

West Milford Township Library

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes

July 8 2025: The regular meeting of the West Milford Township Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:04 PM by Mr. Jim Rogers in the Library Conference Room of the West Milford Township Library and Community Center.

Open Public Meetings Law

Mr. Jim Rogers reviewed the announcement.

Roll Call of Members: The following Board and staff members were present:

James Rogers, President
Sandra Nebel, Vice President
Geoffrey Syme, Treasurer
Linda DeFranco, Secretary (Absent)
Jodie Comune, Superintendent Representative
Michele Hammell, Trustee
Mayor Michele Dale, Mayor (Absent)

Karyn Gost

Approval of Minutes

James Rogers motioned to approve the regular minutes of June 10, 2025. Jodie Comune seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Roll Call:

James Rogers	Yes	Jodie Comune	Yes
Sandra Nebel	Yes	Michele Hammell	Yes
Geoffrey Syme	Yes		

Public Present

N/A

President's Report

It is apparent that the West Milford Township Library has become an increasingly popular destination for residents and visitors seeking to take advantage of the wide range of programs and activities offered by the library. The stats recorded between the years of 2021 – 2024 reflect this increasing popularity, as well as that of our website visits and circulation counts:

WMTL PROGRAMS

Percentage increase in the number of **adult programs** offered from 2021-2024: **60.4%**

Percentage increase in the number of **young adult programs** offered from 2021-2024: **477.2%**

Percentage increase in the number of **children's programs** offered from 2021-2024: **117.1%**

WMTL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Percentage increase in program attendance of **adults** from 2021-2024: **125.9%**

Percentage increase in program attendance of **young adults** from 2021-2024: **591.6%**

Percentage increase in program attendance of **children** from 2021-2024: **76.1%**

WMTL PATRON, WEBSITE, CIRCULATION COUNTS

Percentage increase in the **number of patrons** from 2021-2024: **57%**

Percentage increase in the **number of website visitors** from 2021-2024: **48.9%**

Percentage increase in the **number of materials circulated** from 2021-2024: **23.7%**

Percentage increase in the **electronic circulation** from 2021-2024: **76.1%**

Percentage increase in the **total circulation of materials** for WMTL from 2021 – 2024: **32.7%**

Director's Report

General Operations:

The WMTL Community Survey is up and running, with approximately 80 surveys submitted so far. Nicholas and I worked together to create the survey, with feedback from both the Board of Trustees and library staff. Nicholas made the survey using Google Forms and then formatted another version for hard copies in the library. Theresa and Danielle created the (ongoing) publicity. The survey will be available for public input for the months of July and August. I am very pleased with the way it turned out and look forward to reviewing the results in September.

On June 27, 2025, WMTL hosted the PALS Plus Executive Board meeting.

I attended the West Milford Community Day on Saturday, June 28th on Nosenzo Pond Road with Danielle and Nicholas, to promote our services and programs. We also provided giveaways and DIY tote bag decoration station (78 participants!) The Friends of the Library had a table next to ours.

Summer Reading Club 2025 is in full-swing! Color Our World kicked off with a bang! Each participant receives a "Color Our World – Artful Reading Portfolio" with 6 weeks of reading sheets to record their time on, as well as crayon coupons to submit for prizes.

The Summer Reading kickoff week events brought big crowds of kids:

Pop! Art Big Balloon Show (sponsored by the Friends): June 25, 2025 (80 attendees)

Sand Art: June 26, 2025 (70 attendees)

Color our World Magic Show: June 27, 2025 (75 attendees)

Strategic Plan:

- I attended the West Milford Community Day on Saturday, June 28th on Nosenzo Pond Road with Danielle and Nicholas, to promote our services and programs. We also provided giveaways and DIY tote bag decoration station (78 participants) The Friends of the Library had a table next to ours. (Strategic Plan 1.4. Maintain a library presence at community and township events such as the Autumn Lights Festival and in the school system to promote library participation and Strategic Plan 1.1. Expand the library's outreach particularly to underserved segments of the community).

