



Increasing Public Library Compensation: a How-to Guide for Vermont Libraries

Prepared by the
Personnel Committee
of the Vermont Library Association
2003

Revised 2006



Introduction

In 2001-2002, the Vermont Library Association (VLA) Personnel Committee began studying compensation for librarians in Vermont. The Committee, composed of Nancy Wilson (Lawrence Memorial Library, Bristol), Jake Sherman (Rutland Free Library), Amy Howlett (VT Department of Libraries), Denise Kleinman, and Maureen Wilson (Morrill Memorial Library, Strafford), focused its work on the public library director. The VLA Executive Board, on the Committee's recommendation, adopted a recommended minimum starting salary of \$33,025.00 for public library directors.

The Committee devoted its 2002-2003 efforts to developing tools to guide public library staff, trustees, and community members in implementing strategies for "Increasing Public Library Compensation." The components of this guide included a step-by-step action plan to put into practice locally, a marketing strategy to promote the library, and resources on standard benefits offered at other institutions. This document is intended to facilitate discussion among interested parties about library compensation in their area, and to provide the necessary tools to actually begin working to improve the current status of library salaries. Although the emphasis here is on compensation for public library directors, these tools can be applied across a range of library types and staff levels.

During 2005 and 2006, a newly reconstituted Committee began revision of the 2003 publication. We have expanded the section on benefits, compiled a resource list of print and Internet sources, gathered information on unions in Vermont libraries, and created worksheets that are meant to be pulled out and filled in. We hope that these changes and updates maintain the usefulness of the document. Many thanks to our predecessors for their vision in creating this resource!

Please contact one of the Committee members listed below if you would like help implementing this plan, or have success stories to share, feedback on this document, or suggestions for improvement. We can help you find libraries who have successfully dealt with challenges similar to your own, whether they be salary and benefits, creating job descriptions, or other personnel issues.

Roberta Carrier

Calef Memorial Library
PO Box 141
Washington, VT 05675
802-883-2343
washington@vals.state.vt.us

Amy C. Grasmick, Chair

Kimball Public Library
67 North Main Street
Randolph, VT 05060
802-728-5073
kimball_acg@hotmail.com

Amy Howlett

VT Department of Libraries
1 Hospital Court
Bellows Falls, VT 05101
802-463-0142
amy.howlett@dol.state.vt.us

Lucinda Walker

Norwich Public Library
PO Box 290
Norwich, VT 05055
802-649-1184
lucinda.walker@norwichlibrary.org



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Action plan for better salaries	4
Annual budget memo for trustees	7
How to communicate the value of your work	8
Benefits for public library employees	11
Resources on compensation	14
Appendix	17
Worksheets	19

Action Plan for Better Library Salaries

Salary is a perennial concern for Vermont library trustees and the library staff they employ. The Personnel Committee of the Vermont Library Association is a natural place to begin working on salary and benefit issues. In 2002, the American Library Association kicked off its Campaign for America's Librarians, examining salary and pay equity issues nationwide. To use their methodology and tools, download the "Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit" from <http://www.ala.org/ala/hrdr/libraryempresources/toolkit.pdf>.

If your library is ready to consider fair remuneration, the Personnel Committee of the Vermont Library Association can help.

The "Action Plan" offers specific methods to gather and analyze community and Vermont data to help determine fair remuneration for library staff. Use the "Annual Budget Memo" as a handout when you are ready to discuss compensation with your library board. We also need to spread the word about how libraries and librarians enhance the quality of life in Vermont. "Think You're Worth More Than You Make" provides supporting quotes, statistics, and ideas ready to be used in talks and news articles. The "Worksheets" at the end of this publication represent a distillation of the Action Plan, and are meant to be filled in with data specific to your library and community.

The Vermont Library Association Executive Board recommends a minimum starting salary of \$37,200 for public library directors and a full benefits package including medical insurance, vacation and sick leave, and a retirement plan.

If your director works part time, the comparable hourly wage without benefits is \$17.88.

Get Ready

Staff and trustees should convene a small committee using community resources to discuss the following issues:

- How broad should the investigation into current remuneration be? Low salaries may be limited to one area of the library or be spread evenly from director to lowest paid employee.
- Are other groups in town, perhaps a municipal department, working on salary issues?
- Is the library's budget growth in the past ten years the same as other town agencies or does it lag behind?
- Is there a town-wide situation that could be better addressed by a wage and classification study, including salaries of the public library? Human resource coordinators collect, analyze and make recommendations for such a study.

In many towns, a committee focused solely on library employees will do the work. The committee which takes on the task of determining fair salaries should include library staff, trustees, and community members who have some expertise in salary issues or benefits.

