



WARREN COUNTY LIBRARY

Warren County Library Commission
2 Shotwell Drive, Belvidere NJ 07823
P: 908-475-6320 | www.warrenlib.org

Regular Session – October 26, 2023

The Warren County Library Commission met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. on October 26, 2023.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Henry Newbold, and upon roll call, the following members were present:

Present: Henry A. Newbold
Patricia A. Rokosz
Marilynn A. Barone
Alice Mollitor

Administration: Maureen Baker Wilkinson, Library Director
Jill Butcher, Assistant Director

Virtually: Lori Ciesla, County Commissioner, Library Liaison

Chairperson, Henry A. Newbold stated that notice of the meeting had been properly advertised in the Star-Ledger and the Daily Record, and a notice had been sent to the Warren County Clerk’s Office.

Minutes

On motion by Ms. Mollitor, seconded by Ms. Rokosz, the Minutes of the June 22, 2023 regular session, were approved.

| Voting Member | Aye | Nay | Abstain |
|---------------|-----|-----|---------|
| Mr. Newbold | X | | |
| Ms. Barone | X | | |
| Ms. Rokosz | X | | |
| Ms. Mollitor | X | | |

Chairperson

Recording Secretary

Vice Chairperson

On motion by Ms. Barone, seconded by Ms. Mollitor, the Minutes of the August 17, 2023 Special Meeting session, were approved.

| Voting Member | Aye | Nay | Abstain | |
|---------------|-----|-----|---------|---------------------|
| Mr. Newbold | X | | | Chairperson |
| Ms. Barone | X | | | Recording Secretary |
| Ms. Rokosz | X | | | |
| Ms. Mollitor | X | | | Vice Chairperson |

Budget & Program Reports

Ms. Rokosz had a couple questions related to some of the expenses, and they were discussed and answered. No further follow up needed.

Communications – None

Public Comment – Agenda Items Only - None.

Old Business -

- CDH Construction Status. Covered in the Director’s Report.

New Business -

- County Library Reciprocal Borrowing Agreement. Covered in the Director’s Report.

Director’s Report – October 2023 attached

Closing Public Comment -

Two members of the public attended the meeting. Liza Thomas and Judy McDonnell

Liza Thomas, following up on the matter of her Resource Concern Form, wanted to know since she formally withdrew the complaint, if she needed to wait the 3 year period before being able to submit another. She also questioned when the attorney would be attending the meeting. Director Wilkinson stated that the attorney was in the process of doing legal review of policies and would be asked to attend a future meeting if necessary.

Judy McDonnell asked if we were bound by any law to be associated with the ALA or the NJLA. Director Wilkinson stated that there is no law. These are memberships that do give us access to some benefits of educational training and webinars.

Liza Thomas asked if we knew of the World Library Association, as an alternative to the ALA. She also requested that the minutes of the May meeting be amended, as she felt that they did not quote her acceptably.

Executive Session –None.

Adjournment

There being no further business for the regular session, on motion of Mr. Newbold, seconded by Ms. Barone, the Regular meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m., motion carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. to be held at the Richard D Gardner Branch of the Warren County Library with a virtual link also available on the Library website calendar.

Attested to:



Marilynn A. Barone , Recording Secretary

MAB/mbm



WARREN COUNTY LIBRARY

Director's Report – October 2023

The Catherine Dickson Hofman Branch officially closed on Friday, October 6, and the move-out began on Tuesday, October 10. We are currently moving the last items we are saving from the branch. Consumable items are being moved to the RDG branch and distributed to other branches when they need these supplies. We have transferred some furniture, which will be reused in the renovated branch, to the SW storage area, while other pieces have found a home in different branches. Any furniture not reused by the library will be available to other county departments. We anticipate all items to be retained by the library will be out of the building by the end of the week.

We have been able to open the Lobby Service at the Blairstown Municipal Building this week. The service is a throwback to early COVID-19 practices and provides for returning library materials and checkout of arrived items placed on hold by members. We have a 9x9-foot space at the entrance of the municipal building that is next to the exterior door. We are staffing this space five days a week, with one staff person (7-hour day). We borrowed two locking metal cabinets from another branch to store books and the staff's computer equipment. Staff must set up and dismantle the computer, printer, scanner, and RFID pad at the beginning and end of each day. Due to space constraints, all returned items (3-4 bins per day) are collected and sent to another branch for check-in. Items on hold for Blairstown members are then moved back to the Municipal Building and checked in again to generate the member's "arrived hold" emails or text messages. CDH had four thousand library items circulating when the branch closed, and these items are being stored at other branches when returned until we set up some shelving in the SW storage area. We have gained new insights into the circulation rules and how they work (or don't) and found creative ways to achieve the desired outcome. It would have been a straightforward process if we had not decided to move parts of the CDH collection into other branches. We do not regret the extra work required to do this since we have been able to keep high-demand items available to our members while CDH is closed.

The Lobby Service provides limited library access to our members, and we have already heard complaints (too far to go to other libraries, lack of browsing collection). Statistically, only 27% of our library circulations are items placed on hold (73% of borrowed items are from browsing). We saw this pattern during COVID-19 and engaged in an education program to teach people how to use our online catalog and services. While some services saw increased use (digital content, self-checkout), browsing remains the popular way of interacting with the physical collection.

Unlike our previous library renovation projects, CDH will be closed for 1-2 years (we have yet to receive a construction schedule). CDH is our second-busiest location, with a highly engaged membership (power users) unlikely to use other library facilities in our County. In-library services such as copying, printing, faxing, and WiFi are used frequently since alternative service options do not exist or are unreliable/slow

(WiFi). We have been investigating rental options in the community for a small service point with additional services; however, the options are few and often expensive. (Discussion on Agenda)

I continue to work on a parallel investigation of shared ILS (Integrated Library Software) options with MAIN and Somerset County. Both options would result in savings in comparison to our current costs. The issue becomes further complicated since Somerset is also part of the group considering a partnership with MAIN. MAIN is offering access to other software discounts. Somerset (CARL) would be the most effortless migration from our software (Products are part of the same company), and MAIN will only be deciding on the ILS or implementing the change in late 2024-2025.

We have had additional part-time staff resignations but have successfully found some new staff and potential candidates. The closing of CDH will provide extra staff time in the NE and RDG branches and alleviate the situation.

The State Library is continuing discussions on possible models for shared eBook resources. Discussions are preliminary and include concerns over the sharing of resources. While this project is unlikely to launch soon, the Directors of County Libraries hope to implement a Statewide reciprocal borrowing agreement. While not a "statewide library card" as offered in other states, implementing this agreement would create a level of service covering most of the state (assuming all Counties participate). I have indicated we are interested in participating in the pilot project starting in February 2024. (Discussion on Agenda)

Submitted by:



Maureen Baker Wilkinson
Library Director