2027 Berkeley Heights Library Draft Budget Presentation

November 9, 2026

2026 Highlights – Library Statistics Snapshot

	October 2026	October 2025	YTD 2026	2025
Door Traffic Count	9,814	9,031	97,588	91,982
New Library Cards	71	54	585	728
Total Circulation	13,992	11,441	138,912	176,435
Physical Circulation	9,778	7,244	95,640	118,665
Digital Circulation	4,214	4,197	43,272	57,770
Museum Pass Circulation	25	24	295	326
Library of Things Circulation	205	86	1635	1003
Youth Services Programs	43	41	418	508
Youth Services Program Attendance	540	1,418	8,716	9,142
Adult Programs	21	6	196	237
Adult Program Attendance	247	75	2226	1,402

Berkeley Heights Public Library
Vision Statement

A place where curiosity thrives, futures take shape, and every neighbor belongs.

Our library will continue to be an integral part of our community: a trusted source of information, a launchpad for learning and career readiness, and a welcoming place for everyone.

We envision a library that:

- **Connects people to knowledge.** We will continue to provide accurate, reliable information and expert guidance, from research databases and digital tools to skilled staff.
- **Prepares the next generation.** Beloved children's programming, expanded youth STEM, and technology programs for adults and seniors, supported by modern devices and mobile learning equipment. Bubbles the Hippo will keep leading the way.
- **Serves commuters and collaborates with local businesses.** Flexible services, digital collections for the ride, business research tools, and partnerships that strengthen our local economy.
- **Welcomes every language, culture, and ability.** Multilingual collections and programs, and new accessible front doors, ensure every resident can use the library independently and with dignity.
- **Raises awareness of what we offer.** Expanded outreach and social media will bring our services to residents of every age and background.
- **Stands on a strong foundation.** Updated governance, a new circulation desk with a convenient book return, and improved staff, storage, and public spaces for easier, more accountable service.

With our community's support, we will continue to be a library that informs, inspires, and brings people together for generations to come.

Let’s join Bubbles the Hippo in building what’s next.🦛

2027 Budget Objectives

- **Outreach and Marketing**
  - Create comprehensive Outreach Plan with the goals of
    - Increase Outreach by 25%-50%
      - School Visits
      - Tabling at town wide events
      - Off-site storytimes
      - New Book Drop locations
    - Reaching currently underserved demographics
      - Senior Citizens
        - Tech Classes
        - Donations of collection materials
      - Intergenerational programs - example: greeting cards from teens
  - Create comprehensive Social Media and Marketing Plan with the goals of
    - Increase of 10% in followers social media
    - Consistent posting schedule based on viewing statistics
    - Yearly physical mailer
- **Technology and STEM**
  - Technology for in-house use including chromebooks/laptops and power banks
  - Mobile Learning Equipment for Outreach
  - Digitization of Historical and Local Interest materials
  - Replace receipt printers
  - New OPAC for Children's Room
  - Increase in STEM Program for youth
  - Increase in technology programs for adults and seniors
- **Programming**
  - Continue increase in programming for adults with a focus on staff-led and presenter-led art
  - Create a structured and robust teen volunteer program
  - Partner with local businesses and organizations to provide programming for
    - Business management
    - Health and Wellness
    - Local and State History
- **Library Space Improvements**
  - Redesign of backroom staff space
  - Increased/updated storage for programming and outreach supplies
  - Survey of patron use of computer and study space
  - Continuing collection shifting and increase in display/collection visibility
    - Review and update of World Languages Collection
- **Professional Development**
  - Extensive Onboarding and Training Plan for all staff
    - Opportunity for FT professional staff to attend state and national conferences
    - Opportunity for PT staff to attend workshops and webinars
    - Staff speakers for development days on topics including deescalation and workplace safety
  - Update employee handbook and procedures

2027 Budget Preparation Timeline

Oct '26

- Draft 2027 Budget
  - Input and Feedback from Staff and Finance Committee
  - Meet with Town CFO, final millrate and "Library Contribution" Costs

