

Executive Director's Report August 2024

Benchmarking Project Summary

In August, Executive Director Jack Bower made a significant step toward aligning employee compensation with market rates through the benchmarking project.

Of the 54 employees assessed, 24 were at the bottom of their pay range, between 80-85% of the midpoint. Many of these employees have worked at the library for a long time, which is not ideal. Our staff have an impressive average tenure of 9 years.

Overall, 36 of the 54 employees received adjustments. Directors, who are already compensated at or above market rates, and employees with less than 11 months of service were not included. To prevent pay compression and maintain the integrity of our salary structure, employees above the midpoint received smaller adjustments.

Prior to the changes, 36 employees were below the midpoint, with 24 in the 80-85% range. After the adjustments, only eight remain in that range, though 34 are still below the midpoint. The average increase was 4.21%, and the total cost of these adjustments in 2024 was \$57,984, well within what was allocated for adjustments in the budget.

Jack recommends continuing to allocate funds for further adjustments in 2025 to better align compensation with market rates and further recognize the contributions of our dedicated staff.

Special thanks to the administrative team for their hard work in implementing these midyear changes. Staff have expressed their appreciation for this recognition and we are grateful to the board for providing the resources to make this happen.

Benchmarking Comparison

% of Pay Range	Before	After
Midpoint	Adjustments	Adjustments
<85%	24	8
85%-90%	3	5
90%-95%	8	12
95%-100%	1	9
midpoint		
100%-105%	3	5
105%-110%	6	4
110%-115%	3	5
>115%	6	6
Total Under	36	34
Total Over	18	20

Jules Verne Voyage Extraordinaire Escape Room

On August 17th, we hosted the Jules Verne Voyage Extraordinaire Escape Room, an exciting tie-in to this year's summer reading theme. In this adventure, Professor Lindenbrock's experiment went disastrously wrong—instead of bringing Jules Verne to the library, participants were sent back in time! Patrons had to use their problem-solving skills to regain control of a submarine, decode ancient documents, read maps, and solve puzzles in order to escape and return to the year 2024.

All of the content was entirely original, crafted by our talented Readers Services staff. Patrons aged 13 and older signed up for one of six 1-hour sessions, each accommodating up to six players. Nearly every session was fully booked, making it a highly successful and engaging event.



“Truly Great Reads” Nonfiction Reading Challenge Wrap-Up

On August 29th, the Reference Services Department officially wrapped up its year long reading challenge, Truly Great Reads: A Nonfiction Reading Challenge. This program was designed to spotlight the nonfiction collection, draw patrons into the West Wing of the library, foster engagement with Reference Department staff, and encourage exploration of curated nonfiction book displays throughout the West Wing. It also aimed to remind patrons that nonfiction can be enjoyed for leisure reading.

Participants were given monthly challenges to explore books from suggested nonfiction topics. With 90 sign-ups and nearly 400 nonfiction titles read, we consider this inaugural program a resounding success!

Summer Reading Challenge Success and Upcoming Changes

This year's Summer Reading Challenge was our most successful in decades, with an incredible 435 kids completing the challenge of reading 10 hours. That's a lot of t-shirts! A big thank you to the Friends of the Library for providing the shirts.

