

October 7, 2013

Charles Aspinwall, Town Administrator
Town Hall
Millis, MA 02054

Dear Charles,

Pat Sjogren, the Assistant Town Clerk, and I met with you recently on September 19th to discuss reclassifying the position of Assistant Town Clerk up from the current Grade 7. The process we are following is in the current Union contract (I have attached the relevant section at the end of this letter).

Pat provided you with her written request (see attached). I had previously met with her and agree with her request that the position should be reclassified up from the current Department Assistant III. I believe this is long overdue. I have been attempting to get the position reclassified and the pay scale increased for many years. My efforts have been assisted recently by the job surveys that were completed by the Massachusetts Town Clerks Association and the Millis Operations Director in your office. I presented this material and my request last Spring during the budget process, but I was bumped back and forth several times between the Town and the Union due to the ongoing negotiations at the time, and nothing was able to be done until the Union Contract was approved, which was too late for action at the Spring Annual Town Meeting.

I believe it is now time to address this issue in time for the November Town Meeting.

Aside from the increased workload and responsibilities detailed in the attached letter, much of which mainly supports my ongoing request for more hours for the office, the single most important factor in the request for a change in classification is the fact that there is no direct supervision on a daily basis. The term "assistant" typically refers to a person who gives aid and support, assuming some responsibilities. That is not the case in the Office of the Town Clerk.

The Assistant Town Clerk in Millis holds a unique position. The Millis Town Clerk receives only a yearly stipend and, as such, operates primarily as a volunteer. There is no other Town Clerk in the state who has a full time Assistant Town Clerk without also being in a full-time position.

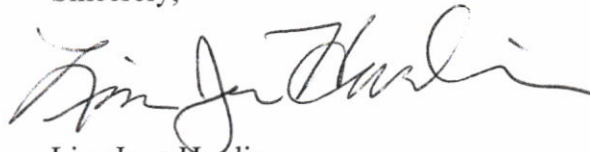
The Assistant Town Clerk in Millis fulfills all the day-to-day responsibilities of the operation of the office, including the supervision of a twenty hour clerical staff position and workers on the Senior Work Program, and other more occasional volunteers. The Assistant Town Clerk assumes all the responsibilities of the Town Clerk, acting on her behalf on a daily basis.

This type of situation does not exist anywhere else in the Town offices. All other offices in which an "Assistant" works, have a full time, highly paid supervisor. While these other "Assistants" may be able to assume the responsibilities of the Department Head, this is done on a sporadic rather than routine basis.

The job description for Department Assistant III falls short of what the position actually entails. This position has far greater authority than the title would indicate. I therefore concur with Pat Sjogren's request that the position of Town Clerk be reclassified upward from Grade 7. I also request that her salary be increased retroactive to July 1, 2013, since this process has dragged on for so long.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Jane Hardin". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Lisa Jane Hardin
Town Clerk

Note: The current Union Contract (SEIU Local 888), Article 20, Job Classification states:

- (1) An employee who believes his or her position should be classified by different title and/or in a different pay grade shall have the opportunity to request a hearing on the matter before the Personnel Director;
- (2) Any such request should be submitted to the employee's department head in simple written form. The request should include the reasons for the request;
- (3) Following a review of the request, the department head shall forward it to the Personnel Director together with a written recommendation and the reasons therefore;
- (4) Approved changes in classification and/or pay grades shall be effective upon approval by the Board of Selectmen and must be ratified at the next Town Meeting. If ratification is not obtained, the position will be returned to the previous grade.

To: Lisa Jane Hardin
Millis Town Clerk

Thank you for seeing me. I am here to advocate for a grade change for the position of Assistant Town Clerk.

I feel the grade change is warranted for a number of reasons. There is a job description currently in effect which addresses the minimum qualifications, functions, and responsibilities of the Assistant Town Clerk. This description falls short in several areas. The Assistant Town Clerk's position has changed significantly in the last several years.

Some examples of this change are;

Increased direct supervisory responsibility for one clerical part time employee, one volunteer, and two senior workers. Would love to have more staff or increased hours.

Collection and filing of Conflict of Interest Ethics Training for all employees, board and committee members, and volunteers of the Town, including the school system. These forms are completed for every new hire and are repeated every two years. This is an increase in paperwork and responsibility.

Single biggest change in position has been the Open Meeting Law and "transparency" in government. All meetings and agendas for local or regional meetings must be posted a minimum of 48 hours prior to the meeting taking place. These postings are located in the downstairs window on the upstairs bulletin board, and in the office. Meeting notifications come at all times on all days of the week. It is impossible to coordinate these and causes significant interruptions during the work day. This has increased the daily workload.

All meeting minutes also must be filed and kept in this office. I now have 18 three ring binders for these minutes and separate file drawers for the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee.

Another significant change to responsibilities relates to identity. Certified copies of births, marriages, or deaths are now routinely required for entrance to schools, participation in any sport, driver's license, any "money" account, and verification for retirement to name only a few. These vital records are kept in the downstairs vault. At this time, only births since 2011 are "on-line". All other vital information must be retrieved from the vault and hand prepared for certification.

While the Commonwealth has made registering to vote an easier process, this has caused extra work for the Clerk's office. When renewing a driver's license, individual is asked if s/he wish to be a registered voter. A simple check mark starts this process. Unless the individual reads the sentence VERY carefully, they do not understand they do not have to re-register if they

are already registered to vote in their community. Voter registrations from the RMV have added significant amounts of time to this position.

Other time related increases include sale of Transfer Station stickers and changes with Animal Control regulations which affect licensing. All of the above add to the multi-tasking and organization of the various aspects of the position. These changes have also increased the responsibility of this office. There is now routine contact with the Secretary of State's office, the Attorney General's office and the Elections Division.

What sets the position of Assistant Town Clerk apart from any other Department III position is the lack of direct supervision. All other positions entitled Department Assistant III work under a full time Department Head.

The Millis Town Clerk receives a stipend of approximately \$5900. There are no set hours attached to this stipend. In many respects, it is similar to a paid volunteer position.

The Assistant Town Clerk is the only full time position in the office and thus is responsible for all the day to day operations. The Assistant Town Clerk assumes all the responsibilities of the Town Clerk and acts on her behalf on a daily basis—signing legal documents, certificates, notarization, election information, Treasurer's documents, Board of Registrars information, Attorney General requirements, Secretary of State election representatives, Finance Director requests, Town Administrator requests and so on. This increased authority and responsibility is what sets this position apart from others.

A salary survey conducted by the Office of the Town Administrator for FY13 showed that in all communities contacted, the Assistant Town Clerk's salary is greater than that for Millis. Also, with one exception, Upton, all these communities additionally employed a full time Town Clerk.

It is for the above reasons I am requesting an increase in grade classification from the current grade seven.

Thank you.

Pat Sjogren