Nov '26

- Present Draft Budget to BOD
- Revise Budget as necessary

Dec '26

- Bring Budget to BOD for Approval

Jan '27

- Revise and bring back to BOD for Approval if necessary

1H27

- Strategic and Capital Planning

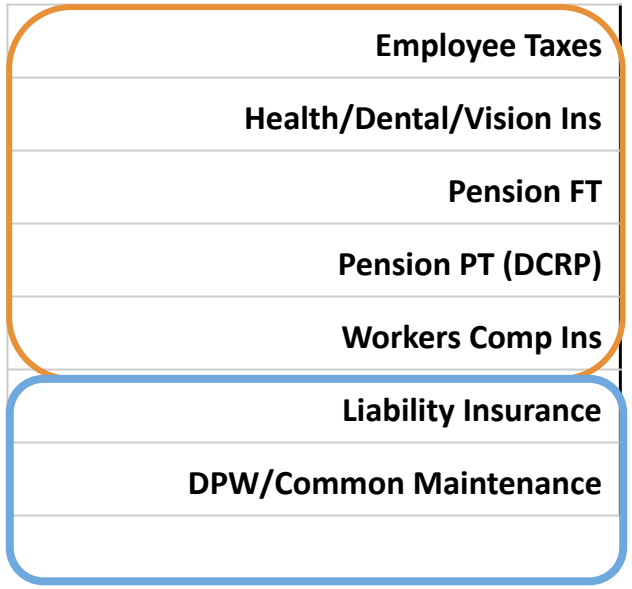
Historical Expense Categorization:

Three main categories have been historically used to divide the Library Operating Budget.

- Salaries and Wages
- Library Contribution*
- Operational Expenses

* Library Contribution was also referred to as “Expenses Paid by Township of Berkeley Heights” or similar terminology.

Breakdown of “Library Contribution Costs”



Employee Related Costs

Operational Costs

90% of “Library Contribution Costs” are employee related expenses

For the 2027 proposal is to separate these costs Employee Taxes and Benefits and Operational Costs Categories

2027 Main Expense Categories :

- **Salaries and Wages**
- **Employee Taxes and Benefit**
- **Operational Expenses** will include
  - Liability Insurance
  - DPW/Common Maintenance

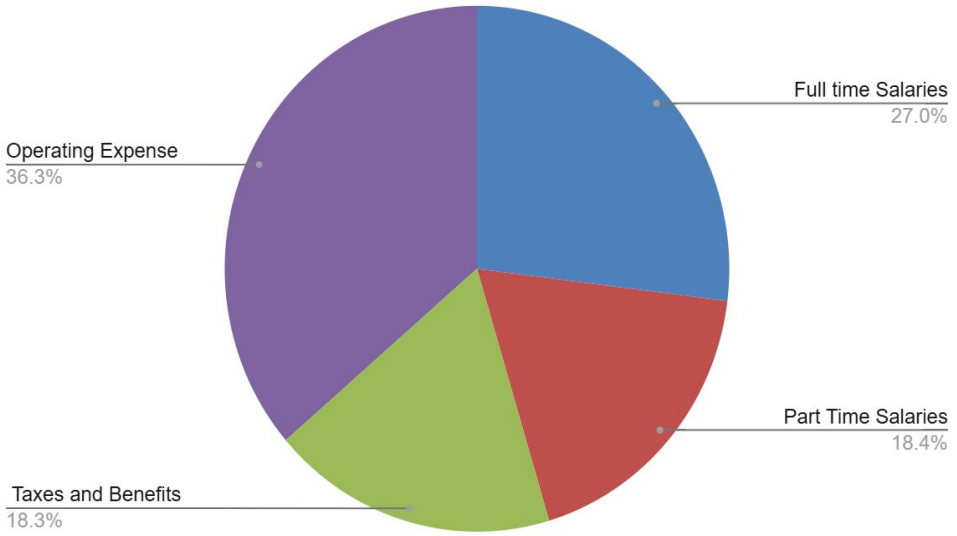
Downside of this approach is comparisons of budget from previous years.

