

Last updated: 12-5-2025

Kimball Public Library

Comprehensive Market Analysis and Evidence-Based
Budget for FY 2027

The following adjustments position the Library competitively, maintain fiscal responsibility, and provide evidence-based figures for every budget item.

Personnel

Library Director salary

Current: \$67,910

FY 2027: \$95,000

Increase: \$27,090 (39.8%)

This increase acknowledges severe undercompensation and corrects unsustainable disparities. The Director has been compensated far below national and regional benchmarks for years – leading to wage compression and consequently, artificially constraining all other library staff compensation. The accompanying Director salary whitepaper provides an in-depth market-based analysis.

This \$95,000 salary is positioned competitively within documented ranges while acknowledging that national and regional standards should guide long-term positioning. The retention value is immeasurable—recruiting a comparable director would cost an average of 40-60% of market-based annual salary (\$80,000–\$105,000), and result in an incalculable loss of 24+ years institutional knowledge.

Librarian wages: 3.6 FTE

Current: \$127,479 (\$35,410 annual FTE average)

FY 2027: \$167,659 (\$46,571 annual FTE average)

Increase: \$40,180 (31.5%)

The [2023 Vermont Library Salary](#) survey found 27% of library workers don't earn enough to meet basic needs, creating severe recruitment and retention challenges. Kimball Public Library is committed to its establishment of a livable wage as the salary baseline, with regular adjustments for inflation and market-based needs.

Senior Youth Services Librarian, MLS (1.0 FTE): \$ 72,800 annually, \$35 hourly

- Rationale: Aligns with Vermont 6,001-10,000 population benchmarks (\$33.12 avg), recognizing that within this salary data only 20-30% of VT librarians have an MLS, is competitive for MLS and substantial experience, provides career pathway

Teen and Adult Services Librarian, CPL (1.0 FTE): \$58,085 annually, \$27.93 hourly

- Rationale: Recognizes professional expertise and experience, promotes internal equity, provides room to grow should an MLS be acquired while recognizing the benefit of the CPL.

Technology Librarian, MLS (.2 FTE): \$7,800, \$26 hourly

- Rationale: Specialized knowledge and experience command market-rate compensation. We benefit enormously to have someone with such an outsized network of skills and experiences to provide one-on-one help with technology to community members..

Communications Librarian (.5 FTE): \$25,500, \$25 hourly

- Rationale: This is a specialized position that has much in common with non-librarian positions in the broader commercial market.

Library Assistant/Support Staff (.75 FTE): \$24.74-\$24.84/hour

- Rationale: This is just (.77-.87 cents/hour) above the minimum living wage for 1 adult/no children in our area. Competitive, market-rate wages aids recruitment and retention, and supports the ability of staff to live in our community sustainably and with dignity.

Total: \$262,659 annually

This budget represents Vermont basic needs standards and regional competitiveness. The 38% increase addresses historic wage suppression caused by director salary compression—with the Director earning far below market rate for the majority of her 24-year career, librarian wages were artificially constrained.

Benefits and payroll taxes

Social Security/FICA

Current: \$15,026

FY 2027: \$20,093

Increase: \$5,067 (33.72%)

[FICA](#) remains fixed at 7.65% employer contribution. The increase reflects higher salaries, not rate changes.

Unemployment insurance

Current: \$1,211
FY 2027: \$1,370
Increase: \$159 (13.3%)

[Vermont's 2026](#) taxable wage base is \$15,400 (up 4.1% from \$14,800 in 2025), with FY 2027 projections at \$16,000-\$16,200 (4-5% increase). The tax rate depends on experience rating (Schedule I ranges 0.4-5.4%; new employers 1.0%). Vermont's low unemployment rate (2.5-2.6%) supports stable rates.

Health insurance premiums

Current : \$91,415
FY 2027: \$86,645 (-5.22% decrease)
Decrease: -\$4,770

The decrease for FY2027 is due to a staff plan change. FY2026 also had staff plan change but in the other direction; a \$37,884 increase over FY2025. Health insurance costs have historically been very volatile.

[Vermont healthcare](#) costs present extraordinary challenges—premiums doubled from 2018-2024 (\$474/month to \$948/month), and the state now has the highest health insurance costs nationally at \$874/month average. Vermont premiums run 86% above national averages due to the aging population, rural healthcare delivery costs, and limited insurer competition.

Recent Vermont rate increases underscore the crisis: BlueCross BlueShield Vermont approved 14-20% increases for 2025 and initially requested 23.3% (individual) and 13.7% (small group) for 2026, ultimately approved at approximately 15% and 7% after regulatory review. MVP Healthcare showed 14% (2025) and 3% (2026). Small group plans—which typically cover municipal employers—experienced 19.1% increases.

A look ahead to health insurance costs for FY 2028 —while national employer averages project 6.5-7.7%, Vermont consistently exceeds national trends by 4-8 percentage points. Vermont's two-insurer market (BCBS-VT and MVP) limits competition but provides some stability. The [Green Mountain Care Board](#) provides rate regulation that may moderate increases, and recent legislation capping hospital specialty drug charges could provide 4% relief.

Dental insurance

Current: \$3,268
FY 2027: \$3,268 (0% increase)
Increase: \$0

This category remains flat rather than increasing, due to the staff insurance plan change. [Dental insurance](#) costs remain relatively stable compared to medical insurance, with market growth rates of 2.6-3% annually. The national dental insurance market shows 2.62% CAGR through 2034. Costs increase slower than medical because annual maximums cap insurer risk, preventive care emphasis reduces major claims, and competitive markets with multiple carriers moderate pricing. Dental inflation typically tracks general CPI more closely than medical inflation.

Life insurance

Current: \$450
FY 2027: \$450 (0% increase)
Increase: \$0

[Group life](#) remains stable compared to individual markets, and strong employment supports the group market. This category also did not increase this year, due to the staff insurance plan change.

Retirement contributions (VSERS)

Current: \$29,245
FY 2027: \$38,920
Increase: 33.08%

As salaries increase, so do retirement contributions.

Randolph is one of only three towns in the state that enrolled in [VSERS](#) instead of [VMERS](#). The 2023 Vermont survey shows 36% of library workers enrolled in VMERS, with libraries serving a 6,001-10,000 population showing 71% participation. The system's funding ratio is improving, reaching the highest level in a decade. Unlike VSERS and VSTRS, VMERS did not require emergency reforms under Act 114.

Workers compensation insurance

Current: \$2,279
FY 2027: \$3,047
Increase: \$768 (33.69%)

Vermont ranks as the 6th most expensive state for [workers compensation](#), with rates approximately 56% higher than national averages. The assessment rate has remained unchanged at 1.75% since 2012.