Find Statistics and Data on the Subject

Whether you hire a human resources coordinator or use committee members to collect data, you will need to find out what similar positions in Vermont offer for salaries and benefits. Remember that part time employees should not be penalized for serving small libraries; use full time salaries and calculate the comparable hourly rate.

In many communities, local salary information is the key to finding the fair compensation for the library staff. According to the Vermont Public Records law (1 V.S.A. section 317B), the salaries and benefits relating to elected or appointed officials and employees of public agencies are available for public inspection and copying. Some sources of comparable data are given below.

- The Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) salary survey is sent to every VLCT member town. Very few towns in Vermont are not members. Check with the town clerk or town manager for the annual volume. The survey provides salary and benefit information by the individual town for comparable positions such as library director, town clerk or town recreation manager. Look for towns which are similar in population, income, and character to yours.

- The American Library Association annually surveys librarians with the MLS degree in institutions employing at least two certified librarians. According to the 2006 ALA-APA Survey of Librarian Salaries, the annual median salary for Vermont directors or chief officers of libraries serving fewer than 10,000 population was \$47,944. For all academic and public librarians, the average national annual salary reported was \$56,259 and the median was \$50,976. ¹
- Some Vermont communities and businesses use the Vermont Livable Wage as a guideline. The figures, based on legislative studies of Vermont food, housing, and living costs, suggest a reasonable standard. Employees who make at least the Livable Wage will be able to afford coverage for their basic needs in Vermont. ² See the chart in the appendix.
- Teachers and school library media specialists in your community may offer some comparable data. Be sure to consider the responsibilities of the job and the actual hours worked when you compare salaries. In 2006-2007, the average starting salary for a Vermont teacher with a BA was \$19.70 per hour or \$31,047 annually. ³
- Vermont Public Library Statistics, collected from every library in the fall, are published each February in the Biennial Report Supplement, available in hard copy or online at http://dol.state.vt.us/GOPHER_ROOT5/LIBRARIES/stats/PLSTATS.HTML. Statistics for each town library include: number of librarians holding the ALA-approved Master of Library Science degree; total librarians; other staff; total FTEs (full-time-equivalent); volunteer hours/week; and amounts spent on total library salaries and total benefits.
- Vermont state employee positions such as the regional librarian (Librarian C), assistant regional librarian (Librarian B), or clerk are listed at the state personnel web site, with job requirements and salaries: <http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee>. State jobs use a step chart to determine exact wage, with steps for the increase in years worked. See the chart in the appendix.
- Eight Vermont libraries have employees who belong to local unions. See the appendix for a discussion of the issues and a list of the libraries and the unions they belong to.

Compare Job Descriptions

Within the library, positions should be compared to make sure all are rewarded equitably. If the library is part of a town-wide study, professional analysts will compile this data. Committee members will probably lack their expertise or tools. Therefore, proceed carefully and consider whether you are reflecting what the job requires rather than traditional wage and gender inequities. Generally, tasks are compared based on standard characteristics, including:

- § Knowledge and skill required to do the job
- § Level of communication needed: does the person speak for the institution, work directly with decision makers in the community, or work with the public more generally
- § Importance of the decisions required by the job
- § Level of authority
- § Impact of the work accomplished
- § Level of physical demands
- § Type of working conditions
- § Supervisory scope
- § Budget responsibility

If the library has recently created solid job descriptions, this information can generate the job comparison. Other sources for comparison may be found in neighboring libraries or on the state employee personnel site at <http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/specs.cfm>. The state personnel site also provides a step chart which shows the wages (but not the benefits) with each position. The specifications for Librarian A, B, C and for Clerk A and B may be useful comparisons for local library positions.

The United States Department of Labor provides detailed job descriptions, some salary data, and predicted demand by position in the Occupational Outlook Handbook, available as a reference book or online at <http://www.bls.gov/oco>.

In 2004, the New Hampshire Library Association published an excellent manual for creating job descriptions — “Advocating for Pay Equity in New Hampshire Libraries: A Toolkit” — available on the Internet at <http://www.state.nh.us/nhla/payequitytoolkit.pdf>. The toolkit includes task lists for different library roles (e.g., administrative, patron services, etc.), job analysis worksheets, and sample job descriptions.

Use a Step Chart for the Whole Library Organization

Constructing a table or chart with steps gives the board an overall tool to discuss how library staff will earn salaries based on longevity or new responsibilities and knowledge. Typically, new employees progress from one step to another more rapidly at the beginning of their careers. A library step chart might include salary increases of 2% for each year on the job over the first six years, dropping to 1.5% increase per year for years 7-12. Education increases should be awarded for associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, DOL certification, and Master's degree. Often new employees will be given the first raise after successful completion of a six-month probation period.