2026 FY Projected* Spend

	2026 Budget	2026 Projected	2026 Budget v Projected
Millrate	1,737,236	1,737,236	0.0%
State Aid	7,500	7,500	0.0%
Misc. Income	8,500	10,558	24.2%
Total Income	**1,753,236**	**1,755,294**	**0.1%**
Salaries/Wages	872700	702,000	-19.6%
Full time Salaries	499300	417,000	-16.5%
Part Time Salaries	373400	285,000	-23.7%
Employee Taxes and Benefits	270,000	270,802	0.3%
Operational Expense	658,500	568,498	-13.7%
Total Operating Expense	**1,801,200**	**1,541,300**	**-14.4%**

- **Under Spend in 2026 driven by:**
  - **Delay in hiring**
  - **Staff Turnover**
  - **Limited Project Spend**
  - **≈14% underspend of Opex**
- **With new Director and FT staffing level by end of Nov,**
  - FY Salaries ≈ $ 866 K
- **Employee Costs ≈ 64% of Projected Spend**
  - ALA guidance is 67% of Library Spend should be on personnel costs
- **Taxes and Benefits: +≈ 40% of Salary/Wages**

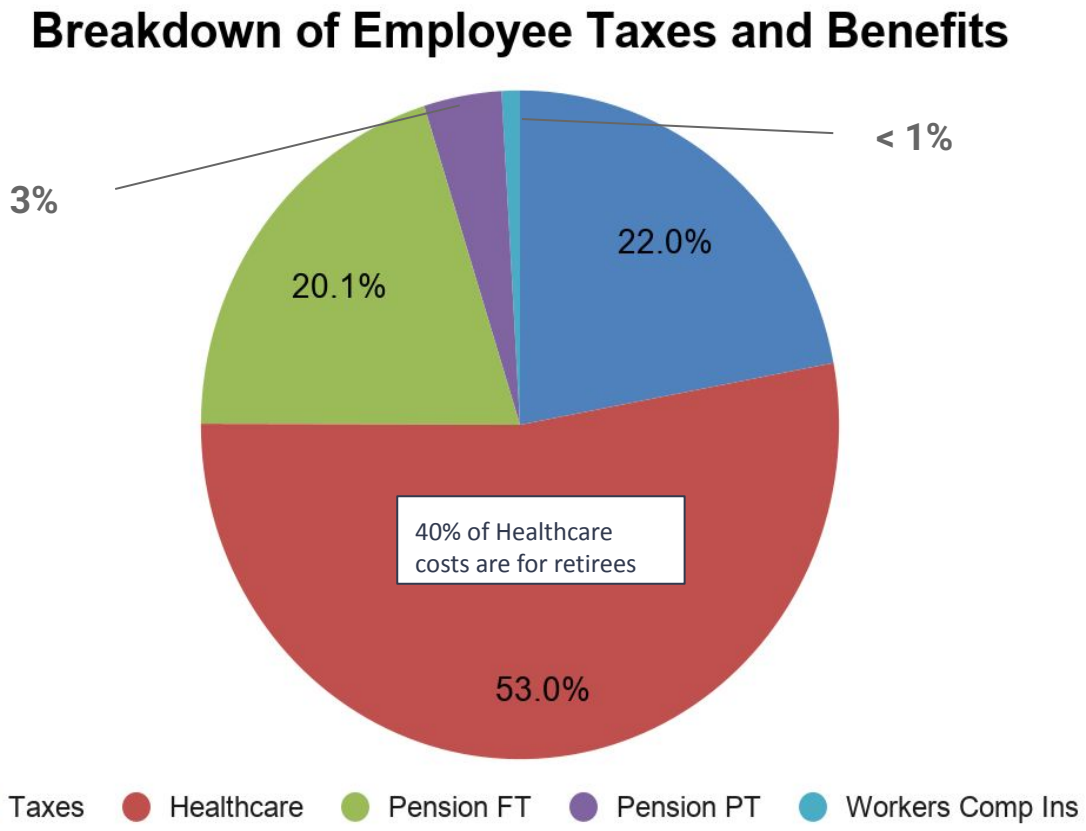
2026 Budget Breakdown (Projected FY Spend)