While national workers compensation costs show relative stability (1-3% annually), Vermont's higher benefit levels, rural healthcare costs, and limited insurer competition add premiums. Librarians are generally considered low-risk compared to many other professions.

Child Care Tax Contribution

Current: \$864

FY 2027: \$1,156

Increase: \$292 (33.79%)

Per Act 76, employers pay a 0.44% payroll tax on wages paid.

Operating expenses

Property and liability insurance

Current: \$6,461

FY 2027: \$ 6,784

Increase: \$323 (5%)

Vermont's location moderates some climate risks compared to coastal or wildfire areas, but storm recovery costs have reached record highs for three consecutive years, affecting regional rates.

As insurance is procured by the municipality, the Library has no control over these costs.

Technology costs and subscriptions

Current: \$6,300

FY 2027: \$7,056

Increase: \$756 (12%)

This category covers hardware, integrated library system subscriptions, computer/network maintenance contracts, cybersecurity requirements, and cloud services.

SaaS costs increased approximately 15% over 2023-2024 (7.5% annually), and IT services/consulting shows 10.4% projected growth. Major vendors (AWS, Adobe, Microsoft) are raising rates 7-20%, and library database subscriptions and peripherals needed follow SaaS trends. However, hardware costs are moderating after supply chain disruptions—server prices dropped 1.2% month-over-month in mid-2024, and storage prices trend downward.

Equipment that could no longer be commercially updated was replaced this year.

Equipment costs to think about for future: Public access computers (\$800-1,200 each), staff workstations (\$1,000-1,500), laptops for lending (\$400-800), tablets for lending (\$200-800), and specialized equipment (scanners, AV equipment) at varying costs.

Office supplies

Current: \$600

FY 2027: \$600

Increase: \$0 (0%)

Office supplies track closely with general CPI. Supply chain constraints have largely resolved and paper costs stabilized after 2021-2022 spikes. Library usage is historically fairly stable.

Printing and advertising

Current: \$200

FY 2027: \$207

Increase: \$7 (3.5%)

Printing services inflation is moderating with stabilized paper costs, though labor costs in the printing industry factor into rates. Digital advertising costs remain competitive, providing alternatives. This budget is slightly above general CPI. (3.5%, vs 3.2%)

Copier expense

Current:\$750

FY 2027: \$784

Increase: \$34 (4.5%)

Equipment costs tied to technology inflation, service contracts following IT services trends (5-6%), and supplies moderating (3-4%). This budget is a blended 4.5% rate.

Recruitment

Current: \$50
FY 2027: \$50
Increase: \$0 (0%)

This category is for recruiting library staff. The expense to work output ratio has been exemplary this year.

Telecommunications

Current: \$2,160
FY 2027: \$2,268
Increase: \$108 (5%)

Business internet services show sustained increases above general CPI, with 5G and infrastructure investments reflected in pricing. Rural areas may see higher increases than competitive urban markets, and the current situation at ECFiber may affect future rates.

This category is currently reimbursed via [Fiber](#) Connect Transition grant money set-aside for this purpose, but we keep this category up-to-date with yearly inflation numbers to ensure there are no steep surprise adjustments once the Library no longer funds telecommunications with that source.

Electricity

Current: \$4,000
FY 2027: \$4,200
Increase: \$200 (5%)

The [Vermont Public Service Department](#) projects a 25% increase by 2030 (4.6% annually). Vermont's current average residential rate (~17¢/kWh) ranks 5th highest nationally, and New England has the nation's highest electricity costs. New England rates increased 19% from 2022-2025.

For Vermont, high renewable energy percentage increases costs, transmission costs are among the nation's highest, and storm recovery costs at record highs for three consecutive years.

Heating oil

Current: \$4,000

FY 2027: \$4,000

Increase: \$0

Building-wide efficiency upgrades have led to declining use, but the budget has remained steady due to rising heating oil rates.

Water and wastewater

Current: \$800

FY 2027: \$1,200

Increase: \$400 (50%)

The Library's main floor toilet is an old, inefficient model that has a tendency to catch open and run unnoticed. This leads to increased water and wastewater bills – a literal flushing away of money, if you will. The Library would benefit from a capital reserve fund for timely yet one-off expenses such as toilet replacement and accompanying professional plumber expenses.

Professional services

Current: \$2,000

FY 2027: \$2,000 (0% increase)

Increase: \$0 (0%)

The Library has been able to keep this category fairly stable. Legal services (5-6%), accounting/audit (4-5%), IT consulting (7-10%), and architectural/engineering services (5-7%) all follow wage inflation trends. Skills shortage in specialized areas drives higher rates. A 5% blended rate for typical library professional services mix (legal, accounting, occasional consulting) is a good figure to keep in mind for future years.

Operating supplies

Current: \$800

FY 2027: \$848

Increase: \$48 (6%)

This category is for the necessary little things that don't fit neatly into other line items and need to be accounted for, like toilet paper, sidewalk de-icer, and hand soap.

Mileage reimbursement

Current: \$650

FY 2027: \$650

Increase: \$0 (0%)

IRS standard mileage rate increased from 67¢/mile (2024) to 70¢/mile (2025), a 3¢ increase following historical patterns of 1.5-3¢ annual increases. FY 2027 spans two rate periods: July-December 2026 and January-June 2027.

Based on fixed and variable vehicle costs including gas prices (moderating), vehicle maintenance, insurance (rising), and depreciation, project 72-73¢/mile for FY 2027. The \$0/0% change year-over-year in this category reflects historical usage trends.

Custodial services

Current: \$12,600

FY 2027: \$17,500

Increase: \$4,900 (38.8%)

The current contractor is a replacement for the former, who moved away last year. Our budget estimate for FY2026 was \$12,600, but actual costs due to custodial turnover were \$15,680. This is an increase of \$3,080 (24.4%). The increase from actual costs to FY2027 is \$1820 (11.6%)

[BLS Employment Cost Index](#) for service workers shows 3.6% annual growth. Vermont wages typically run at or above national average due to cost of living, and the 2023 Vermont library survey shows custodial positions at \$19.07-19.67/hour (\$20.70-\$21.36 inflation-adjusted).

Competition from other service sectors affects availability and wages. Vermont minimum wage trends and basic needs wage (\$18.80/hour in 2022, inflation-projected \$20.50/hour by FY 2027) establish wage floors. The last custodial services RFP returned only one bid. We will continue to keep an eye out for additional options.

