Kimball Public Library in Randolph does not have a mechanical ventilation system. This is a serious problem for the community because the 120 year-old building has been closed to the public since November 2021. The advent of cold weather coincided with ever-increasing transmission rates of COVID in the community. We cannot simultaneously provide sufficient ventilation to protect community well-being by keeping windows open, and adequately heat the 4000 square foot space. Library staff have worked extremely hard to maximize low- and no-contact services to the community, and in fact have increased the number of hours we provide services. However, nothing replaces the value of being *in* the library: serendipitous meetings with friends and neighbors that support social well-being; browsing the collection; accessing technology (from the photocopier/scanner to computers to wireless internet in a warm sheltered location); partaking of after-school services; and participating in face-to-face programs, both library- and community-designed.

We are eager to re-open the building in April, as the weather warms just enough for us to both ventilate and heat the building. Looking ahead to next autumn and winter, we absolutely must solve our ventilation problem. Closing Kimball Library to the public was the best choice before us, but it was a terrible one to have to make.

Amy Grasmick, Director

Kimball Public Library

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