

## MINUTES

Warren County Library Commission

APRIL 22, 2025

The Warren County Library Commission met in Regular Session at the Richard D. Gardner Branch, 2 Shotwell Drive, Belvidere, New Jersey on April 22, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Thomas and upon roll call, the following members were present: Chairperson Liza Thomas, Vice Chairperson Cathleen Gerkhardt, Recording Secretary Deborah Pasquarelli, Ruth Kanyuck, and Tammy Koop. Also attending were Warren County Library Commission Attorney, Joseph Bell IV, and Library Director, Jill Butcher. There were approximately 45 members of the public in attendance, and the meeting was viewable in real-time via Zoom.

After leading the flag salute, Ms. Thomas confirmed that notice of this meeting was in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

### APPROVAL of MINUTES

On motion by Ms. Pasquarelli, seconded by Ms. Kanyuck, the minutes of Regular Session of March 25, 2025, were approved.

Recorded Vote: Ms. Gerkhardt, absent; Ms. Kanyuck, Yes; Ms. Koop, Yes;  
Ms. Pasquarelli, Yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

### FINANCIAL RESOLUTION

#### RESOLUTION 2025-F-05

On motion by Ms. Pasquarelli, seconded by Ms. Thomas, the Resolution to pay bills in the amount of \$227,602.05 was approved.

Recorded Vote: Ms. Gerkhardt, Yes; Ms. Kanyuck, Yes; Ms. Koop, Yes;  
Ms. Pasquarelli, Yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

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Communications from Commission    None

### PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda Items Only)

Kelley Nemeckay – White Township -

- a. Questioned what the CLARS resolution was, and
- b. Asked about the status of the By-Laws. Suggested taking applicable experience and background into account.
- c. Commented regarding streaming recordings and posting Zoom recordings.

Paul Eskola – Allamuchy –

Asked if the bylaws will be posted before or after they're approved.

### OLD BUSINESS

- a. Regarding the status of Library Commission By-Laws, the subcommittee members stated they were working on the revisions. A draft will hopefully be available at the next meeting.
- b. The Director reported the quote, which County IT department received for equipment and software for streaming and recording Library Commission meetings, was approximately \$45,000. In the meantime, Zoom will continue to be used.

### NEW BUSINESS

- a. Director Butcher introduced a draft policy for Small Group Rooms. The Library Commission approved the policy.
- b.

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### RESOLUTION 2025--06

On motion by Ms. Gerhardt, seconded by Ms. Koop, the Resolution to adopt the Small Group Rooms at CDH Policy was approved.

Recorded Vote: Ms. Gerhardt, absent; Ms. Kanyuck, Yes; Ms. Koop, Yes;  
Ms. Pasquarelli, Yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

### RESOLUTIONS

- a. Director Butcher requested a resolution approving the extension of CLARS (County Library Access & Resource Sharing). The Library Commission approved the extension.

### RESOLUTION 2025--05

On motion by Ms. Pasquarelli, seconded by Ms. Kanyuck, the Resolution to extend CLARS Reciprocal Borrowing was approved.

Recorded Vote: Ms. Gerhardt, absent; Ms. Kanyuck, Yes; Ms. Koop, Yes;  
Ms. Pasquarelli, Yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

### REPORTS AND COMMENTS

See attached Library Director's Report submitted by Jill Butcher.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS      None.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS

Glenn Epps – Phillipsburg – Asked what the purpose was for updating the by-laws, service sharing with Phillipsburg Library, some programs, and the IMLS.

Susan Nordell – Belvidere – Questioned why Library Commission members did not attend any of the Makers Day events. Said appointments should be based on experience and merit.

Paul Eskola – Allamuchy – Asked about the new catalog, joining MAIN, federal funds for libraries, and qualifications for WCLC applicants.

Julie Budzinski-Flores – Hope – Questioned why an attorney was needed at all meetings, especially with the potential loss of federal funding.

Evie Roderer – Greenwich Twp. – Spoke about elections have consequences, diversity, and librarians having ALA training.

Teresa Esposito Jackson – Washington Twp. – Asked the Commission to do their due diligence and provide answers to the public's questions.

Ellen Schiller – Blairstown – Stated she doesn't think it's a necessary expense to have an attorney at every meeting with the potential financial loss we are facing.

Glenn Epps – Phillipsburg – Stated he is a reporter for the Express-Times, and asked more questions about programs.

Kelley Nemeckay – White Twp. – Spoke of her personal experiences as a child regarding sexual harassment and assault, and that having access to books, which some Commission members have called obscene, would have benefitted her.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

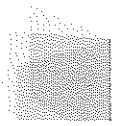
On motion by Ms. Gerhardt, seconded by Ms. Koop, and there being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of the Warren County Library Commission minutes of the date above mentioned.

Deborah A. Pasquarelli 6/25/25

Deborah Pasquarelli  
Recording Secretary

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# WARREN COUNTY LIBRARY

## Director's Report April 2025

Program attendance continues to be high. Laura Goldner and Kim Urban, who search for new and unique programs, are doing a wonderful job of finding programs that appeal to the community. During the local schools' Spring Breaks, when we know we have a captive audience, they scheduled programs with an inflatable planetarium, Earth Day crafts, sensory science snacks, Bad Art Nite, and a community drum circle.

Our annual summer reading program bookmark contest is underway. Each year we invite children to design a bookmark related to the program's theme. The 2026 summer reading theme is Color Our World. The Friends of the Library and CDH Trustees then vote for their favorite bookmarks for different age categories. We reproduce the winning bookmarks and hand them out to patrons all summer long. In response to patrons' feedback last year, we added an adult category for the bookmark contest this year.

The County confirmed the official reopening of the Catherine Dickson Hofman Branch to the public is Saturday, May 10. The CDH Trustees are providing refreshments, a local guitarist will be performing, attendees can enter to win prize baskets, and extra staff will be working to welcome back our patrons. Mark Povilaitis, our driver extraordinaire, has been moving items in storage back to CDH every day for the past 3 weeks. He has also assembled various numerous pieces of furniture for us. Approximately 70% of CDH's collection has already been re-shelved by the book moving company. Kelly Durkin, the branch manager, is overseeing the re-shelving of the rest of their collection, which is being done by our staff.

We continue to struggle with our staffing levels. The Southwest Branch is the only branch fully staffed, when as of this Thursday a new hire starts. In the next few months, we are anticipating two retirements and two resignations, along with at least one medical leave. Branch managers have been interviewing candidates to fill part-time library assistant positions. However, candidates have turned us down due to the pay rate and having to work on Saturdays and evenings. We are without a branch manager at the Gardner Branch now that Kelly Durkin has returned to CDH. Our job postings for that position have not yet resulted in any qualified candidates.

At the end of March, most of the staff with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) were placed on administrative leave. The NJ General Attorney's Office has joined 20 other states in filing a lawsuit against the Trump administration to block dismantling the IMLS. At this time, I do not have an update from the NJ State Library as to what services will potentially be cut. They continue to work on prioritizing services in the event they do not receive their annual State Grant from the IMLS. By joining MAIN, we are in a better situation than many NJ libraries in terms of handling any potential cuts. We have access to a large number of materials and buying power when it comes to negotiating prices for database access.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Jill E. Butcher*  
Director