Recycling fees

Current: \$450

FY 2027: \$473

Increase: \$23 (5%)

Municipal solid waste costs rising, recycling market volatility, Vermont [Universal Recycling Law](#) compliance costs, and hauling/transportation costs tied to fuel prices all contribute to above-CPI inflation. The Library also participates in Terracycle for the snack wrappers produced from providing snacks to participating children during library programming. (The snacks themselves are funded by grants and the Friends of Kimball Library).

Building repair and maintenance

Current: \$5,250

FY 2027: \$10,000

Increase: \$4,750 (90.48%)

Repeated problems with heat pumps installed in 2023 led to spending all of FY2026's budget in the first three fiscal months. As a result, our projections for this category have increased. It would be fiscally prudent to create and utilize a Library capital reserve fund to smooth out any future budgetary emergencies such as these.

Construction materials inflation moderating but elevated (materials 3-5%, labor 5-8%), and skilled labor shortage in trades continues. Vermont has seasonal construction windows limiting scheduling, a skilled labor shortage particularly acute in rural areas, and climate events that are increasing weather-related damage severity and frequency.

Equipment repair and maintenance

Current: \$100

FY 2027: \$120

Increase: \$20 (20%)

Scheduled maintenance and repair is a small but mighty piece of library sustainability.

Equipment purchases

Current: \$500

FY 2027: \$1,000

Increase: \$500 (100%)

This category is monetarily low overall because the Library tends to keep equipment running until it dies, rather than replacing things prior to end of life. This category is for things such as a vacuum cleaner.

Collections and programming: Library-specific inflation

Postage

Current: \$4,000

FY 2027: \$4,480

Increase: \$480 (12%)

Most in-state interlibrary loan traffic is handled through a [courier system](#) managed by the Vermont Department of Libraries. The cost for 10/2026-9/2027 is \$27.09 per delivery; Kimball Library has two deliveries per week, for an annual cost of about \$2800.

USPS announced plans for twice-yearly rate increases in both 2026 and 2027—four increases in January 2026, July 2026, January 2027, and July 2027. The first-class stamp jumped from 66¢ (January 2024) to 73¢ (July 2024) to 78¢ (July 2025), and could reach 82-85¢ by mid-2027.

Library Rate is the cheapest USPS mailing option available to libraries. The rate starts at \$4.25 for 1 pound and increases by approximately \$0.71 per pound thereafter. Library Rate has historically seen modest increases with USPS rate changes, which typically occur once or twice per year.

Processing supplies

Current: \$1,000

FY 2027: \$1,050

Increase: \$50 (5%)

Library-specific supplies (book processing materials, spine labels, book tape, etc.) track between general CPI and technology inflation. This is a blended rate between general CPI and library-specific categories.

Books and media - Adults

Current: \$14,000
FY 2027: \$14,980
Increase: \$980 (7%)

Print book acquisition costs show persistent above-CPI inflation. Historically, print books demonstrated 75% cumulative increase relative to general inflation ([1886-2001 study](#)). Publisher consolidation limits competition, and supply chain pressures affect printing/distribution.

Hardcover books have averaged \$15 library acquisition cost (with vendor discounts from ~\$34.57 retail), but the recent shuttering of Baker & Taylor has forced Kimball and many libraries nationwide to abruptly pivot to new suppliers. These suppliers do not have the same discounts as B&T, leading to higher overall book price averages. In an effort to keep costs down, this category reflects book and media purchases fewer in number, while overall dollar amounts reflect an average increase per item..

Meanwhile, the popularity of ebooks and e-audio has exploded among library users, as have the costs for libraries to lease e-content. Libraries pay much more for digital formats than physical formats, and much more than consumers overall.

Books and media - Teens

Current: \$0
FY 2027: \$1,813
Increase: \$1,813

This category has historically been nestled within the Youth category, but is being broken out for easier tracking and budgeting purposes. Community demand for acquisitions in this category is increasing at a faster rate than the Youth category as a whole.

Books and media - Children

Current: \$10,500
FY 2027: \$11,235
Increase: \$735 (7%)

Children's and young adult materials experience similar inflation to adult materials (5-7% annually), with picture books and early readers showing parallel cost trends.

Cost drivers include increased production costs for color illustrations, smaller print runs for specialized diverse titles, and high replacement needs due to circulation wear.

The increase for this category is due to aforementioned supplier shutdowns, above CPI average inflation costs, and high community demand for acquisitions.

Books and media - Babies

Current: \$500

FY 2027: \$500

Increase: \$0 (0%)

This category is expected to be similar to last year. “Baby books,” picture books added to the collection in honor of babies born to Randolph and Braintree families, are underwritten by the Friends of Kimball Library.

Periodicals and subscriptions

Current: \$1,680

FY 2027: \$1,805

Increase: \$125 (7%)

[Library Journal's 2025 Periodicals Price Survey](#) projects 5.5-6.5% increases for 2026 (applicable to FY 2027 budgets). Periodical inflation has exceeded CPI for 65+ consecutive years, establishing a persistent structural cost challenge. Recent data shows history/humanities titles up 14%.

This category includes a small increase due to declining acquisitions but rising rates for the periodicals that remain.

Programming costs - Adults

Current: \$1,600

FY 2027: \$1,920

Increase: \$320 (20%)

Adult programming continues to exhibit strong community support, with programs offered for adults 19+ increasing from 73 in FY2024 to 104 in FY2025 – a 42% change. Category expenditures have increased 20% to account for rising community demand.

Programming costs - Teens

Current: \$0
FY 2027: \$600
Increase: \$600

This is a new category this year, due to rising community demand necessitating a separate teen vs. youth budget category.

Programming costs - Children

Current: \$3,000
FY 2027: \$3,000
Increase: \$0 (0%)

Youth programs represent the highest volume programming in public libraries nationwide, and Kimball is no exception. Last year saw 263 programs for 0-11 year olds, attended by 3,366 children.

Supply costs for children's programming typically run 20-30% higher than adult programs due to consumable materials, age-appropriate craft supplies requiring safety standards, and higher per-participant material needs.

Cost savings have come from participating in [Collaborative Summer Library Program](#) (CSLP) for shared resources and bulk pricing, grant funding from foundations focused on youth literacy, partnering with schools for shared programming costs, bulk purchasing of supplies through consortia, and developing reusable program kits for repeated use.

Staff development and training

Current: \$1,000
FY 2027: \$3,310
Increase: \$2,310 (230.95%)

Historical library spending on professional development averages 1.26% of payroll ([ALA data](#)), with a spread of 0.3%–10.34%. At FY 2027 payroll of \$262,659, the 1.26% benchmark yields \$3,309. We rounded up a dollar.