Also consider routine contracted services outside the library. Does the maintenance staff receive better hourly compensation than the library staff? Have low salaries at the top made it impossible for clerical staff to receive a livable wage? Is the employee with the most seniority making more money than the director? A good organizational chart will address inequities and the nature of jobs throughout the organization.

School step charts are available usually as part of the school contract or on the Internet at <http://www.vtnea.org/Salaries.htm>. School contracts also contain the description of benefits offered to professional and nonprofessional staff. School contracts are public information, and should be made available at your request.

Consider Benefits

The Vermont Library Association Executive Board recommends a minimum starting salary of \$37,200 for public library directors and a full benefits package including medical insurance, vacation and sick leave, and a retirement plan. Library directors should be offered a range of compensation depending on years of experience, with an annual cost of living adjustment.

Even in the smallest library, all staff should be paid for holidays, annual vacation, and time for illness or doctor appointments. Check with the town and other local institutions, and match the benefits given by organizations similar to the library. Benefits should be given on a pro-rated basis to employees who do not work full time. For example, if a full time employee earns a day of vacation for every four weeks worked, a twenty-hour/week employee would earn a half day (usually four hours) for every four weeks worked.

If the library is unable to create complete medical or retirement plans, perhaps a line item can begin the process. Budget an amount to reimburse staff for holidays, vacation, and sick time, and plan to continue building this line item over the next few years.

In order to compete in today's marketplace, benefits should include medical insurance and a retirement plan. Libraries unable to offer these benefits are at an enormous disadvantage when they recruit new candidates for librarian positions. High staff turnover and expensive re-training costs is another result of insufficient salary and benefit packages.

Make changes

- Start early to advocate for change
- Look locally, but also consider state and national figures. Study the information.
- Ask for help from a peer library— one about the same size that has done a similar job— and from the VLA Personnel Committee.
- Introduce the topic with the PowerPoint slide show and handouts available from the Personnel Committee. Make as many copies as you need.
- Congratulate your committee! Looking seriously at these issues will benefit your library!

¹ *ALA-APA Survey of Librarian Salaries*, 2006. Available from the VT Department of Libraries, UVM, ALA.

² <http://www.vtlivablewage.org>

³ http://www.vtnea.org/Teacher_Salaries_2006-07.pdf. Uses 1576 hours per year to calculate comparable hourly figures.

An annual budget memo for trustees

Budget time often brings up questions about Vermont library salaries. Want some help deciding what a fair raise is for your employees? Think about some of these pointers:

- Ø COLA, or Cost of Living Adjustment, should be considered annually. Check Social Security Administration calculations at <http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/COLA/latestCOLA.html>. The COLA effective for payments in January 2007 is 3.3% . Therefore, in 2007 library staff should receive a 3.3% increase over the previous wage. If staff have missed COLA increases for several years, the raise should be higher.
- Ø Continuing education is an ongoing factor for librarians who need to stay on top of new online tools, and trends in the country and in the profession. If your librarian has recently completed the Vermont Department of Libraries Certificate of Public Librarianship, recognize this important benchmark with a significant raise. Check with your school superintendent to see what percentage the schools use for a step raise as teachers add credits to their starting credentials. If your town has created a step chart for its employees, you may use that for the raise.
- Ø Changes in job description occur incrementally. Bit by bit, the staff may increase the number of library programs offered, the number of volunteers supervised, the number of services provided to the community, or grants written. Annually, trustees should scrutinize changes in the scope and responsibility of the job to see if an additional raise is warranted.
- Ø A fair benefits package should be considered part of staff compensation. If the library does not offer full benefits to its staff, trustees may include a line item in the budget to offer payment in lieu of benefits. Naming the benefit line allows trustees to move towards appropriate benefits for medical insurance, vacation and sick leave, and a retirement plan.
- Ø Bonuses reward staff for exceptional performance. Bonuses are appropriate when staff have risen to meet major challenges. Finding new money to replace an unexpected shortfall, continuing to deliver excellent service while writing and administering a grant, or completing a long-range plan might be occasions for a one-time bonus.
- Ø Make sure that library staff is paid for every hour worked— or paid for enough hours to get the work done. By law, staff should not volunteer for the job they are paid to do.

Trustees may decide they need more time to understand the whole problem of staff salaries. The Personnel Committee of the Vermont Library Association will be happy to help review and study your library salaries and job descriptions. Call or e-mail committee chair Amy C. Grasmick at (802) 728-5073 or kimball_acg@hotmail.com for more information.

