

The Warren County Library Commission met in Regular Session in the Richard D. Gardner Branch, 2 Shotwell Drive, Belvidere, New Jersey on September 26, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chairperson Henry A. Newbold and upon roll call, the following members were present: Commission Vice Chairperson Patricia A. Rokosz, Commission Recording Secretary Alice A. Mollitor, Commission member Cathleen Gerhardt, Commission member Elizabeth Thomas. Also attending were County Commission Liaison Jason Sarnoski, Library Assistant Director Jill Butcher. There were approximately 15-20 attendees in person, and 16 via zoom.

After leading the flag salute, Mr. Newbold 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. Rokosz, seconded by Ms. Thomas, the minutes of Regular Session of June 27, 2024 were approved.

Recorded Vote: Mr. Newbold, abstain; Ms. Rokosz, yes; Ms. Mollitor, abstain; Ms. Gerhardt, yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

On motion by Ms. Rokosz, seconded by Ms. Gerhardt, the minutes of Executive Session of June 27, 2024 were approved.

Recorded Vote: Mr. Newbold, abstain; Ms. Rokosz, yes; Ms. Mollitor, abstain; Ms. Gerhardt, yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

Commission Questions regarding June, July or August Expenditures

Ms. Thomas had one question regarding the attorney payments. No other questions or comments.

Communications to Commission

The commission received communications from Mr Philip Woodridge and Ms. Sylvia Zika

Public Comment (Agenda Items Only)

Sylvia Zika asked why the public was not able to access all documents referred to in the agenda. She specifically asked about the Commission by-laws and was told they would be made available to her.

Anna Babitsky brought up a letter she emailed to the commission that was not on the agenda, or brought to the attention of the commission concerning the issue of books being banned or censored. She was informed we have had some IT issues and some of the emails sent to the commission over the previous month have not been able to be accessed. We are working on gaining access to them, will make a point of adding any such correspondence to the next agenda once we are able to access it.

Old Business

Status from By-Law Subcommittee: The sub-committee is in the process of and continuing to working on the by-laws, that were last updated in 2009.

Directors Report

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

New Business

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 2024-16

On motion by, seconded by Ms. Thomas, Seconded by Ms. Mollitor, a RESOLUTION ADOPTING RULES OF CONDUCT AND DECORUM FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS. Recorded Vote: Mr. Newbold, yes; Ms. Rokosz, yes; Ms. Mollitor, yes; Ms. Gerkhart, yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

RESOLUTION 2024-15

On motion by Mr. Newbold, seconded by Ms. Mollitor, RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE AMENDMENT TO THE LIBRARY SMALL STUDY ROOM POLICY.

Recorded Vote: Mr. Newbold, yes; Ms. Rokosz, yes; Ms. Mollitor, yes; Ms. Gerckhard, yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anna Babitsky – Hackettstown - stated her concern of books being censored. Commissioner Rokosz responded saying no changes will be made to the books or their location.

Susan Rodell – White Twp – spoke of the Rules of Conduct

GJ Attwood- Waller – Washington Twp - asked questions regarding weeding – the discarding of books, censoring and banning book issues and questioned the open-source mentioned in the Director’s report.

Tracey Heisler – Washington Twp – stating as a concerned parent, the importance of keeping politics separate.

Sylvia Zika – Blairstown – brought up the online scheduling program for the study room reservations, and her feeling about the computers in the study rooms regarding pop-ups and automatic shut downs.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Mr. Newbold, seconded by Ms. Rokosz, and there being no further business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

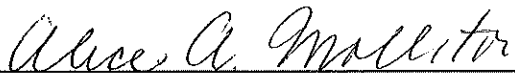
MINUTES

Warren County Library Commission

SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

POLL: Mr. Newbold, Yes;; Ms. Rokosz, Yes; , Ms. Mollitor, Yes; , Ms. Gerhardt, Yes; , Ms. Thomas, Yes.

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



Alice A. Mollitor, Recording Secretary



Assistant Director's Report September 2024

After 15 years of heading up our library system, Maureen Baker Wilkinson has retired. During her tenure, she oversaw the construction and remodeling projects for all four branches. She also helped the library further embrace modern technologies and services, especially our downloadable and streaming services, which are beloved by the public. The staff wishes her well in the next stage of her life.

The Summer Reading Program was a huge success. We had our best registration numbers and program attendance since 2013. Close to 1800 people registered for the reading program and 2900 people attended our 155 events. For the last three years, we used an online program for participants to record their reading logs. This year we went back to a straightforward paper log, which garnered an overwhelming positive response from our members. Not only did the paper log simplify the program for participants, but also for our staff.

Our new youth services coordinator, Michele Bond, started working with us this past July. She comes from the Greenwich School District. In her first two months, she has already visited a number of local schools for kindergarten orientations and back-to-school nights and scheduled class visits to the library. Michele has also revamped our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Orientation Initiative, planned STEM and Maker programs, and redone the signage in the children's room.

Over the summer, we evaluated the RFPs for our new ILS (integrated library system) along with library representatives from MAIN, Somerset County, Sussex County, and Sparta. We narrowed the choices down to four contenders and invited them for full day in-person demonstrations. Both professional and paraprofessional staff from our library attended the demonstrations and gave their feedback. The group decided to go with Bywater's Koha, which is an open source library system. We plan to receive the contract soon, but the migration to the new system won't be until next May. MAIN will be migrating first so they will hopefully be able to work out any initial issues and offer us advice.

Since the end of Summer Reading, staff has been focusing on collection development. They have been shifting collections, moving entire collections to new locations, updating the adult nonfiction collection, and expanding our read aloud books for kids. They are currently working on a major project changing the call numbers for our Easy Reader collection. The changes should help the public and staff more easily differentiate between Easy Reader books (books for children learning to read) and Easy books (picture books).

Starting this month, the County Information Systems Department is providing support for all computer systems for the library. This includes workstations for both staff and public computing, on-site and web-based applications and networking. The staff workstations will be replaced with Windows 11 workstations and the public computers will be changed over sometime next year. We have asked staff to begin reviewing online tutorials about the changes they can expect when switching from Windows 10 to Windows 11.

We are currently advertising to hire part-time library assistants for the Southwest and Northeast Branches as we had staff leave from both of those locations. In-person interviews with potential candidates have been scheduled. The branch managers and I will be conducting the interviews and also testing the candidates on basic shelving principles.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill E. Butcher
Assistant Director