Staff training supports critical skill development in digital literacy, emerging technologies, diversity/equity/inclusion, collection development trends, and new service models. Post-pandemic shift to online training reduces travel costs, making expanded training more affordable. Cost components: Conference registration (\$200-800 per person), online courses (\$50-500 per course), webinar subscriptions

(\$200-2,000 annually), professional association memberships (\$100-300 per person), and on-site training.

This year unveiled a need to focus on building security and more comprehensive safety training for all staff.

Fundraising expenses

Current: \$1,100

FY 2027: \$1,600

Increase: \$500 (45.45%)

Nationwide, new donor acquisition runs \$0.15-0.40 per dollar raised, renewal donors \$0.05-0.15 per dollar, major gifts \$0.03-0.10 per dollar. Donor retention is 5-7x cheaper than acquisition.

Library fundraising expenses go up as fundraising goes up.

Revenue projections and funding diversification

Vermont is one of only six states with no state aid for public library operating budgets, making libraries 100% dependent on local sources for base operations.

The most recent [Vermont Department of Libraries estimates](#) are that for every \$1 spent on Vermont public libraries, the return to the communities on that investment is \$7.41.

Randolph Municipal tax appropriation:

Current: \$369,436

FY 2027: \$440,072

Increase: \$70,084 (19.07%)

Primary funding source requiring town meeting approval

Braintree tax appropriation:

Current: \$15,000

FY 2027: \$18,000 (20%)

Funding source requiring town meeting approval

Contributions & Gifts:

Current: \$8,000

FY 2027: \$8,000
Increase: \$0 (0%)

User Fees:

Current: \$3,000
FY 2027: \$3,000
Increase: \$0 (0%)

Adopt an Author:

Current: \$500
FY 2027: \$500
Increase: \$0 (0%)

Conscience Box:

Current: \$150
FY 2027: \$150
Increase: \$0 (0%)

Photocopies:

Current: \$1800
FY 2027: \$2,000
Increase: \$200 (11.11%)

Lost & Damaged Books:

Current: \$500
FY 2027: \$500
Increase: \$0 (0%)

Trustees of Public Funds:

Current: \$4,000
FY 2027: \$4,400
Increase: \$400 (10%)

Library Trustees:

Current: \$25,000
FY 2027: \$50,000
Increase: \$25,000 (100%)

Investment revenue:

Current: \$1,000

FY 2027: \$250

Decrease: \$750 (-75%)

FY2025 had this category at \$260. This decrease returns the category to historical trends.

Grant Reimbursable:

Current: \$0

FY 2027: \$2,268

Increase: \$2,268

The FiberConnect Transition grant offsets the telecommunications budget line.

TOTAL MUNICIPAL REVENUE: \$440,072

Percentage of budget: 83.17%

TOTAL OTHER REVENUE: \$89,068

Percentage of budget: 16.83%

This diversification reduces municipal burden while maintaining realistic projections. The 83.2% municipal share aligns with Vermont norms and provides stable base funding, while other sources leverage available external funding without unrealistic expectations.

Special Note:

In the last five years alone, the Director has secured over \$580,000 in grant funding for the Library.

5-YEAR TOTAL DIRECTOR-PROVIDED REVENUE: \$580,875

The Director secured a \$150,000 grant in 2023 that has yet to be approved by the selectboard. This and other grant funding is operations money that otherwise will have to be provided by the municipality and tax payer base. The Director adds value to our town through her institutional knowledge, community partnerships, 24 years of experience, and a proven track record of

procuring grant funding. She is an amazing resource for this library and all of our community members.

Thank you for your time in reading the FY 2027 Library Budget. Please do read and reference the accompanying white papers for additional information that went into preparing this budget and figures.

Thank you,

Heather Bowman – Treasurer, KPL Trustee

Last Updated: 12-8-2025

KIMBALL PUBLIC LIBRARY

Investing in Excellence: The Case for Competitive Library Director Compensation

Executive Summary

Competitive salary adjustment is sound fiscal management: nationwide, [libraries return \\$4-\\$10 per dollar](#) invested in benefits to the community.

Kimball Public Library's Director has served Randolph for 24 years. Her current salary of \$67,910 falls \$12,000-\$37,000 below national market rates of \$80,000-\$105,000 for comparable positions. This compensation gap threatens retention of 24 years of [institutional knowledge](#) and creates future recruitment challenges.

Investing appropriately in competitive director compensation prevents turnover costs while protecting the library's ability to deliver exceptional community value.

The True Cost of Turnover: Why Retention Is Fiscal Prudence

Community Return on Investment: According to the most recent [VT Department of Libraries data](#), libraries generate \$7.41 return per dollar invested through services, economic impact, and community benefits. Professional library directors drive these outcomes through expertise in information technology, programming, partnerships, and resource management. Investing appropriately in competitive director compensation prevents turnover costs

while protecting the library's ability to deliver exceptional community value. This is fiscal responsibility, not generosity.

Replacement Economics: Research establishes [turnover costs](#) at roughly 40%-60% of annual salary. For Kimball's director position at market-based rates, replacement would cost \$38,000-\$70,000 including: recruitment and advertising (\$4,000-\$6,000), hiring process and interviews (\$2,000-\$3,000), onboarding and training (\$4,100), lost productivity during 6-12 month ramp-up (\$15,000-\$30,000), institutional knowledge loss (\$5,000-\$10,000), and service disruption to programs and partnerships (\$3,000-\$7,000).

Irreplaceable Institutional Knowledge: The director's 24-year tenure represents knowledge assets no new hire can quickly replicate: relationships with trustees, town officials, community partners, state library networks, and donors; understanding of local budget processes and funding opportunities; historical context for collection decisions and community preferences; and established partnerships enabling resource sharing. This institutional memory directly enables the library's effectiveness.

Salary Compression: The Threat to Recruitment and Morale

Kimball faces [salary compression](#)—the gap between experienced staff and market entry rates. While the director received regular municipally provided cost-of-living-adjustment increases, the broader library director market evolved faster. The Director has also never received merit or experience-based raises, despite a strong track record. When Kimball eventually recruits, trustees will face a dilemma: offer below-market rates that attract only limited candidates, or hire at market rate and create internal inequity when a new director earns more than the 24-year veteran they replace.

Addressing compression requires market adjustments—distinct from cost-of-living raises—that align salaries with current market rates for the position. The alternative signals that experience and institutional knowledge provide minimal value, encouraging talented staff to seek opportunities where expertise translates to meaningful compensation differentiation.

The Market Gap: \$12,000-\$37,000 Below Competitive Compensation

National Benchmarks: The [Public Library Association's 2021 survey](#) of 773 libraries found median director salaries of \$79,022. Adjusted for inflation through 2025, this translates to \$98,119.69. Commercial salary databases report similar figures: [ZipRecruiter](#) averages \$99,246, [Glassdoor](#) indicates \$81,092, and [PayScale](#) reports \$70,416-\$111,000. Directors with 20+ years experience—matching Kimball's director—command the upper ranges of these scales.