Recommended starting salary

The Vermont Library Association recommends a minimum starting salary of \$37,200 (= \$17.88/hour) for library directors with a bachelor's degree and the Vermont Department of Libraries Certificate of Public Librarianship. The following chart is based on this recommended minimum.

Bachelor's	Bachelor's + DOL	Master's	Master's + DOL	MLS
\$36,675	\$37,200	\$37,800	\$38,350	\$39,100

Annual increases should include:

- the federal cost of living adjustment (COLA)
- steps defined by the library: consider an additional raise of 2% for years 2-6, 1.5% for years 7-12, and 1% for years 13 and up
- merit raises

In addition to the minimum recommended wage, the Vermont Library Association urges library trustees to provide their employees a full benefits package, pro-rated accordingly.

Think you're worth more than you make?

How to communicate the value of your work ¹

We live in a political world, and libraries are as vulnerable to shifting political priorities as any other public institution. A critical component in the effort to improve librarians' salaries is to market what we do. Since many of our patrons, funders, and even board members don't fully recognize or understand how libraries function, librarians must take advantage of every opportunity to articulate the nature of our work. As the Internet becomes more dominant in people's lives, this message needs to be consistent and repeated often. For example:

- ⇒ Libraries are 21st century centers for information, for education, for literacy and culture. And librarians are the ultimate search engines. They save time and money by helping to find the best, most accurate and complete information, whether it's online or in a book or video.
- ⇒ Today's librarian is a well-trained, technology-savvy, information expert who can enrich the learning process of any library user—from early reader to graduate student to young Web surfer to retiring senior citizen.

Share the following quotable facts at any available opportunity, such as your next board meeting, in a press release, website, or newsletter, or during a conversation with a patron.

- ◇ Libraries circulate more items every day than FedEx ships packages—5.4 million vs. 5.3 million items. ⁷
- ◇ Vermonters checked out more than 4.4 million books in 2006. At an average book price of \$25 and four readers per book, that's a value to the taxpayers of \$27.5 million! ⁴
- ◇ Federal spending on libraries annually is only 54 cents per person. ²
- ◇ In 2004, the average per-person tax support in Vermont was \$19.57. The national average was \$26.25. ⁴
- ◇ One out of every six people in the world is a registered library user. ⁷
- ◇ Americans spend more than three times as much on salty snacks as they do on public libraries. ²

Once your constituency is behind your library 100%, start putting your salary and operating budget into perspective for the decision-makers and voters in your municipality.

*"Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation."
—Walter Cronkite*

Nationally, Public Library Managers, defined as those who supervise support staff, make a median salary of \$47,399 annually — and this doesn't even include Department Heads or Directors, who make a median salary of \$56,438. ⁵The Library Manager salary is equivalent to \$22.79 per hour based on a 40-hour work week. In Vermont, librarians who worked in public libraries, schools, colleges and universities, and corporations made an average of \$19.88 per hour in 2005; library assistants made \$10.77 per hour. ⁶

While your board may groan during budget season, the truth is that libraries in this state are run on a shoestring. Vermont's libraries cost roughly \$17.3 million to operate in 2006, of which 99.9% was provided by local sources (tax revenue, fundraising, endowments, etc.). ⁴ Compared to the cost of running public schools in this state — nearly \$1.3 BILLION — libraries are a bargain. ³

Combined Vermont library budgets add up to less than 1.4% of what schools spend in this state.

For this small sum, Vermont's libraries offer 2.7 million books, 240,000 audiobooks and videos, 7300 magazines and access to millions of periodical articles via the Vermont Online Library and other databases. 800+ computers are available for public use, and 77% of Vermont's libraries offer high speed Internet access. ⁴ Isn't it time to pay library staff a fair wage for the level of service that they provide?

Here are some additional statements to convince people that we're worth more than we're paid.

- ⇒ Librarians must be paid 21st century salaries if Vermonters are to enjoy 21st century library and information services.
- ⇒ Libraries shouldn't have to choose between paying their staffs equitable salaries and buying books, adding hours, or updating their technology.
- ⇒ Everyone loves libraries, but library workers can't live on love alone. Just ask our landlords, doctors, and families!
- ⇒ Libraries work because library workers make them work.
- ⇒ You can't have good education without good libraries, and you can't have good libraries without good staff.

HOW DO PUBLIC LIBRARIES ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN VERMONT? HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE WAYS THAT LIBRARIES MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLES' LIVES:

Libraries...

