

The Warren County Library Commission met in Regular Session at the Richard D. Gardner Branch, 2 Shotwell Drive, Belvidere, New Jersey on November 21, 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 Chairperson Henry A. Newbold, 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 and Library Assistant Director Jill Butcher. There were approximately 40 attendees in person, and 24 attendees 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

Ms. Thomas requested an amendment be made to her statement under Communications to indicate she made the request in response to a communication. On motion by Ms. Gerhardt, seconded by Ms. Thomas, the minutes of Regular Session Meeting of October 24, 2024, were approved as amended.

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

FINANCIAL RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION 2024-18

On motion by Ms. Rokosz, seconded by Ms. Thomas, the Resolution to pay bills was approved.

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

COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMISSION

The commission received seven (7) communications. They were asked if there were any questions or comments regarding any of these items. There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda Items Only)

Anna Babitsky, from Hackettstown, asked the Commission to reconsider posting booklooks.org as a book review site in the library.

Guy Citron, from Califon, stated booklooks.org is a crowd sourced program and should not be posted in the library.

Sandy Roberts, from Blairstown Township, said thank you to the Library Commission, Citizens, and Library staff for being present to support the role of parents, and not politicians, to make these decisions. She asked for whom the list of book review sites was intended.

Sarah Hare, from Hope Township, expressed her concerns over posting booklooks.org as a book review site.

Monica Scott, from Lopatcong Township, stated she applied for a position on the Library Commission and is hoping to hear from someone soon, and went on to give her professional opinion on booklooks.org.

Dan Kleinman, from Chatham, spoke in support of booklooks.org for safer libraries.

Philip Wooldridge, from Independence Township, thanked the Commission for considering his list of alternative book review sites. He also spoke of booklooks.org's restrictive rating system.

Viryan Hodges, from High Bridge, said that any control of books is censoring, and he expressed his concerns over booklooks.org.

Sylvia Sincaglia, from High Bridge, expressed her concerns that booklooks.org is not a reputable source for information and is not inclusive to marginalized communities.

Charles B., from Washington, said that consideration should be given as to whether the book review sources impart knowledge or information, which are two different things.

Sylvia Zika, from Blairstown Township, stated we are not in compliance with the Sunshine Law because we have not posted the financial details online with the agenda. She was informed that the County Counsel agrees the public is not entitled to something the governing body hasn't yet approved. The County Commission does not post the list of bills being paid under the resolution for the same reason. She also questioned why specific names are not listed under communications as they had been in the past. She was told the Library was following recommendations from the County Administrator.

Christopher Bauknight, from Washington, expressed his dislike of booklooks.org. He also stated that he as a parent decides what to read with his child.

OLD BUSINESS

Status from By-Law Subcommittee:

The Assistant Director reviewed and provided a draft of the by-laws.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 2024-19

Resolution to set date for Reorganization Meeting followed by the Regular Meeting on Thursday, January 2, 2025, at 5:30 pm at the Richard D Gardner Branch.

On a motion by Commission Member Thomas, seconded by Ms. Gerhardt, a resolution to set the date for the Reorganization Meeting followed by the first Regular Meeting of 2025.

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

RESOLUTION 2024-20

Resolution to close the Library for Staff Training on the new ILS that the Library is migrating to in the Spring of 2025.

On a motion by Commission Member Thomas, seconded by Ms. Rokosz, a resolution to close the Library for Staff Training on the new ILS on or about February 26, 2025, depending on availability of ByWater ILS trainers.

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

RESOLUTION 2024-21

Resolution to post a list of Book Content and Review Resources for patrons.

On a motion by Commission Member Thomas, seconded by Ms. Gerhardt, a resolution to post a list of Book Content and Review Resources in various areas of the Library.

Recorded Vote: Mr. Newbold, No; Ms. Rokosz, yes; Ms. Mollitor, No;
Ms. Gerhardt, yes; Ms. Thomas, yes.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

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

NEW BUSINESS

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anna Babitsky, from Hackettstown, said she did not understand the reason behind pushing booklooks.org and how the book reviews sites were going to be used.

Sandy Roberts, from Blairstown Township, asked what problem the list of book review sites is solving. She expressed that consideration for everyone in the community and comments from the public were ignored.

Jay Waldstein, from the Friends of the Northeast Branch, expressed his concerns over censorship in the library.

Michele St. Andre, from Knowlton Township, questioned why the motion to approve a list of book review sites wasn't tabled after hearing the public comments.

