

MINUTES

Warren County Library Commission

JUNE 24, 2025

The Warren County Library Commission met in Regular Session at the Richard D. Gardner Branch, 2 Shotwell Drive, Belvidere, New Jersey on June 24, 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 5:40 p.m.) Also attending were Warren County Library Commission Attorney, Joseph Bell IV, and Library Director, Jill Butcher. There were approximately 35 members of the public in attendance, and the meeting was not able to be viewed remotely due to electronic device issues.

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 May 27, 2025, were approved.

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

FINANCIAL RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION 2025-F-07

On motion by Ms. Gerkhardt, seconded by Ms. Koop, the Resolution to pay bills in the amount of \$140,450.25 was approved.

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

MINUTES

Warren County Library Commission

JUNE 24, 2025

Communications from Commission Ms. Thomas reminded everyone this was the last meeting until September. Ms. Kanyuk brought up the e-rate grant program that she helped get started by working through the County IT department. She stated that it is saving \$5,000 annually and is in place from 7/2025 through 6/2026.

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 is in review.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

RESOLUTIONS

None.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

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

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sue Nordell – White Twp. – Asked about the grant money from the E-rate program.

Judy McDonnell – Liberty Twp. – Asked about the Freedom to Read Act protecting the Library Commission, and paying annual ALA and NJLA fees.

Monica Scott – Lopatcong Twp.- Stated there are professional organizations for many professions, which provide standards for their respective fields. Talked about their being choices in America and everyone being able to make their own choice.

Kaitlin McShane – Blairstown Twp.- Mentioned that professional organizations are used for networking. Said she thought there was a lawyer in attendance at these meetings to answer First Amendment rights questions.

Ellen Schiller – Blairstown Twp. – Stated she is happy that CDH is open again, but questioned the cost.

Pamela Keane – Independence Twp. – Stated she is interested in the books being questioned and hopes professional librarians are making the book buying decisions.

Meryl Barny-McGinley- Harmony Twp.- Expressed her concerns that members of the Library Commission are not impartial nor do they acknowledge the public's comments.

Shelley Harvey – Frelinghuysen Twp. – Expressed her belief that parents should decide what is appropriate for their children and not the Library Commission.

MINUTES

Warren County Library Commission

JUNE 24, 2025

Judy Freger – Hackettstown – Stated that when you only look at sections of a book, you're not going to understand the context. She believes libraries need a variety of books for their variety of patrons.

Don – White Twp. – Questioned books being discarded and expressed his displeasure.

Teresa Esposito Jackson – Washington Twp. – Stated there is a lot of mis-information going around and that book discards go to the Friends of the Library for their book sale. Expressed her concern that the library is losing talented staff.

Kelley Nemeckay – White Twp. – She took part in the summer reading kick off at RDG, which she thought was a tremendous success. She thanked the staff for their hard work and support.

Sandy Roberts – Blairstown Twp. – Stated she sees the library as a blessing for her family, and that having sex education books is important.

Sara Hare – Hope Twp. – Stated that the Library Commission's support of booklooks.org was part of what upset the public.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Ms. Thomas, seconded by Ms. Kanyuck, and there being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

MINUTES

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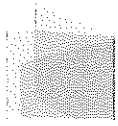
JUNE 24, 2025

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 June 2025

The summer reading program, Color Our World, kicked off Monday, June 16. In the first week, we distributed more than 1300 reading logs to patrons of all ages. As we anticipated, feedback about using paper reading logs has been overwhelmingly positive. Three branches have held their kickoff parties with face painting, cotton candy, ice pops, crafts, sidewalk chalk art, and dancing. They were very well attended with 190 people showing up at the Northeast Branch and people having to park on the grass at CDH. The Southwest Branch is holding their party tomorrow and it features a bubble show with giant bubbles, bouncing bubbles, smoke in a bubble, and a kid in a bubble.

Courtney Butrymowicz, our Librarian 1, will be representing the library at the County's Bicentennial Celebration this Saturday. She has created a display with Then and Now photos showcasing changes in county locations throughout the years. There will also be a Warren County trivia contest display in addition to informational brochures and free giveaways. Using a laptop and hotspot, she plans to register new patrons for library cards.

The NJ State Librarian, Jen Nelson, has reported that NJ will receive their total allotment of the IMLS Grants to States for 2025. States whose Attorney Generals joined the lawsuit to stop the dismantling of the IMLS are receiving their full amount for this year. Fortunately for us, NJ's Attorney General had joined this lawsuit. Ms. Nelson said at the moment, the State Library's concern is the 2026 budget. They continue to work on contingency plans if funding is reduced next year.

The NJ State Library informed us that access to the JerseyClicks electronic resources has been extended for 3 months until September 30th. This includes the many research databases provided to us at no cost such as Peterson's Test & Career Prep, NovelList, Data Axle Business Research and HeritageQuest. We will learn more about further extensions and/or renewals of these resources once the State Library has more information about the state budget. We are appreciative to have continued access to these valuable resources for at least the next few months.

We have two upcoming retirements this summer. Lorraine Bloom, from our Northeast Branch, has been with us 17 years. We are going to greatly miss her excellent customer service skills and connections with the Northeast community. We are also losing our Administrative Secretary, Meryl Barny-McGinley, who has transformed and streamlined our administrative tasks and adapted to many changes over the last 8 years. Finally, our information technology staff member, Mark Stutzman, has resigned. The County anticipates we will not rehire for this position, but will instead refer our technology and equipment questions to the County IT Department. On behalf of our entire staff, I wish them all well in their future adventures.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill E. Butcher

Director