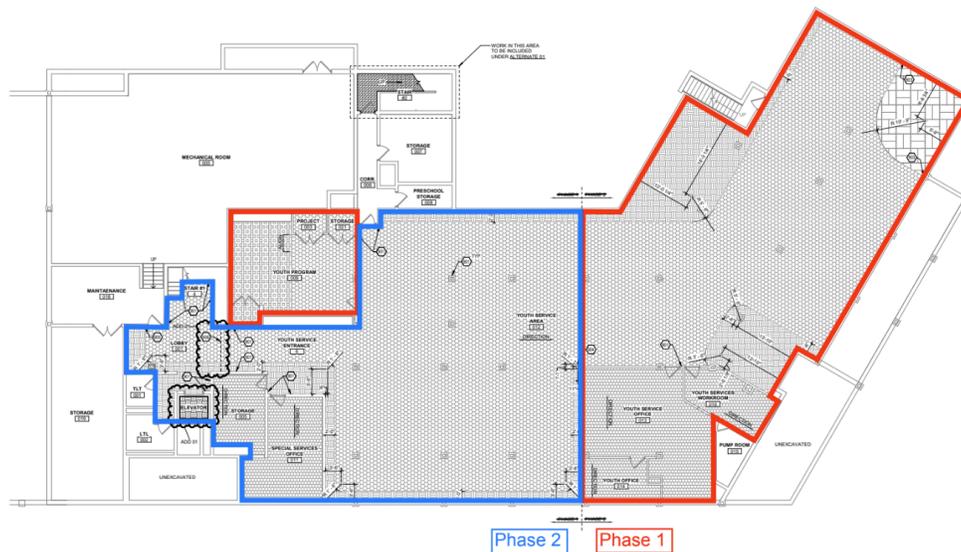
With the extra-long summer, Youth Services offered additional programming to keep kids engaged throughout the season. Now, they are prepared for the recarpeting project while continuing to serve the public.



Youth Services Flooring Replacement Project

The Youth Services flooring replacement project will commence on September 9, requiring the lower level to be closed to the public until early October. The work will be conducted in two phases, starting with the eastern portion of the lower level and the Youth Program classroom, followed by the western portion. Movers will be on site on September 9, with demolition, floor prep, and installation scheduled to follow. We anticipate having the punch list inspection for Phase 1 by September 20 and for Phase 2 by October 4.

During the project, youth materials will be temporarily relocated to the main level, and staff will assist patrons with requests. Youth programs will be held in the Community Room throughout September. In addition to the flooring replacement, the walls will be repainted to match the new carpet, as recommended by the architect. The phased map is attached for your reference.



Strategic Planning Project Update

The Strategic Planning project is well underway. On August 20, the Planning Committee met with Library Strategies to review the project’s timeline and framework.

Currently, a staff survey is in progress and will remain open until September 27. SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) sessions are scheduled for the staff in-service on September 20, as well as during a special Board meeting later that day. A community survey is also being developed, and the Steering Committee is identifying key community members to participate in focus groups led by the planning firm.

To encourage community participation in the focus groups, Jack has requested a donation from the Friends of the Library to offer gift cards as incentives.

The timeline for the project is outlined below. The planning firm expects to have drafts of the Strategic Plan, incorporating comprehensive community feedback, by late November. These drafts will be reviewed by the Steering Committee before being presented to the full Library Board for approval at the January meeting.

Rolling Meadows Public Library
Strategic Plan | Draft Project Timetable



ACTIVITY	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
Preparation, Data Analysis + Kickoff									
Project scoping + background data review	X								
Kickoff meeting + workplan finalization		X							
Surveying + Interview Exercises									
Create, test, publish, distribute community survey			X						
Create, test, publish, distribute staff survey		X							
Coordinate and hold 6-8 '1:1' interviews				X					
Fieldwork + Stakeholder Engagement									
Staff and board SOAR sessions (Trip 1)			X						
Focus group brainstorming, invitation process				X					
Hold community focus group sessions (Trip 2)					X				
Crafting Strategic Plan									
Draft and revise strategic plan						X			
Review and revise mission, vision, values						X			
Finalize/share secondary deliverables (ex., reports)						X			
Present and approve final strategic plan							X		
Graphic design + dashboard measurement tool								X	
Develop Implementation Plan									
Partner w/ staff on operations plan (Trip 3)									X

New Ejector Pumps Installed and Temporary Library Closure

On August 21, the library installed new, more efficient submersible ejector pumps, replacing the old suction-style pumps. The new pumps operate more quietly and efficiently, addressing a key recommendation from the engineer’s assessment.