Vermont Context: The [2023 Vermont Public Library Compensation Survey](#) shows directors in libraries serving 6,001-10,000 residents (comparable to Kimball's operational scale) average \$33.12/hour, or \$68,890 annually. Adjusting for inflation, this would be \$35.96/hour, or \$74,796 annually today (2025). Kimball's director at \$32.65/hour is noticeably below this average. Importantly, this survey says their salary figures should not be used for benchmarking, as data shows 27% of Vermont library workers earn below basic needs. This signals sector-wide compensation challenges that require proactive response.

The Experience Premium: Library directors with 20+ years experience typically earn 15-25% above mid-career rates. Applied to Kimball's profile—[MLS degree](#), 24 years tenure, \$428K budget management, 2.6 FTE supervision—the competitive range should be \$80,000-\$105,000. The current \$67,910 creates a gap that undermines retention and future recruitment.

Vermont's Cost Crisis: Why Salary Growth Still Falls Short

The director's 2001 starting salary of \$29,774 would require \$55,228.98 in 2025 to maintain equivalent purchasing power based on [cumulative inflation](#). Her current \$67,910 represents 22.9% real growth – less than 1% per year—but Vermont-specific costs far exceeded national inflation:

- Housing: [275% increase \(2001-2023\)](#), with median home values of \$385,992
- Cost of Living: Vermont ranks 14.9% above U.S. average
- These Vermont-specific pressures mean that maintaining purchasing power requires salary growth significantly exceeding general inflation indices.
- The director's less than 1% average annual real wage growth fails to track Vermont's actual cost trajectory, creating accumulated compression over 24 years.

Recommendations: A Strategic Path Forward

1. **Immediate Market Adjustment:** Establish director salary at \$95,000 for FY 2027. This \$27,000 increase is solely a market correction for accumulated compression, not a merit increase.
2. **Separate COLA from Market Adjustments:** Build future budgets with two components: Cost-of-living adjustment as applied by the municipality, plus market adjustment as warranted. This transparent structure explains why salary increases may exceed inflation—competitive positioning requires tracking both inflation and market dynamics.
3. **Establish Transparent Salary Ranges:** Develop and publish salary ranges (minimum, midpoint, maximum) for all positions based on market research and internal equity. This enables consistent compensation decisions and signals professional management to applicants.
4. **Commit to Regular Benchmarking:** Review compensation data at least every three years using such professional and reliable sources as ALA-APA surveys, comparable municipal positions, and Vermont Department of Libraries updates. Regular benchmarking prevents compression from accumulating and allows gradual adjustments rather than crisis-driven increases.
5. **Document and Communicate Value:** Continue to track library impact metrics (circulation, programs, technology training, job assistance, grants received) and quantify economic value. Present this data with each completed budget to demonstrate that library investments generate measurable returns—shifting the narrative from 'the library needs more' to 'investing in library staff returns \$4-\$10 per dollar to Randolph and Braintree residents.'

Conclusion: Protecting 24 Years of Community Investment

The director's 24 years of service—spanning technological transformations, economic recessions, pandemic adaptations, and evolving community needs—represents extraordinary value to Randolph and Braintree. At \$67,910 in a market where comparable directors earn \$80,000-\$105,000, the current compensation inadvertently signals that experience and loyalty matter less than they should.

The choice is clear: invest proactively in competitive compensation that retains institutional expertise and protects our 24-year investment in director development, or accept reactive hiring costs when turnover forces emergency recruitment. The former costs minimally for the value it adds annually and preserves service continuity. The latter risks \$38,000-\$70,000 in replacement costs plus years of reduced effectiveness as a new director builds knowledge and relationships.

Kimball Public Library serves as Randolph and Braintree's intellectual commons, technology hub, literacy center, and community gathering space. These services depend entirely on professional expertise that cannot be replicated through good intentions alone. Competitive compensation is not luxury—it is the necessary foundation for excellence in library service and sound fiscal management. The data demonstrates that this foundation requires immediate attention to prevent compromising the structure it supports.

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Kimball Public Library

Investing in Excellence:

The compensation case for Kimball Public Library Staff

Executive Summary

Kimball Public Library is committed to livable wages as a compensation floor, formalized in our Personnel Compensation and Evaluation Policy. This positions us to attract and retain qualified library professionals. This brief provides market-based salary recommendations for our five staff positions, grounded in national data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, regional benchmarks from Vermont's 2023 Public Library Compensation Survey, and Northeast regional comparisons. Our livable wage threshold of \$23.97 per hour (\$49,858 annually for full-time work) serves as the foundation, with professional positions commanding premiums that reflect education, experience, and specialized expertise. The recommendations balance competitive market positioning with internal equity and sustainable budget management.

Introduction: Context and Methodology

Kimball Public Library serves 6,024 residents, with a fiscal year 2026 budget of \$428,296 and 3.6 full-time equivalent staff. The library's Personnel Compensation and Evaluation Policy requires market-based salary research at least every three years, using at least three independent sources. This analysis fulfills that requirement by synthesizing data from multiple authoritative sources including the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (May 2024), the Vermont Public Library Compensation and Salary Survey (2023), commercial salary databases (Salary.com, PayScale, ZipRecruiter), and professional association surveys from the American Library Association.

The recommendations reflect Vermont's high cost of living, where the MIT Living Wage Calculator establishes \$23.97 per hour as the threshold for a single adult in Orange County. Our policy commits to this as a minimum, with professional positions commanding premiums based on education, specialized skills, experience, and supervisory responsibilities. All salary recommendations balance competitive market positioning against internal equity and budget sustainability.

Position 1: Senior Librarian with MLS (1.0 FTE)

Position Profile

This position is held by a librarian with an ALA-accredited Master of Library Science degree who has worked part-time in libraries since approximately 2000 and transitioned to full-time work in 2018. With roughly 25 years of total library experience including 7 years full-time, this individual brings substantial professional expertise, institutional knowledge, and proven competency.

National Benchmarks

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the national median annual wage for librarians and library media specialists was \$64,320 in May 2024, with the mean at \$69,180. The distribution shows the 25th percentile at approximately \$50,000, the 75th percentile at \$77,680, and the 90th percentile at \$100,880. These figures encompass all librarian specialties and experience levels across the nation. Commercial salary aggregators provide complementary data points: Salary.com reports a national median of \$68,662 for librarians with typical requirements of a master's degree and 2-4 years of experience, while ZipRecruiter's data shows averages of \$53,096 nationally for mid-career librarians. PayScale indicates that librarians with 10-19 years of experience average \$58,000-\$62,000 nationally, with the most experienced professionals (20+ years) reaching significantly higher ranges.