* Estimated full year 2026 spend based on actual 2026 spending levels through 3Q26

2026 Employee Taxes and Benefits Review

Projected	2026
Taxes	59,670
Healthcare	143,570
Pension FT	54,403
Pension PT	10,659
Workers Comp Ins	2,500
Total	270,802



- Health Benefits significant portion of employee benefits costs.
- Retirees Health Benefits are 40% of this total Health Benefits Cost
- Healthcare costs have escalated in recent years and is projected to increase 13-15% in 2027

2027 Proposed Operating Budget

	2026 Budget	2026 Projected	2027 Budget	YOY 2026 Projected v 2027 Budget	YOY 2026 Budget v 2027 Budget
Millrate	1,737,236	1,737,236	1,825,725	5.1%	5.1%
State Aid	7,500	7,500	7,500	0.0%	0.0%
Misc. Income	8,500	10,558	9,000	-14.8%	5.9%
Total Income	**1,753,236**	**1,755,294**	**1,842,225**	**5.0%**	**5.1%**
Salaries/Wages	872700	702,000	878,000	25.1%	0.6%
Full time Salaries	499300	417,000	583,000	39.8%	16.8%
Part Time Salaries	373400	285,000	295000	3.5%	-21.0%
Employee Taxes and Benefits	270,000	270,802	358,163	32.3%	32.7%
Operational Expense	658,500	568,498	616,922	8.5%	-6.3%
Total Operating Expense	**1,801,200**	**1,541,300**	**1,853,085**	**20.2%**	**2.9%**

- **FT Employee related cost driving ≈85% of increase in 2027 Budget**
  - With new Director and FT staff level by end of Nov. FY Salaries $ 866 K
  - Budget reflects a 3.5% salary increase.
- **Operating Expenses costs driving ≈ 15% of increase in 2027**
- **Employee Related Costs are 67% of Budget**
- **≈ 32% increase in taxes and benefits cost**

2027 Operational Expense Budget Detail

Operational Expenses	616,922
BOOKS	72,000
DIGITAL MATERIALS	75,000
A-V MATERIALS	900
PERIODICALS & SUBSCRIPTIONS	36,000
DATABASE	18,000
CONSORTIUM	10,000
PROGRAMS	25,200
SUMMER READING	9,000
MUSEUM PASSES	7,650
LIBRARY OF THINGS	2,700

cont.

FACILITIES	25,000
UTILITIES	52,500
XEROX SERVICE	5,400
DELIVERY	1,800
SUPPLIES	26,800
POSTAGE	900
MARKETING AND OUTREACH	12,000
TECH & EQUIPMENT	49,500
LIBRARY IMPROVEMENTS	30,000
MEMBERSHIPS	4,500
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	25,000
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	70,000
Liability Insurance	37,272
DPW/Common Maintenance	19,800

2027 Proposed Capital Spending

Capital Project Spending	
Accessibility Door	40,000
Badge Readers	25,000
Security Cameras	35,000
Office Space Redesign	100,000
Total Capital Spend	200,000

- **2027 Capital Project Spending will be funded from Capital Reserve Account**
  - (Capital Reserve balance of ≈$700K)
- **Each capital project must come to the Board for approval prior to committing any funds.**
  - Board to approved project scope, cost, plan and schedule.

Next Steps:

Integrate feedback from Board

Minor adjustments based on 4Q26 Actual spend

Follow-up with township on DPW/Maintenance Estimate and Worker’s Comp Insurance

Determine if “reserve” funding is required for unused sick pay, FT Pension obligations and retiree Healthcare

Confirm Staffing Plan and Organizational Chart with Personnel Committee

Questions?