, completed job description review forms, and classification and compensation information for their areas of supervision.

After collecting all of the job activity data, the next elements of the project will involve developing new job descriptions (positions identified in Step 2 in the scope of work section), updating select existing job descriptions, evaluation of positions, collection and analysis of a variety of benefits and salary survey data, and updating the classification and compensation plan.

The final steps in the project will involve reviewing the preliminary results with administration and human resources staff. The final recommendations will be presented to the Board of Commissioners. A preliminary cost estimate and report will be submitted for review by Thursday, September 30, 2021 and a final report submitted by Friday, October 29, 2021.

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government will remain available to assist with implementation and training related to the study recommendations until Monday, February 28, 2022.

COST:

A fixed fee of \$15,500 is required to fund the project. The Institute of Government is willing to adjust the scope of work and costs accordingly to meet the County's needs. This proposal will be valid for 45 days from the date of issuance (February 8, 2021) and honored upon acceptance within that timeframe thereafter pursuant to execution of a contract.

Upon receipt of the invoice, Habersham County will pay the University of Georgia Research Foundation, Inc. a fixed fee of \$15,500, with this amount being due in two equal installments of \$7,250 on May 3, 2021 and February 28, 2022. The invoice should be directed to: Mr. Phillip Sutton, County Manager, Habersham County, 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523; email psutton@habershamga.com; telephone number 706-839-0200.

CAPABILITIES OF THE VINSON INSTITUTE:

The mission of the Institute of Government is to improve governance and the lives of people in Georgia. In carrying out this mission, the Institute can call on the wide-ranging knowledge base of the University of Georgia as well as on over 90 years of direct service experience in providing technical assistance, training, research, and policy analysis to local and state governments in Georgia. The Institute of Government is among the most highly-rated university-based organizations designed specifically to span the gap between best practices research and the existing practice of government. The Institute of Government has developed expertise in numerous areas of public policy, public management, training, and human services and resource development. Most importantly for the purposes of this proposal, the Institute of Government's Strategic Operations and Planning Assistance (SOPA) Division has tremendous experience with assisting local governments with human resource management technical assistance projects.

The proposed researcher for this project is:

Alex Daman Alex Daman would oversee the project. Alex joined the Institute in 2007. He provides technical assistance to local governments and public sector organizations in the areas of position classification and compensation, job descriptions, salary and employee benefits surveys, executive searches, and general human resource management. Mr. Daman has directed over 80 human resource technical assistance projects in the State of Georgia. He is a member of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and serves on the Executive Board of ASPA's Section on Personnel Administration and Labor Relations. He has a Master of Public Administration from the University of Georgia.

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government focuses on providing customized research projects based upon the unique and specific needs of each local government. We have several experts in this arena that can be called upon to provide additional technical support. We stand ready to meet your applied research and training needs! For additional information please contact: Alex Damna, Public Service Associate; email: adaman@uga.edu