- Pam, Theresa, and the Children's Services Staff visited all five elementary schools to promote the Summer Reading Club. We bundled SRC handouts for each teacher in each school for their students to bring home (Strategic Plan 1.4. Maintain a library presence at community and township events such as the Autumn Lights Festival and in the school system to promote library participation).
- Nicholas has been providing resume help to patrons, including formatting, wording, and goals. In addition, he has been providing tech advice for patrons' various requests. (Strategic Plan 1.5. Offer programs that provide life skills training: resume writing, interviewing skills, job seeking, and more, and 1.6. Continue to promote one-to-one and small group technology training for patrons and schedule quarterly tech training sessions at remote locations, and 1.7. Start a regular schedule of tech drop-in sessions to help patrons get started with mobile devices, Office applications, and PC basics.
- Nicholas has been reviewing our databases and planning program/training sessions based on his research (Strategic Plan 1.6. Continue to promote one-to-one and small group technology training for patrons and schedule quarterly tech training sessions at remote locations).
- I met with both Theresa and Nicholas to discuss our new logo/brand/update of website. The plan is to have everything completed by the end of the year so that we can start 2026 with a fresh face (Strategic Plan 5.4. Create consistent branding, with a new logo that displays our library's mission to the community).
- Danielle reached out to two local business for programming- Vilma Mirkov, owner of U Paint Studio, to instruct a paint your pet program and to Brandy Sharrock, owner and director of Bricks 4 Kids Hewett, to instruct a robotics/LEGO program in August for teens (Strategic Plan 5.3. Foster new partnerships with West Milford Township departments, the West Milford Township School District classes and clubs, various community groups, organizations, and local businesses).
- The Library hosted one school visit In June: Paradise Knoll - with **26** new Library cards issued. (Strategic Plan 1.4. Maintain a library presence at community and township events such as the Autumn Lights Festival and in the school system to promote library participation).
- Pam attended the webinar *Developing Youth Creative Writing Programs for Your Library* for 1 hour of training. (Strategic Plan 6.2. Encourage staff to attend relevant workshops, conferences, and webinars provided by the NJLA, the New Jersey State Library and other professional organizations).
- Most of the staff participated in the training webinar, "Backup-How Coworkers Should Provide Backup During Conflict," which is part of a series of trainings on De-escalation

(Strategic Plan 6.1. Promote an atmosphere of lifelong learning and professional skills enhancement among staff and Strategic Plan 6.2. Encourage staff to attend relevant workshops, conferences, and webinars provided by the NJLA, the New Jersey State Library and other professional organizations).

Committee Reports

Finance:

Geoffrey Syme reported that the Finance Committee met earlier and discussed:

- Brainstorming ideas for the capital plan to be finalized next January.
- We received an unclaimed property letter; the township CFO will follow-up.
- Waiting to hear from the donor about the logistics regarding her generous donation of 300 art books to the library.

Personnel & Policy:

Sandy Nebel reported that the committee met and discussed:

- The strategic plan is on hold pending the results from the surveys.
- The ad hoc committee formed to help plan next year's 250th anniversary of the US hasn't met yet.
- The board will discuss the library director's performance evaluation during executive session.

Facilities & Maintenance:

Geoffrey Syme reported the following:

- The committee toured the building to note any and all lighting issues throughout the library. It is confirmed that the fluorescent lightbulbs will be changed to LEDS in the Gallery. There are two lights over the audio books that are not functioning, and the handyman has not been able to find replacements for them. The manufacturer who made the curved lightbulbs over the computer stations on the first floor no longer makes them, so we plan to reach out to Freedom Electric for an alternative.
- The water heater failed and leaked last Sunday. The repair estimate is 5 -10 days for replacement of the unit under warranty. Labor is not included in the warranty and it is estimated to cost ~\$1300 to fix it.
- We need to create a plan for emergencies (i.e., flooding in the library) so that the library staff is aware of the proper procedure to follow.
- BSE Mechanical has been consulted regarding obtaining and installing a high-capacity toilet for the first floor men's room.
- We spoke with the WM police regarding the vandalism done to the story walk; we need to follow up with Mayor Dale.
- The batteries in the generator were replaced last month.
- The next quarterly deep cleaning for the library needs to be scheduled.
- We are still checking out the space to decide on a feasible spot for the proposed playhouse in the children's library.

Friends of the Library:

Sandy Nebel gave the following report:

- The FOL newsletter supports and promotes activities taking place at the library.
- The FOL have not had any meetings yet.
- The concert sponsored by the FOL originally scheduled for July 7th was cancelled due to inclement weather.

School Liaison:

Jodie Comune reported that:

- She spoke with Jen Monego again regarding the customized signs to be made by the art students for the library's various book sections. We have requested physical samples of each proposed material so that a final decision on the type of signs we want can be made.

Action on Bills

Geoffrey Syme motioned to approve the bills. Michele Hammell seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Roll Call:

James Rogers	Yes	Jodie Comune	Yes
Sandra Nebel	Yes	Michele Hammell	Yes
Geoffrey Syme	Yes		

Resolutions

N/A

Unfinished Business

N/A

New Business

James Rogers motioned to go into executive session re: NJSA 10:4-12 Subsection B Personnel for the purpose of discussing personnel evaluations. Geoffrey Syme seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Executive session took place from 7:45PM – 7:53PM.

Public Petition

N/A

Adjournment

Geoffrey Syme motioned to adjourn at 7:53 PM. Sandra Nebel seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Date of Next Meeting: August 12, 2025

Minutes prepared and respectfully submitted by: Michelle Hirsch