Work began early in the morning, with the goal of completing the installation by 9:00 AM, before the library opened. However, the plumbing team encountered delays and was unable to finish on time. After operating for an hour without water, Jack consulted with President Threadgill and made the decision to temporarily close the library, as it's not permissible to keep a public building open without water or functioning restrooms. The library reopened later that day at 4:00 PM after the installation was completed.



Staff Resilience During Departmental Illness

In August, over the course of a week, a virus impacted nearly an entire department, creating a challenging situation for the library. While specific details must remain confidential, the rest of the library staff demonstrated exceptional teamwork, stepping up to ensure that services continued without disruption. Special recognition goes to both the staff who filled in during this time and to Administrative Services Coordinator Kristin T., whose outstanding coordination and leadership were crucial in managing coverage and guiding the library through this period.

Electronic Flyers

Typically, the library provides printed publicity flyers for trustees to review and promote. While many trustees appreciate having physical copies, the flyers are also available online for electronic viewing. To help reduce unnecessary paper use, we encourage any trustees who do not prefer printed copies to let Jack or the administrative staff know.

In the Community

National Night Out Participation

On the evening of August 6, Readers Services staff Carrie D., Elizabeth K., and Mary Constance B. represented the library at the Rolling Meadows Police Department's National Night Out event. The library hosted a table to promote its events and services. Despite some misty weather, the event saw great attendance and plenty of activity. This collaborative event provided a unique

opportunity for the library to network with residents and members of the community, sharing what the library has to offer.



Outreach and Community Engagement

Education Services Coordinator Kate D. and Youth Services Associate Margie B. represented the library at the High School District 214 Newcomers Academy Open House, collaborating with other district-serving libraries, including Arlington Heights, Mt. Prospect, Buffalo Grove, Prospect Heights, and Elk Grove. While the opportunity was valuable, family turnout was lower than expected.

In addition, Community Relations Manager Laura G. continued her weekly outreach throughout the summer, visiting the Rolling Meadows Neighborhood Community Center to engage with the local community.

Department Updates

Special Services Update

- Graphics & Digital Content Specialist Abbey M. helped spotlight the Library of Things collection by installing an eye-catching end cap wallpaper to draw attention to this unique offering. Additionally, all promotional materials for Fall (September, October, and November) have been completed, along with preparations for the Fall 2024 StoryWalk featuring Doris by Lo Cole.

- Special Services Director, Jessica V. collaborated with Circulation to create the “There’s More Than Meets the Eye” promotion for Library Card Sign-Up Month. This includes a display at the Check-Out Desk with two raffles: one offering \$10 gift cards as an incentive for patrons to sign up for a new library card or complete our online survey (with survey insights to be shared in September), and another with prizes like an iPad, Kindle Fire, or Kindle Paperwhite for patrons who check out items from the Library of Things, video game/board game collections, or classic library materials.
- Special Services also designed and printed materials for various programs, including the Truly Great Reads wrap-up party, Readers Department book discussion groups, Rhymetime Anytime, Lotería, Take-Home Craft Kit, Book Lovers Day, and several outreach events.

Technical Services

Technical Services staff completed the first set of early learning backpacks, providing a new resource for young patrons. Additionally, they finished repackaging Youth Services board games into colorful, see-through, and easily portable bags, enhancing both accessibility and convenience.

The latest additions to the Library of Things include a mahjong set, digital luggage scale, portable karaoke machine, LED UV flashlight, rechargeable LED lantern, and a cash box (sans cash), expanding the variety of unique items available for checkout.



Technical Services Recap 2023/24 YTD													
	2023				2024								12 MONTHS
	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Total
Collection	189,629	189,737	189,040	187,803	187,213	186,640	186,632	187,357	187,541	187,017	186,394	186,246	185,975
Added	965	1,046	1,076	881	839	1,232	1,269	964	1,156	958	1,237	905	12,528
Withdrawn	1,029	1,743	2,313	1,471	1,412	1,240	544	780	1,680	1,581	1,385	1,176	16,354