Vermont library salaries historically lag national averages by 10-20% due to smaller budgets and rural service areas. However, Vermont's cost of living ranks 14.9% above the national average, creating compression where librarians' purchasing power falls below national peers despite Vermont's higher living costs. The Vermont Public Library Compensation Survey (2023) provides the most relevant regional context.

Vermont and Regional Data

The 2023 Vermont survey gathered data from 144 of Vermont's 188 public libraries. In their analysis, they caution:

“Analysis of pay rates for the individual jobs represented in this survey show that 1 out of 4 Vermont library workers do not make enough per hour to meet basic needs in a rural area (27%). Upon closer inspection, all of these workers are part-time and as such are unlikely to access health benefits through their employer since just 5% of libraries in Vermont offer health benefits to part time employees. Indeed, the average number of paid weekly hours

for all public library workers in municipalities under 10,000 that are represented in this survey fall short of full time 40 hours per week work.

This means 76% of the library workforce in Vermont might be considered part-time and not likely to experience the safety net that people often have when employed in a fully benefited position.

In principle, this data can be used to benchmark wages for these positions in different types of libraries. A cautious approach to benchmarking is advised since there are positions that do not make what would be considered a wage that supports basic needs. Benchmarking is often thought of as part of an overall compensation strategy to recruit and retain employees, one that might by default be considered affirmative or aspirational. This outlook about benchmarking does not apply in those instances where staff position types are not paying a livable wage or a wage that would meet basic needs for a single person, let alone someone who is supporting other family members.”

This survey found that librarians (excluding directors) in libraries serving populations of 4,001-6,000 residents averaged \$22.78 per hour, while those in the 6,001-10,000 population band averaged \$25.52 per hour. These figures include the salaries that provide below the minimum threshold of basic needs, lowering the overall hourly wage average.

Kimball's service population of 6,024 and operational scale places them at the upper end of the smaller band or the lower end of the larger band.

Vermont State Employee classifications provide another reference point. A Librarian B position (MLS degree, no experience required) started at \$16.86 per hour in Vermont state service in 2007. The equivalent purchasing power today is \$27.01. The Vermont Library Association's 2009 guidance recommended minimum starting salaries of \$37,200 annually (\$17.88 hourly) for professional librarians. Adjusted for 16 years of inflation through 2025, this translates to approximately \$57,224 annually (\$27.51 hourly) as a contemporary minimum for entry-level MLS holders in Vermont.

Experience Premium Considerations

Professional librarian compensation appropriately recognizes experience through salary premiums. National data suggests experience premiums of 15-25% over entry-level rates are standard for mid-career professionals, with more substantial premiums for highly experienced professionals. This senior librarian's 25 years of professional experience, including 7 years in a full-time capacity, represents the upper end of mid-career progression. Industry practice suggests experienced librarians with two decades of service should earn 30-50% above entry-level MLS holders.

Recommended Salary Range

Based on this analysis, the recommended compensation range for this senior librarian position is \$65,000-\$85,836 annually (\$31.25-\$41.26 per hour for full-time work). This range:

Provides appropriate professional-level compensation, exceeding the Vermont livable wage floor of \$23.97 per hour, positions compensation base rate at approximately the national median for all librarians (\$64,320) while recognizing the substantial experience premium appropriate for 25 years of professional library service. It also maintains internal equity by establishing clear differential between senior professional staff and entry-level positions.

This recommendation provides competitive compensation that respects the professional's extensive experience while remaining sustainable within Vermont's library salary market. The position should be placed at the midpoint of the range initially, with room for progression based on performance and budget availability.

Position 2: Teen and Adult Services Librarian (1.0 FTE)

Position Profile

This position is held by a professional with four years of part-time library experience and one year of full-time service, holding Vermont's Certificate of Public Librarianship rather than an ALA-accredited MLS. Vermont's CPL program, offered through the Vermont Department of Libraries, provides professional training specifically designed for Vermont library workers who may not have access to traditional graduate programs. The certificate requires completion of coursework covering library operations, collection development, reference services, and professional ethics, representing substantial professional development even though it is not equivalent to a master's degree.

Understanding Vermont's Certificate of Public Librarianship

Vermont's CPL addresses a critical challenge: many small Vermont libraries cannot attract MLS-holding candidates due to compensation limitations, geographic isolation, or part-time scheduling. The certificate program creates a pathway for Vermont library workers to gain professional competencies without the time and financial investment of a graduate degree. While not equivalent to an MLS in terms of academic rigor or national portability, the CPL demonstrates commitment to professional development and provides genuine competencies in library operations. Compensation should recognize this credential's value while maintaining appropriate differentials from MLS-holding positions.

National and Regional Context

The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not separately categorize librarians by credential level, as the MLS is considered the standard professional credential. However, library technicians (who typically hold associate degrees or certificates) earned a median of \$19.22 per hour in May 2024, while full librarians with MLS degrees earned \$30.92 per hour nationally. This suggests a market differential of approximately 35-40% between paraprofessional and fully credentialed professional positions. Vermont library workers without MLS degrees but performing professional-level work fall into an intermediate category.

The American Library Association's 2006 guidance suggested that professional positions without MLS credentials should earn 70-85% of MLS-equivalent salaries, reflecting the credential differential while recognizing genuine professional responsibilities.

Role Responsibilities and Compensation Positioning

This position carries full professional responsibilities for teen and adult services programming, collection development, reference services, and patron engagement. These responsibilities require professional judgment, specialized knowledge, and independent decision-making. While the CPL provides appropriate training for these duties, the position's responsibilities align with those typically held by MLS librarians nationally. The five years of combined experience (four part-time, one full-time) represents early-career status, positioning this professional at the entry-to-intermediate level within the profession.

Recommended Salary Range

Based on this analysis, the recommended compensation range for this position is \$50,000-\$60,000 annually (\$24.04-\$28.84 per hour for full-time work). This range:

Exceeds the Vermont livable wage floor by 0.3-20%, meeting our policy commitment while recognizing career status. Positions compensation appropriately below the recommended range for MLS-holding professionals, reflecting the credential and experience differential. This range aligns with Vermont survey data for professional positions requiring advanced training or bachelor's degrees and provides room for salary growth as experience accumulates and professional development continues. Maintains internal equity by establishing clear progression from this position to more senior roles.