- ◇ Instill a love of reading in children through story hours , summer reading programs, and special events.
- ◇ Provide homework help to students including instruction on Internet research and using online databases.
- ◇ Train Vermont citizens to effectively search the Internet through one on one training and group classes.
- ◇ Offer free community meeting and social space for seniors, stay-at-home parents, homeschoolers, and local organizations.
- ◇ Reduce the stress of working adults through recreational reading, audiobooks, and videos, thus lowering health care costs.
- ◇ Help people to find jobs, start small-businesses, and launch new careers.
- ◇ Refer people to appropriate state and federal agencies, including consumer and legal services.
- ◇ Provide free tax forms (including all of the attachments and instructions, not just the 1040!).
- ◇ Enrich the lives of people in underserved communities, through bookmobile visits in rural areas, and outreach programs in day-care centers and retirement communities.
- ◇ Provide volunteer outlets for hundreds of Vermont citizens.
- ◇ Spark interest in new ideas and maintain a healthy democracy.
- ◇ Offer cultural programming through book discussion groups, lectures, and other events.
- ◇ Are often housed in historical buildings that lend architectural value to the town's landscape.

Please reprint any portion of this document to make the case for better library salaries.

Sources:

1. Adapted from "Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit." *American Library Association* Jan 2003.
<http://www.ala.org/ala/hrdr/libraryempresources/toolkit.pdf>
2. "Quotable Facts about America's Libraries," *American Library Association*.
<http://www.ala.org/ala/pio/availablepiomat/quotablefact.pdf>
3. "Vermont Department of Education School Report [2006]," *Center for Rural Studies*, Feb 2007.
<http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt/cfusion/schlrpt06/vermont.cfm>
4. "Vermont Public Library Statistics 2007 Biennial Report Supplement," Vermont Department of Libraries, Feb 2007.
http://dol.state.vt.us/GOPHER_ROOT5/LIBRARIES/stats/PLSTATS.HTML
5. *ALA-APA Survey of Librarian Salaries*, 2006.
6. "Wages and trends reported for May 2005," *Vermont Labor Market Information*.
<http://www.vtlmi.info/oic2.cfm>
7. "Libraries: how they stack up," *OCLC*, Sept 2003.
<http://www5.oclc.org/downloads/community/librariesstackup.pdf>

Benefits for Public Library Employees

In order to attract and retain qualified employees, it is essential that library boards offer a benefits package that is funded and reviewed annually. Developing a benefits package requires research. Your community provides the best benchmark. Look at what your municipal government offers its employees. Review the local teacher contract. Compare your library to other libraries of a similar size and nature. All of these provide a picture of a fair benefits package.

As the cost of benefits soars, it is vital to find creative solutions for funding. Join group plans whenever possible. Share the cost of benefits between the employer and employee. Offer options appropriate to employees' needs. If your library has not previously offered benefits, you may plan to phase the cost in over a number of years. Meanwhile, immediately offer benefits, like time off or flex time, that don't raise the budget. Many small libraries start by offering an annual cash benefit that employees can use for medical, dental, retirement, or other benefits payment. All benefits should be offered on a pro-rated basis, to avoid penalizing part-time employees.

Most employers spend between 14 and 25 percent of an employees total compensation package on benefits...this does not include legally required benefits

US News and World Report, February 23, 2003

Legally required benefits

Social Security — paid 50/50 by the employer and employee

Unemployment Compensation— paid by the employer

Worker's Compensation— paid by the employer; check to see if the library can join the town's plan.

Payment for time not worked

Vacations — Vacations commonly range from two to five weeks per year. According to U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics (<http://www.bls.gov>), American employers give their employees an average of 15 paid vacation days per year. The amount of vacation earned annually usually increases with years of service. For example, an employee with one to three years of service may earn two weeks of vacation, an employee with four to seven years of service may earn three weeks of vacation, and so on.

Holidays — Employees should always be paid for holidays that fall on days they are scheduled to work. The State of Vermont pays employees for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Town Meeting Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Bennington Battle Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day. A library might consider establishing a set number of holidays per year, and give staff the flexibility to take a "floating holiday" when a regular holiday falls on a day the employee is not scheduled to work or the library is closed.

Sick Days — One day of sick leave per month of service is a common benefit. Organizations must also determine how much sick leave may be accumulated.

Bereavement — Three days of paid leave is commonly given for the death of an immediate family member. Immediate family might include spouse, great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, siblings, children, and grandchildren of the employee and the employee's spouse.

Lunch and Breaks — It is common for shorter lunch breaks (20-30 minutes) to be paid. It is also standard practice to allow employees a 15-minute break for every four hours worked.

Leaves of Absence — Training staff is a time- and labor-intensive process. It is, therefore, expensive. Consider negotiating leaves of absence—for illness, maternity leave, or even a sabbatical. A leave policy provides peace of mind to both employer and employee: the employer will welcome back a refreshed and renewed worker, and the employee is confident that his or her job is secure.

