

## West Milford Township Library

### Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes

**August 12, 2025:** The regular meeting of the West Milford Township Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:03 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  
Jodie Comune, Superintendent Representative  
Michele Hammell, Trustee (Excused Absence)  
Mayor Michele Dale, Mayor (Excused Absence)

Karyn Gost

#### Approval of Minutes

Geoffrey Syme motioned to approve the regular minutes of July 8, 2025. Sandra Nebel seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Roll Call:

|               |     |                |     |
|---------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| James Rogers  | Yes | Linda DeFranco | Yes |
| Sandra Nebel  | Yes | Jodie Comune   | Yes |
| Geoffrey Syme | Yes |                |     |

#### Public Present

N/A

#### President's Report

The Board is set to approve a resolution tonight which will authorize the library director and staff to explore AI applications affiliated with library operations over the next two years, launching the WMTL into an emerging digital landscape expanding opportunities for its patrons. With the passing of this resolution incorporating AI into the WMTL, we are reaffirming the library's role as the community's hub for information, knowledge, and technology.

## Director's Report

### General Operations:

Jean Callie is retiring, with her last day of work being September 30, 2025.

We have several building issues/updates- Geoff will include them in his Facilities report.

The WMTL Community Survey has received 116 responses so far.

Summer Reading Club 2025 Color Our World: We have a total of 342 participants with the following breakdown: 10 babies (0-2), 239 kids (3-11), 20 teens (12-18) and 73 adults (19+). This # is not final as there may be some late registrants as we are logging coupons. People seem happy about the club, prizes, and programs!

I applied for and received a mini grant for an initiative called Flight Path, which is the first campaign in the Spark of Science@ My Library initiative that focuses on the science of birds and bird migration. Flight Path taps into the popularity of bird watching and provides local communities with fun activities to get to know their local birds and promote bird health and safety. WMTL is one of 200 libraries chosen to receive a \$500 honorarium to help cover the cost of events, a bird watching kit, bookmarks with bird-friendly tips/facts, informal Activity Guides, promotional materials, and digital copies of Wild Hope episodes - Wild Hope: Building for Birds; and Wild Hope: Puffling Patrol.

### Strategic Plan:

- On July 28, local Author/Musician John Foley read his new children's Book *The Blue Chihuahua* and performed at the Library (approximately 40 participants) (Strategic Plan 1.3. Expand opportunities for local writers, artists, and poets to exhibit and share their works with the public).
- In order to build STEAM programming for teens, Danielle reached out to KerryAnn O'Connor from Learning Exchange to instruct engineering programs in the fall (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).
- Nicholas worked with Theresa to develop tech help drop-in and discussed program ideas that could be done in the community rooms. Some of the ideas for programs include Computer Basics: What exactly are computers and how do they work? Internet Basics: What is the internet and how does it work? Navigating the Internet Safely and Ethically. (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.)
- Nicholas, Theresa and I have had some preliminary talks about technology programming, showcasing our databases and learning platforms, and how to effectively use databases to search for articles, with the goal of increasing our patron's knowledge and use of such services (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.)

## **Committee Reports**

### ***Finance:***

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

- Meeting with the prospective donor of the extensive art book collection this week.
- The Capital Reserves Study where an auditor comes in and evaluates our hard assets regarding lifespan and replacement costs and puts a plan in place for the future.
- The goal for the capital plan is to have the rough draft ready in September so that the final draft will be ready next January.

### ***Personnel & Policy:***

Sandy Nebel reported that the committee met and offer their congratulations to library director, Karyn Gost on her three years with the library. Her performance evaluation will be discussed during executive session tonight.

### ***Facilities & Maintenance:***

Geoffrey Syme reported the following:

- We are looking for a new plumber for the library; we are considering the possibility of entering a shared services agreement with the township to include plumbing services.
- Obtaining a second opinion from an electrician re: the LEDs; we have the part numbers for the lights in the light fixture over the public computers on the first floor.
- Encore Fire is planning to install the fire sprinkler valve.
- Homestead Sprinkler has put the landscape sprinkler system back in service.
- "Library of Things" will be included in the capital plan.
- We now have labels to clearly mark the water shut-off valve, with plans to create a document with instructions for the library staff detailing how to shut off the main water supply (if necessary).
- Explanation for facilities and maintenance expenses incurred over \$3,000 this month:
  - BSE Well & Water Treatment cost incurred: \$6,000  
The well pump failed after 8 years requiring replacement.
  - J&M Cooling Heating LLC cost incurred: \$3,300  
Quarterly HVAC maintenance performed by a Daikin certified service provider.

### ***Friends of the Library:***

Sandy Nebel gave the following report:

- The FoL met on August 6<sup>th</sup> to discuss the upcoming book sale. Better World Books now require all books leftover from the sale to be individually scanned. The Friends are looking for other places to donate the unsold books after the book sale. Jodie Comune recommended that they look into GreenDrop, and she also reminded everyone that teachers can take books after the sale ends.
- On August 8<sup>th</sup> the Friend's board meeting was held. The need for new members to join the FoL was emphasized; an open invitation to join the FoL is set to be promoted heavily by the library in October.
- The Friends are looking for a volunteer to update their website, and keep it current.
- The first two outdoor summer concerts sponsored by the FoL were rained out, but now that we have access to the barn, we can house future concerts there in inclement weather.

**School Liaison:**

N/A

**Action on Bills**

James Rogers motioned to approve the bills. Jodie Comune seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Roll Call:

|               |     |                |     |
|---------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| James Rogers  | Yes | Linda DeFranco | Yes |
| Sandra Nebel  | Yes | Jodie Comune   | Yes |
| Geoffrey Syme | Yes |                |     |

**Resolutions**

Resolution No. 2025-09 approving the investigation and eventual installation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the operations of the library.

Resolution No. 2025-10 prior to the conclusion of this regular meeting, the West Milford Township Library Board shall meet in executive session to discuss issues related to personnel.

James Rogers motioned to approve the above listed resolutions, Geoffrey Syme seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Roll Call:

|               |     |                |     |
|---------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| James Rogers  | Yes | Linda DeFranco | Yes |
| Sandra Nebel  | Yes | Jodie Comune   | Yes |
| Geoffrey Syme | Yes |                |     |

**Unfinished Business**

N/A

**New Business**

Geoffrey Syme motioned to go into executive session re: NJSA 10:4-12 Subsection B Personnel for the purpose of discussing personnel evaluations. James Rogers seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Executive session took place from 7:48PM – 8:03PM.

James Rogers motioned to go back into regular session, Sandra Nebel seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

**Public Petition**

N/A

**Adjournment**

Jodie Comune motioned to adjourn at 8:03 PM. Geoffrey Syme seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

**Date of Next Meeting:** September 9, 2025

Minutes prepared and respectfully submitted by: Michelle Hirsch