Shelley Harvey, from Blairstown, said that no parents are asking for the book review resources to be provided and she questioned the need for such a list.

Tom Levitt said the Commission is providing resources that will direct kids straight to the books the Commission doesn't want them to have.

Teresa Esposito-Jackson, from the Friends of the RDG Library, said she was disappointed the book review list was approved. Booklooks.org is not credible.

Viryan Hodges, from High Bridge, said the Commission has their own political agenda.

Sylvia Sincaglia, from High Bridge, asked why the Commission has a lack of empathy for marginalized communities.

Dan Kleinman, from Chatham, expressed his opinion that having a list of book review sources from ALA and not including booklooks.org would be censorship.

Sarah Hare, from Hope Township, questioned why the Commission would regard booklooks.org as legitimate when it includes concerns about books detailing oppression and resistance throughout history, which should not be denied.

Monica Scott, from Lopatcong Township, stated it is concerning that the Commission is voting on booklooks.org as a credible source with so many people stating their disapproval.

Charles B., from Washington, expressed his concerns that the manner in which Commission meetings are run is not a good governing model. He advocated for discussing this with an attorney.

Ed Thomas, from Washington, thanked the Commission for volunteering their time and offering a tool to look at someone else's opinion, if he so chooses.

MINUTES

Warren County Library Commission

NOVEMBER 21, 2024

Sylvia Zika, from Blirstown Township, asked whether the CDH furnishing are going to be new, used, or a combination of both. She also stated she wants the budget revealed.

Elizabeth Gittins, from Greenwich Township, expressed her opinion that with all the opposition to booklooks.org, the vote should have been tabled and voted on next month.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

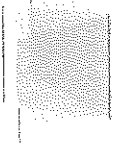
ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Ms. Gerhardt, seconded by Ms. Thomas, and there being no further business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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



WARREN COUNTY LIBRARY

Assistant Director's Report November 2024

Last week Kelly Durkin and I met with Emily Hammer, the CDH Project Manager. Emily said construction is going well and is on track to be done in late winter or early spring. Once the construction is completed, we will have the shelving and equipment installed and then move in the furniture and physical collection. CDH's collection is currently divided up between our other branches and the storage space at the Southwest Branch. Arranging all of the materials from these various locations will be a difficult and time consuming task, but I am confident our staff will be able to handle this challenge.

We learned recently that one of our vendors, Plymouth Rocket, is stopping operations on December 31, 2024. We use their product, TixKeeper, to run and manage our museum pass program entirely online. This program allowed us to get away from circulating physical museum passes, which was highly problematic. With the TixKeeper program, patrons can reserve passes for specific days and pull up the passes right on their phone. We are currently looking for alternatives to TixKeeper. However, if we cannot find a cost effective alternative, we may have to discontinue the museum pass program.

In anticipation of our migration to Koha, our new ILS (integrated library service), the staff is working on data cleanup. They are busy reviewing and updating patron, bibliographic, and item records to make sure the records are uniform and follow proper standards. One example of what they are working on is checking our TV series records. We want each season to have its own separate record in the catalog and for each season's multiple discs to be cataloged as one individual item.

A potential issue we have discovered during our Koha planning meetings is how to handle the unfilled holds patrons have placed on items in our old system. We are still determining if those holds can be transferred into Koha, which would be ideal. If not, we might have to place a moratorium on new holds being placed. Then when we go live with Koha, our staff will have to manually enter the old holds into the new system. A good piece of news is that Senator Steinhardt has committed to sponsoring NJ Senate Bill 3738, which would help defray the ILS costs.

In anticipation of the County's Bicentennial next year, our staff has been working hard on creating and scheduling a series of related programs and displays. Thus far, we have scheduled programs on *The Rise and Fall of Spiritualism in the Victorian Era*, *Victorian Magic*, *Curious Cures of the Victorian Era*, *100 Years of Antique & Collectible Quilts from 1860-1960*, and *The Cultural & Natural History of the Minisink in the Delaware Water Gap*. Additionally, the staff is planning Warren County trivia and bookmark contests and a series of Then & Now photos featuring local locations. So be sure to keep an eye on our Facebook and Instagram pages, along with our 2025 calendar, for these events.

Finally, on behalf of our entire staff, I want to thank Trish Rokosz and Alice Mollitor for their 14 years of service on the Library Commission. Both have served in leadership positions and on various subcommittees throughout those years. Their commitment and dedication to the Commission and Library has been greatly appreciated and will certainly be missed. All of us wish them the best.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill E. Butcher
Assistant Director