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**Fair Pay for
Library Directors**
State Library of Iowa
November 8, 2007

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Speakers

- Mary Wegner, State Librarian of Iowa
- Sandy Dixon, Program Director for Library Development, State Library of Iowa
- Karen Burns, Administrator, Southwest Iowa Library Service Area

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Learning Objectives

- State the board's authority regarding compensation of library employees
- Describe the impact of low pay
- List benefits of fair pay for librarians
- Describe at least one way to present salary and "justification" to funding bodies
- Describe 2 ways to use the questionnaire, The Value of Librarians: Reaching Equitable Compensation

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Assumptions

- Great library service does not happen without great librarians
- Librarians do important work
- Librarians should be compensated equitably

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What is the impact when library staffs are paid low salaries?

- High staff turnover
- Board spends their energy on constantly filling library director position
- Library can't move forward when the director changes frequently
- Inconsistent customer service
- Low staff morale (Employees treat customers the way they are treated)

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How does the community benefit by improving library salaries?

- Customers are served consistently by knowledgeable and experienced staff who are familiar with library resources
- Keep good staff
- Attract qualified staff
- Improve staff morale
- Board more likely to focus on the future

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Where Do We Start?

- Recognize your authority as a library board.
- Library boards have a great deal of control / influence over the pay of library workers.

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Review Your Library Ordinance

- Most library ordinances state that the board has the power and duty to employ a librarian,
- To authorize the librarian to hire other library employees
- To "fix their compensation"

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Steps

- Schedule time on a board meeting agenda to discuss salaries (consider budget calendar)
- Ask the library director to gather background salary information
- Discuss library salaries at the board meeting. Is improving salaries a priority?
- Will the board need to re-allocate funds or will it require additional funding?
- If additional funding is required, discuss the best way to approach the city

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Resources

- What Do Library Directors Do, Anyway?
- Iowa Public Library Statistics
- Iowa League of Cities Salary Survey
- The Value of Librarians: Reaching Equitable Compensation
- State Library of Iowa Web Site, <http://www.statelibraryofiowa.org/>
