

MINUTES

Warren County Library Commission

MAY 27, 2025

The Warren County Library Commission met in Regular Session at the Richard D. Gardner Branch, 2 Shotwell Drive, Belvidere, New Jersey on May 27, 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, Ruth Kanyuck, and Tammy Koop. (Recording Secretary Deborah Pasquarelli arrived at approximately 5:43 p.m.) Also attending were Warren County Library Commission Attorney, Joseph Bell IV, and Library Director, Jill Butcher. There were approximately 17 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. Koop, seconded by Ms. Gerkhardt, the minutes of Regular Session of April 22, 2025, were approved.

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

FINANCIAL RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION 2025-F-06

On motion by Ms. Gerkhardt, seconded by Ms. Koop, the Resolution to pay bills in the amount of \$192,107.16 was approved.

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

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Communications from Commission None

PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda Items Only) None

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Regarding the status of Library Commission By-Laws, the subcommittee members stated they were still working on it. A draft will hopefully be available at the next meeting.
- b. The Director confirmed with the Members how they wanted the recorded meetings posted on our website. It was agreed that the Zoom Recorded meetings would be posted on our website starting with this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

RESOLUTIONS

None.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

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

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS None.

None.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mary Ann Boyd – Knowlton Twp. – Asked in what ways can she find about the programs that are available. She was informed that the library website calendar was always available, she could sign up for the email newsletter, and also pick up a printed calendar of events at each branch.

Shelley Harvey – Frelinghuysen Twp. – Asked if the draft of the by-laws will be available to the public before being voted on. She suggested allowing time to get public feedback.

Jim Goodwin – Washington Twp. – Suggested it would save money to not have an attorney at all meetings.

Ellen Schiller – Blairstown Twp. – Asked how much the attorney's fees are per meeting. She also said the by-laws should be made available for public input before the members vote on them.

Judy McDonnell – Liberty Twp. – Stated she thought the reason for the attorney was because of the issue of child pornography that was brought up two years ago.

Teresa Esposito Jackson – Washington Twp. – Spoke of the prior attorney only being present at meeting when there was an issue.

Sandy Roberts – Blairstown Twp. – She is glad the by-laws are being worked on. She hopes the Commission would make them available for public input before voting.

Kelley Nemeckay – White Twp. – Spoke of staffing at the branches, how much work goes into making programs happen, and her support of using paper logs for summer reading.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

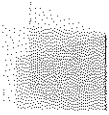
On motion by Ms. Pasquarelli, seconded by Ms. Kanyuck, and there being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

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



Deborah Pasquarelli
Recording Secretary

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WARREN COUNTY LIBRARY

Director's Report May 2025

The Catherine Dickson Hofman Branch reopened to the public on May 10. Over 500 people visited the branch that day and enjoyed live guitar music, refreshments, a scavenger hunt, and crafts for children. For four hours straight, there were 2-3 lines at the circulation desk with people registering for new cards, renewing their cards, and checking out materials. Door counts have remained high during the first two weeks of their reopening with many families with young children discovering what we have to offer. The children's area with the boat, early literacy computers, and Lego cart has been very popular.

We have completed three full weeks with our new computer system, Koha. Staff definitely have down the basics of checking out, checking in, pulling the holds list, and creating new accounts down. We are now delving further into more advanced topics such as adding magazine issues and new items to records along with batch modifications and deletions. Additionally, we continue to work on cleaning up patron and item record data that didn't transfer properly. The staff at the Gardner Branch has been doing a tremendous job handling the deluge of items coming from the other MAIN libraries. We had a backlog of holds from our old system with which we have been catching up on in Koha.

For over 15 years, we have created goodie bags to hand out during kindergarten orientations at local schools. Michele Bond, our youth services librarian, is continuing this project and has already begun dropping off bags and handing them out at kindergarten orientations. The bags contain books about the first day of school, coloring and writing workbooks, crayons, pencils, bookmarks, reading lists, and library brochures. This has been a wonderful outreach project, which we enjoy as much as the parents and children.

Jen Nelson, the NJ State Librarian, was notified that NJ's IMLS Grants to States award for 2025 will be 50% of last year or approximately \$2.25 million. She said there has been no further information as to whether or not the remaining 50% will be allocated. The State Library has begun planning for 2026 with this reduction in mind, but they are not speculating as to what programs and services will be impacted. With this reduction, MAIN is anticipating membership fees will increase next year, and LibraryLinkNJ is proposing a 10% increase in delivery fees.

Our summer reading program kicks off on June 16. This year's theme is Color Our World. Staff has been scheduling and creating various programs for all ages to inspire creativity and imagination through art. We are again using paper reading logs, which patrons use to track their reading. The simplicity of the paper logs, which we went back to last summer, made it easier for patrons to take part in the program and helped contribute to our increased participation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill E. Butcher

Director