



WARREN COUNTY LIBRARY

Warren County Library Commission
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VIRTUAL Session – APRIL 23, 2020

The Warren County Library Commission met in virtual session at 5:30 p.m. on April 23, 2020 via Zoom due to the COVID-19 distancing requirements.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Alice A. Mollitor and upon roll call, the following members were present:

Present:	Alice Mollitor Henry A. Newbold Marilynn A. Barone Virginia R. Rutledge
Absent:	Patricia A. Rokosz
Administration:	Maureen Baker Wilkinson, Library Director Jill Butcher, Assistant Director

Chairperson, Alice A. Mollitor opened with the Notice of the Open Public Meetings Act for a virtual meeting at 5:35.

Director's Report – The director gave the Commission a status report. Please see Director's Report attached.

Public Comment - None.

Executive Session - Not required.

Adjournment

There being no further business, on motion of Alice Mollitor, seconded by Virginia Rutledge, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.; motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

Attested to:

Henry A. Newbold, Recording Secretary



WARREN COUNTY LIBRARY

Director's Report April 2020

The last couple of months have meant a continual evolution of how we do business.

It began with orders to eliminate meetings and programs at the library, implementing social distancing, and eventually closing our buildings.

Staff had less than a day to close the buildings. We canceled newspapers and magazines and stopped deliveries of books by contacting our vendors. We terminated automated services, such as overdue notices and fines, emptied refrigerators, and took library plants to our homes.

We were able to quickly configure the manager's laptops with remote access into their work computer and library software.

Administration staff was allowed to re-enter the Headquarters Branch after it was cleaned to process orders and payments of bills and to enter payroll.

Once closed, the management team began regular online meetings to discuss how we could provide service to our members. We established a rotating schedule to answer questions on our "As a question" service and to renew and issue library cards.

We increased the number of Hoopla circulations and purchased additional content for our CloudLibrary eBook and eAudio service.

We started new webpages with COVID-19 information and curated lists of learning and free entertainment websites. Vendors of online library services offered free or expanded access to their products, and we updated our website to list these offerings.

We prioritized communication with our members. We moved our online newsletter mailing list to a different product to facilitate the distribution of program fliers. Front line staff began calling members to let them know about our online services. Our Facebook page and YouTube channels are being used to deliver live and recorded content.

Staff is using online meetings, texting, email, and phone calls to keep information flowing. The management team meets three times a week, and branch and department staff are meeting weekly. We have started holding system-wide Zoom Meet-ups (scheduled for once a week) to allow staff to see each other, and catch up on personal and work news.

We have addressed the need for public internet access by relocating our WiFi access points to extend the service outside of our branches. We are looking at using our van to provide a rotating community hotspot in communities without a library branch.

Ten staff members are working from home using VOIP phones to book appointments for COVID-19 testing at the County test site (at VoTech School).

The staff has stepped up to the challenge of delivering online library programs and instructional content by learning to use a variety of technologies and services to create content. One staff member secured 200 free WeVideo licenses for creating and editing content.

We are currently offering storytimes, maker activities, book discussion groups, videogame tournaments, craft programs, and job assistance. Some branches are bringing members who attend regular group programs together for social interaction.

Some performers are offering online versions of programs, and we have booked several of these programs. (ScienceTellers, Jamie Novak)

Our 3D printer and Silhouette machine are being used to create face shields and other items related to PPE. Several staff members are using their personal time to sew facemasks for donation to hospitals, nursing homes, and first responders.

We have established a mail service for the delivery of materials to our homebound members. Members will keep mailed items until we re-open.

We have used our time to catch up on IT installations (new staff computers) and upgrades (computer time print management) and services (final approvals for our library app).

Staff is attending online training opportunities and webinars, and we are rolling out system-wide staff training through weekly assignments.

The management staff is considering how we can enhance our services in a new reality. We are trying to add Kanopy (movie/documentary service) as a service. We have contracted with an online summer reading/reading challenge service (BeanStack) to replace the in-person/printed booklets we have used in the past. Canva (software for promotional materials, source of pictures) has been ordered for all branches to allow us to create a greater variety of electronic promotions.

Discussion of a re-opening plan has started and I will be a member of a LLNJ committee that will be gathering information and creating recommended procedures for the transition of re-opening in this new environment.

The Warren County Library staff have done an outstanding job through these troubling times.

Each day I am amazed at the innovation, creativity, and commitment of the staff. They are continually trying new things and working as one unit to provide service to our members. Ideas and solutions are shared, and help is always available. They have become performers, teachers, and editors using technology they had never used a few weeks ago. They have dared to go online live, and sing to a non-existent audience.

Our community is overwhelmed by our compassion and agility to respond to this crisis. The personal connection staff makes with our members is reflected through their calls, the extra mile when they answer a question or help someone access a resource, or when they create a program with their familiar smiling face. This connection is our "superpower," and our staff is using it to make Warren County a little brighter in these dark times.



Submitted by
Maureen Baker Wilkinson
Library Director