Retirement

VMERS —The Office of the State Treasurer manages the Vermont Municipal Retirement System. If a municipality participates in the program, the library board may decide to include the library, even if the town does not pay the library staff.

Simple 401(k) — Employees may contribute pretax salary to a 401(k) plan and the employer may match up to the entire amount. Any employer, including governmental and tax-exempt employers, can adopt a 401(k) plan. 401(k) plans are available from certified financial advisors.

SEP-IRA (Simplified Employee Pension) — Employers contribute up to 25% of the employee's total compensation, with a maximum annual contribution of \$44,000 in 2006. With the exception of the higher contribution limits, they are subject to the same rules as a regular IRA. In a SEP-IRA, contributions and the investment earnings can grow tax-deferred until withdrawal (assumed to be retirement); at which time they are taxed as ordinary income.

TSA (Tax Deferred Annuity) — TSAs are long-term investments specifically designed for retirement purposes. They are available to employees by an employer under a 403(b) tax-deferred annuity plan, in which a portion of one's salary is contributed to the plan. Contribution limits vary by individual, but many people can contribute at least \$14,000 per year. Withdrawals are generally subject to restrictions and a 10 percent penalty before age 59 1/2.

TIAA-CREF — A provider of retirement savings plans to colleges, universities, schools, research centers, medical organizations and other non-profit institutions, including libraries. TIAA-CREF offers a variety of retirement savings options and schedules.

Insurance-Related Benefits

Medical Insurance — The availability of medical insurance to public librarians varies widely. Do you work in a municipal or incorporated library? Are you a town employee? Are you considered to be employed full-time or part-time? The answers to these questions help you begin to understand your options.

Employees of municipal libraries may be entitled to participate in their town's medical insurance program. Most Vermont municipalities purchase medical insurance for their employees through the Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT). Municipal librarians who work at least 17 hours per week AND who meet their town's guidelines for participation are entitled to medical insurance. They cannot be excluded, even if they are not technically town employees.

Incorporated libraries might consider approaching their town to inquire whether the library can buy into the town's medical insurance plan. The library, not the town, would be responsible for the entire premium. This option may be less expensive than purchasing medical insurance independently at the small group rate. Also, local chambers of commerce often offer members the opportunity to participate in their health insurance program at less-expensive large group rates. Finally, the Vermont Alliance of Non Profit Organizations (VANPO) offers its members access to a what it terms "group dental and medical insurance" - in fact, VANPO directs members to an insurance broker.

Libraries choosing to purchase medical insurance independently have three choices in Vermont:

- BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont 800-255-4550
<http://www.bcbsvt.com>
- CIGNA [Connecticut General Life Insurance Co.] 508-798-8667
<http://www.cigna.com>
- MVP Health Plan 800-TALK-MVP
<http://www.mvphealthcare.com>

Health savings accounts—also known as flexible spending accounts and cafeteria plans—offer individuals and/or employers a method for setting aside non-taxed wages for medical and other expenses. Money set aside in such accounts can be withdrawn only for designated purposes. Depending on the plan, these purposes may include medical co-pays and deductibles, prescription and over-the-counter medications, dental and vision care, and in some cases, even child care. Consult IRS publication 969 (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p969.pdf>) for details.

Librarians who are unable to obtain medical insurance through their employer have additional options. They can purchase individual policies directly from any of the insurers listed above, or through an insurance broker. Or they might qualify for Vermont's low-income medical insurance program, VHAP. Guidelines for the program change annually.

- Vermont Health Plan 1-800-250-8427
http://www.dsw.state.vt.us/Programs_Pages/Healthcare/vhap.htm

[At the time of this revision, the Vermont legislature and governor are working on a medical insurance plan for uninsured Vermonters, Catamount Health. As details become available, this publication will be revised to include them.]

Please note: The American Library Association offers members the opportunity to buy into medical and dental insurance plans. However, due to state regulations this member benefit is not available in Vermont.

Disability Insurance — Long and short-term disability insurance is available through most insurance companies.

Dental Insurance and / or eye care insurance — Dental and eye-care services may be provided as part of a health care policy or may be provided by independent companies.

Life Insurance — Most insurance companies can provide life insurance policies. Plans commonly pay one year of the insured's salary to his or her beneficiaries.

Continuing Education

Education Costs — The cost of attending workshops and conferences as well as the cost of membership in professional organizations should be budgeted for each year.

Mileage Reimbursement — Mileage costs for attendance at approved professional workshops should be provided. You can find the current federal mileage reimbursement rates at <http://www.gsa.gov>.

Helpful Resources for Compensation

Books available from the Vermont Department of Libraries

ALA survey of librarian salaries. American Library Association, 1982-.