This recommendation recognizes the genuine professional nature of the work while acknowledging that the CPL certification, though valuable for Vermont library service, carries different market value than an ALA-accredited MLS. Should this professional pursue an MLS degree, compensation should be reevaluated to reflect the enhanced credential.

Position 3: Communications Librarian (0.5 FTE)

Position Profile and Market Context

This position focuses on marketing, communications, and public engagement rather than traditional library services. The role requires expertise in digital communications, social media management, graphic design, community outreach, and public relations. While the position does not require library-specific credentials (neither MLS nor CPL), it demands professional-level communications skills that are valuable across nonprofit and municipal sectors. The 0.5 FTE status (approximately 20 hours weekly) makes this position part-time.

Compensation for communications specialists varies widely based on sector, organization size, and scope of responsibility. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that public relations specialists (a close analog) earned a median of \$66,750 annually (\$32.09 hourly) in May 2024, while marketing specialists earned \$50,010 annually (\$24.04 hourly). However, part-time communications roles in small nonprofit and municipal contexts typically earn less than full-time corporate positions. Vermont's 2023 survey does not separately categorize communications positions, as this represents a specialized role not common in small public libraries.

Skills and Responsibilities

Communications librarians manage the library's public image, develop marketing campaigns, maintain social media presence, design promotional materials, coordinate with local media, and create engaging content that drives library usage. These skills are increasingly critical as libraries compete for public attention and funding. Modern library communications require proficiency in graphic design software, social media platforms, content management systems, email marketing tools, and basic analytics. The position requires understanding of both communications best practices and library services, though the primary expertise needed is in the communications domain.

Comparable Positions

Examining comparable municipal and nonprofit communications roles in Vermont provides useful benchmarks. Small Vermont towns and nonprofit organizations typically compensate part-time communications coordinators at \$22-\$28 per hour depending on experience and scope. Entry-level communications positions start near \$22-\$24 hourly, while those with significant experience or broader responsibilities reach \$26-\$28 or higher. The Vermont Department of Libraries' communications positions (full-time state employees) provide another reference point, though state employee compensation structures may not directly map to municipal library contexts.

Recommended Salary Range

Based on this analysis, the recommended compensation range for this position is \$23.97-\$27.00 per hour (0.5 FTE, approximately \$24,928-\$28,080 annually). This range:

Meets or slightly exceeds the Vermont livable wage floor, appropriate for professional-level communications work. Aligns with comparable nonprofit and municipal communications roles in Vermont. Recognizes the specialized professional expertise required for effective library marketing and outreach. Positions the role competitively to attract candidates with genuine communications expertise rather than treating it as an administrative add-on. Maintains internal equity by compensating specialized professional skills appropriately relative to library-specific professional roles.

This recommendation acknowledges that communications expertise, while not library-specific, carries genuine professional value and market demand. The position should be placed at the middle to upper-middle point of the range depending on the candidate's demonstrable communications experience, portfolio strength, and track record of successful campaigns. Part-time professional positions often command slightly higher hourly rates than full-time equivalents due to reduced benefits and less job security.

Position 4: Technology Librarian (300 hours annually)

Clarification on Technology Position Compensation Analysis

Since submitting our initial compensation recommendations, we've refined our analysis of the 300-hour technology position to ensure the most accurate benchmarking. We appreciate the Board's time reviewing the initial document and want to provide this clarification for your consideration.

What prompted the review:

Upon closer examination of the position's actual duties—which are exclusively one-on-one patron instruction in basic technology skills—we recognized that standard "technology librarian" benchmarks weren't the right fit. Technology librarian roles (which justified the \$40-50/hour range) typically include systems administration, technology policy development, digital collections management, and institutional technology strategy.

What we found:

This position functions as specialized digital literacy instruction rather than library technology management. The instructor teaches patrons how to use and troubleshoot technology like smartphones, email, video calling, and websites—critical skills for civic participation—but doesn't manage systems, supervise staff, or make policy decisions.

The result:

Digital literacy instructor benchmarks (\$23-31/hour in nonprofit settings, \$23-28 for one-on-one instruction) provide more appropriate comparison. Our revised recommendation of **\$26/hour** (\$7,800 annually):

- Exceeds Vermont's livable wage floor by 8.5%
- Positions competitively within the digital literacy instruction market (65th-70th percentile)
- Maintains clear internal equity with full-time librarians at \$27-35/hour
- Appropriately values specialized teaching expertise for a focused 300-hour instructional role

This refinement strengthens rather than weakens our compensation case—it ensures we're benchmarking against truly comparable positions rather than inflating expectations with misaligned comparisons.

Position 5: Substitute Librarians (130 hours annually)

Position Profile and Responsibilities

Substitute librarians provide essential coverage during staff absences, vacation periods, and unexpected schedule gaps. At 130 hours annually (approximately 0.06 FTE or 2.5 hours weekly on average, though distributed irregularly), these positions are highly part-time and called upon as needed. Substitutes must possess sufficient competency to handle circulation desk duties, answer basic reference questions, assist patrons with technology and catalog searches, maintain building security, and represent the library professionally during their shifts. While the work does not require advanced professional credentials, it demands reliable judgment, good customer service skills, familiarity with library operations, and ability to work independently.

Market Context for Substitute and On-Call Library Positions

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that library assistants (clerical) earned a median of \$17.31 per hour in May 2024, with the 25th percentile at approximately \$14.50 and the 75th percentile at \$20.50. Library technicians, who have more training and responsibility, earned a median of \$19.22 per hour. Substitute positions typically fall into the library assistant category rather than library technician, as they provide general support rather than specialized technical services.

Vermont's 2023 survey found that circulation assistants and general library assistants in libraries serving 4,001-6,000 residents averaged \$15.50-\$18.00 per hour, while those in slightly larger libraries averaged \$17.00-\$19.50 per hour. As a reminder, according to this survey itself the majority of this salary data should not be used for benchmarking, as these salaries fall below the \$18.80/hour (\$20.41/hour inflation-adjusted for 2025) minimum basic needs threshold.

Substitute positions in Vermont libraries typically earn within or slightly below these ranges, as irregular schedules and very limited hours may make recruitment challenging even at competitive rates. Some Vermont libraries report difficulty filling substitute positions at rates below \$18-\$20 per hour, as workers with the necessary competencies have other employment options.

Recruitment and Retention Considerations

Substitute positions face unique recruitment challenges. The extremely limited hours provide negligible annual income, making these positions suitable only for individuals seeking supplemental income, retirees, or others with flexible schedules who value the work for reasons beyond compensation. The irregular scheduling and on-call nature add inconvenience. However, these positions offer valuable benefits: flexible schedules, intellectually engaging work, community contribution, and potential pathways to more substantial library employment. Libraries that compensate substitutes well tend to build reliable pools of capable fill-in staff, while those paying minimum wage often struggle with frequent turnover and gaps in coverage.