LS 331.2 2006 (look for the most recent available); UVM also owns.

Based on an annual survey of libraries employing full-time academic and public librarians. Because of the population served and the accreditation, the figures may be less helpful to Vermont public libraries than to academic libraries.

Brumley, Rebecca, 1959- *Neal-Schuman directory of public library job descriptions.* Neal-Schuman, c2005.

LS 023.2

Current, detailed, and extremely broad coverage including branch director, bookmobile staff, circulation assistant, et al.

Expectations of librarians in the 21st century / edited by Karl Bridges. Greenwood Press, 2003.

LS 020.23

Thoughtful essays about the qualities professional librarians hope to find in the twenty-first century librarian. These clarify the profession beyond the “likes books and people” myths of librarians.

Kane, Laura Townsend. *Straight from the stacks: a firsthand guide to careers in library and information science.* American Library Association, 2003.

LS 020.2373

Career choices for librarians with sample job descriptions. Useful for librarians thinking about using their skills in many fields.

Kenady, Carolyn. *Pay equity : an action manual for library workers.* The Association, 1989.

LS 331.2

This includes useful material on pay equity, accounts of how municipal, library and state groups have pursued equity, and suggested strategies. Appendixes address writing job descriptions and comparing jobs.

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Appendix

Vermont comparative salaries

	Hourly wage	Annual wage ¹
Vermont Minimum Wage, 2007 ²	\$7.53	\$15,662
Livable Wage in Vermont, 2007 ³ ** single person, rural	\$14.57	\$30,307
VLA recommended minimum salary ** not including benefits	\$17.88	\$37,200
Average minimum salary, teacher with a BA, 2006-2007 ⁴ ** not including benefits	\$19.70	\$31,047
State Employee Librarian B (MLS, no experience) ⁵ **beginning salary after probation; not including benefits	\$16.86	\$35,069
ALA recommended minimum salary for beginning librarians ** librarians with ALA-MLS	\$19.23	\$40,000

Livable Wage in Vermont (2007, updated annually)

	Hourly (non-Burlington area)	Annual (non-Burlington area)	Hourly (Burlington area)	Annual (Burlington area)
Single person	\$14.57	\$30,307	\$13.94	\$28,998
Single parent, one child	\$21.23	\$44,168	\$21.57	\$44,868
Single parent, two children	\$23.95	\$48,820	\$27.23	\$56,640
Two parents and two children, one wage earner	\$24.79	\$51,526	\$24.99	\$51,986
Two parents and two children, two wage earners	<i>each</i> \$17.24	<i>each</i> \$35,868	<i>each</i> \$17.79	<i>each</i> \$37,003

Vermont State Employee wages

Title	Brief example of qualifications ⁵	Actual work example	Pay grade	Hourly, starting ⁵	Hourly, range	Annual, starting ¹
Librarian A	BA in any field, 6 months above clerical level	Assistant regional librarian	18	\$15.20	\$14.56-22.50	\$31,616
Librarian B	MLS	Reference librarian & liaison to UVM libraries	20	\$16.86	\$16.15-25.10	\$35,069
Librarian C	MLS, 2 years professional library experience	Regional librarian	22	\$18.87	\$18.01-28.12	\$39,250

¹ Annual figures derived from hourly figures by multiplying the hourly wage by 2080 (= 40 hour work-week and 52 weeks/year)

² <http://labor.vermont.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=243>

³ <http://www.vtlivablewage.org/factsfigures.html>

⁴ http://www.vtnea.org/Teacher_Salaries_2006-07.pdf, using 1576 hours/year to calculate hourly comparable figure

⁵ Job Specifications: <http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/specs.php>

Pay Chart link: http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/compensation_payplan.php

⁶ "Endorsement of a Nonbinding Minimum Salary for Professional Librarians": <http://www.ala-apa.org/about/20062007APACD15.pdf>. The \$40,000 figure aligns with the results of the 2006 ALA-APA Librarian Salary Survey, which indicates a mean salary of \$40,026 paid to ALA-MLS beginning librarians working in libraries with at least 2 ALA-MLS librarians. However, the survey did not include enough data from Vermont public libraries for ALA-APA to report statistics that apply solely to Vermont. Furthermore, the Library Research Service, comparing the ALA-APA data to Colorado public libraries, found that fewer than half of the public libraries in that state pay the proposed minimum salary to ALA-MLS beginning librarians: http://www.lrs.org/documents/fastfacts/250_40000.pdf.