Recommended Hourly Rate

The recommended compensation for substitute librarian positions starts at the minimum living wage rate floor of \$23.97 per hour (130 hours annually, approximately \$3100). This base wage:

Starts at the base of Orange county's livable wage, appropriate for positions providing such limited hours that they cannot constitute primary employment. Maintains internal equity by establishing clear differential between professional positions and support roles. Provides compensation sufficient to attract capable, reliable substitutes who view the position as valuable supplemental income rather than exploitation of their goodwill.

This recommendation acknowledges the reality that 130 annual hours cannot provide a livable wage regardless of hourly rate against the need to compensate substitutes fairly for their contributions. Kimball Public Library should position substitute rates to build a reliable pool of qualified substitutes. The modest total annual cost (\$3,116 annually) represents excellent value for ensuring consistent coverage during staff absences or emergencies.

Conclusion: Investment in Library Excellence

These salary recommendations position Kimball Public Library to attract and retain qualified professionals who can deliver excellent library services to our community. The recommended ranges total approximately \$158,000-\$173,000 in annual salary costs for all five positions combined (excluding the director), representing a significant but justified investment in library excellence. This

investment aligns with our Personnel Compensation and Evaluation Policy's commitment to fair compensation, market-based salary research, and recognition of professional expertise.

The recommendations maintain internal equity through clear salary progressions: substitutes at \$23.97 hourly providing essential coverage, specialized communications staff at \$24-\$27 hourly bringing professional marketing expertise, early-career professional librarians with CPL certification at \$24-\$28 hourly developing programming and services, senior experienced MLS librarians at \$30-\$36 hourly providing institutional knowledge and professional leadership, and highly specialized technology expertise at \$40-\$50 hourly delivering targeted high-value community technology services. These differentials respect credential levels, experience, specialized expertise, and role responsibilities while ensuring all positions meet or exceed appropriate compensation thresholds.

Libraries deliver exceptional community value, with economic studies showing returns of \$4-\$10 for every dollar invested. However, libraries can only deliver this value with qualified staff. Underinvesting in library compensation risks turnover costs of 30-50% annual salary to replace professional librarians, service degradation as positions remain vacant or are filled by less qualified candidates, and difficulty recruiting talented professionals who might otherwise choose Vermont library careers. These recommendations provide the Board of Trustees with market-based guidance to position Kimball Public Library as an employer of choice within Vermont's library community, ensuring our community receives the excellent library services it deserves.

Summary of Recommendations

Position 1: Senior Librarian (MLS, 25 years experience, 1.0 FTE)

Recommended Range: \$65,000-85,836 annually (\$31.25-\$41.26//hour)

Position 2: Teen and Adult Services Librarian (CPL, 5 years experience, 1.0 FTE)

Recommended Range: \$50,000-\$60,000 annually (\$24.04-\$28.87/hour)

Position 3: Communications Librarian (0.5 FTE)

Recommended Range: \$24.00-\$27.00/hour (\$24,960-\$28,080 annually at 0.5 FTE)

Position 4: Technology Librarian (MLS, extensive specialized experience, 300 hours/year)

Recommended Range: \$24-28/hour

Position 5: Substitute Librarians (130 hours/year combined)

Recommended Range: \$23.97-up/hour (\$3,116 annually)

Total estimated annual salary costs for all five positions: \$155,000-\$192,032

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Last Updated: 12-5-2025

Market Rate Adjustment

Comparison to Town Manager Precedent

The Precedent: Town Manager Market-Rate Adjustment

The Situation

The same individual served as Randolph Town Manager during two periods: 1999-2003, and again in 2012-2017. When he returned to the position in 2012, the town did not resume his 2003 salary of \$32,956 plus 2-3% annual cost-of-living adjustments (which would be \$41,971). Instead, he received \$75,000 – a **127% increase** – to reflect current market rates for the position.

This decision recognized that the position's value had increased over 9 years, even though it was the same person performing the same job. The town understood that competitive compensation should reflect the position's current market value, not simply incremental raises from a historical baseline.

The Town's Sound Logic

Pay reflects the position's current value, not just incremental raises from historical baselines.

Amy's Situation: 24 Years of Incremental Growth

Amy's Tenure

Amy has served as Library Director from 2001 to present—24 years of continuous service.

Her Salary Progression

| Year | Salary | Annual Growth |
|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 2001 | \$29,774 | — |
| 2026 (current) | \$67,910 | 5.34% (2020-2026) |

Recent growth rate of 5.34% annually is below the peer average of 5.95% annually for other department heads.

The Problem

After 24 years of incremental raises, Amy ranks 7th of 8 department heads despite managing a department comparable in scope and community impact to recreation, highway, and finance. She never left for a market-rate reset, while the profession's compensation grew substantially. The two lowest-paid department head positions? Both held by women—the only two women in leadership. The pattern is difficult to defend.

The \$95,000 Proposal: A Market-Rate Adjustment

What This Is

This proposal brings Amy to market rate for a municipal library director in Vermont and positions her appropriately among department heads. It corrects 24 years of incremental growth that lagged behind the position's increasing value.

What This Isn't

This is not a 39.9% 'raise' in the traditional sense. It is not rewarding tenure alone, nor creating a new salary ceiling for the position. Just as the town manager received \$75,000 (not \$32,956) when he returned in 2012, Amy's compensation should reflect what a library director position is worth in 2027—not what it was worth in 2001 plus 2-3% annual increases.

Supporting Data

Current Department Head Salaries (FY2026)

| Position | Salary |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Town Manager | \$113,306 |
| 2. Police Chief | \$107,120 |
| 3. Finance Director | \$90,177 |
| 4. Highway Foreman | \$87,046 |
| 5. Recreation Director | \$77,349* |
| 6. Economic Dev Director | \$72,120 |
| 7. Amy (Library Director) | \$67,910 |
| 8. Town Clerk | \$61,345 |

*Town hired a new director, and split this position into two according to the Town Report. \$77,349 reflects sole director position.

With adjustment to \$95,000 (FY2027)

Amy would move to #3, appropriately reflecting a department head with 24-year tenure managing public services, programming, staff, facilities, and community partnerships.

Recommendation

A recent municipal precedent is in FY2025, when the current town manager's wages were increased \$12,161 from the year prior based on "market rates" according to the town report.

This follows the precedent set when the town adjusted the town manager's salary to current market rates in 2012, and corrects a structural inequity that has developed over 24 years of continuous service.

The trustees should respectfully approve a market-rate adjustment to \$95,000 for the library director position, effective FY2027.