Unions and Vermont Libraries

Employees in eight Vermont libraries have voted to unionize, presumably in order to improve working conditions. Two public librarians discuss the benefits and drawbacks of bringing unions into libraries in the article "Can Unions Solve the Low-Pay Dilemma?" [American Libraries, 33.1 (January 2002): p. 65 (4), available through the Vermont Online Library]

The article provides a number of perspectives on unions which operate in public libraries. For example, employees began lobbying for a union to preserve their rights in a library where poor management had eroded staff confidence. Erosion of benefits and low pay relative to other library jobs were cited as reasons employees felt they needed effective representation. When boards, trustees, and Friends are informed about compensation issues and management fairness, employees may not need union representation. One problem unionized library workers may discover is that their issues are lost in the larger, non-library union representation. Managers also classically cite the division they feel in small staffs when the union does not represent supervisors and the library director.

Unionized Libraries in Vermont (survey by Amy Howlett, Spring 2006)

Aldrich Library, Barre	United Steelworkers ** union already represented municipal workers of Barre City and Barre Town
Brownell Library, Essex Junction	Village of Essex Junction Employees Association ** all full-time Village employees except for Department Heads may join
Fletcher Free Library, Burlington	AFSCME ** other city departments like police and fire also unionized
Ilsley Public Library, Middlebury	AFSCME ** library clerical staff; with town office staff, DPW, wastewater, police
Kellogg Hubbard Library, Montpelier	AFSCME ** closed shop; all library employees are members except custodial help, accountant, management
Rutland Free Library	AFSCME ** affiliated with unions at City Hall
Springfield Town Library	AFSCME ** clerical staff
Stowe Library	IBEW (Int'l Brotherhood of Electrical Workers) ** with other Town of Stowe employees

Worksheets

Committee members:

Name	Contact information

Goal statement:

- How broad should the investigation into current remuneration be?
- Are other groups in town, such as municipal departments, working on the same issues?
- Is the library's budget growth in the past ten years the same as other town agencies or does it lag behind?
- Is there a town-wide situation that could be better addressed by a wage and classification study, including salaries of the public library?

Timeline

Objective	Date of Completion	Responsibility
Write goal statement		
Write job description		
Compare to local job descriptions		
Salary comparison table		
Benefits		

Write job description

Sources

- <http://www.state.nh.us/nhla/payequitytoolkit.pdf>
- <http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/specs.cfm>
- <http://www.bls.gov/oco>

Compare to local job descriptions

Generally, jobs should be compared based on standard characteristics including:

- § Knowledge and skill required to do the job
- § Level of communication needed: for example does the person speak for the institution, work directly with decision makers in the community, or work with the public more generally
- § Importance of the decisions required by the job
- § Level of authority
- § Impact of the work accomplished
- § Level of physical demands
- § Type of working conditions
- § Supervisory scope
- § Budget responsibility

Position	Organization

DIRECTOR & PROFESSIONAL STAFF Salary comparison

Current wage		
VLA recommended minimum salary	http://www.vermontlibraries.org/betterpay.pdf	\$17.88 / \$37,200
DOL librarian B	http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/specs.php http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/paychart.php	\$16.86 / \$35,069
Beginning librarian, mean salary, 2004	http://www.ala-apa.org/about/20062007APACD15.pdf	\$19.23 / \$40,000
Starting public school teacher	town report http://www.vtnea.org/Salaries.htm http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/data/teacher_FTE.html	
Starting public school principal	town report school district	
Comparable town positions	town report	
Comparable VT library directors	http://dol.state.vt.us/GOPHER_ROOT5/LIBRARIES/stats/PLSTATS.HTML Librarians of the Upper Valley (LUV) survey: contact Lucinda Walker	

DIRECTOR & PROFESSIONAL STAFF
Consider benefits

Current benefits		
DOL librarian B	http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/benefits.php	
Starting public school teacher	town report	
Starting public school principal	school district	
Comparable town positions		
Comparable VT library directors	LUV survey: contact Lucinda Walker	

SUPPORT STAFF Salary comparison

Current wage		
VT minimum wage	http://labor.vermont.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=243	\$7.53 / \$15,662
VT Livable Wage	http://www.vtlivablewage.org/factsfigures.html	\$14.57 / \$30,307
DOL clerk B	http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/specs.php http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employee/paychart.php	\$10.00 / \$20,800
Starting school paraprofessional	town report http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/data/teacher_FTE.html	
Comparable town positions	town report	
Comparable VT library positions	http://dol.state.vt.us/GOPHER_ROOT5/LIBRARIES/stats/PLSTATS.HTML	

SUPPORT STAFF
Consider benefits

Current benefits		
DOL clerk B	http://www.vermontpersonnel.org/employees/benefits.php	
Starting school paraprofessional	town report	
Comparable town positions		
Comparable VT library positions		