



# Library Advisory Board Meeting

## Thursday, June 17

ZOOM: 983 3133 2641 | Passcode: 821018

### 12:00 pm

#### MINUTES (DRAFT)

### 1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 12:01 PM

Members Present: Trevor Pearson, Mary Ann Tempestini, Martha Knuth, Liz Allen, Julie Boam, Bill Conway, Annie Rosenthal, Quyen Aoh

Members Absent: Kara Murphy

Others Present: Jessica Church, Alyssa Johnson, Deana Cooper, Peg Shenefelt, Sheryl Thomas

### 2. Approval of Minutes – May 20, 2021

Bill motioned to approve meeting minutes as written. Mary Ann seconded.

### 3. Library Reports

#### a. Report of Acting Director

- Sheryl provided the report of acting director.
- Introduced our newest Board Member Quyen Aoh, replacing Jim Dehaven to represent council district 7 (Schauerman)
- MCK Planning process is moving forward. The library has started a survey that will be available through June 30. Virtual focus groups will be conducted by Bostwick Design Partnership. Additional details to come.
- July 1 we are joining the state’s “Chat with a Librarian” service that provides 24-hour reference services to patrons across the state.
- Poetry initiatives are proceeding with the library’s Erie County Poetry Anthology and the County’s search for the next Erie County Poet Laureate.
- NEA Big Read grant was awarded for \$20,000, 9-month project centered on Joy Harjo’s “An American Sunrise”. Program is led by Rachel Stevenson and supported by Patric Nuttall.
- Continuing to pursue funding for the Newsbank digitization project. Purchase was brought before council in April, tabled in May and may be brought forward at the June 29 meeting. This is a huge benefit to library patrons as it allows digital access to this collection *virtually and completely*. The heritage room currently has select news available through microfiche.

#### b. Review of Financial Report

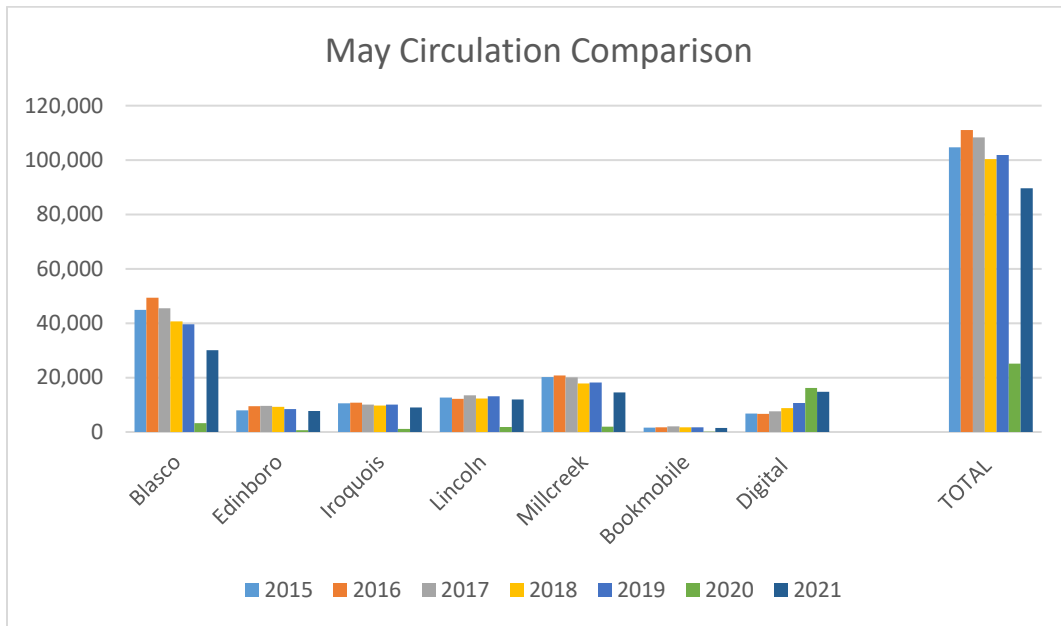
- Deana recapped the financial report noting that the library is down about 20% in our revenue line to the benchmark for mid-year. Deficit is attributed to the pandemic (loss of room rentals, fees). It is not anticipated that we will meet the projected revenue. There is 2-3% savings in wages & fringes from interim vacancies and being closed on Sundays. Next month’s report will have increased expenses as we conclude the District’s fiscal year.



May 2021 Statistics

**Numbers Snapshot**

- **89,614** overall check outs, up **2%** over last month, up **256%** over last year
- **3,640** Wi-Fi sessions, up **14%** over last month
- **22,163** visits, up **6.7%** over last month
  - Visits are down **54%** from May 2019



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Blasco</b>	44,946	49,354	45,476	40,664	39,594	3,292	30,045
<b>Edinboro</b>	7,910	9,516	9,588	9,197	8,456	649	7,711
<b>Iroquois</b>	10,591	10,749	10,052	9,779	10,130	1,159	9,003
<b>Lincoln</b>	12,663	12,225	13,448	12,280	13,154	1,813	11,979
<b>Millcreek</b>	20,176	20,812	20,031	17,840	18,169	1,962	14,604
<b>Bookmobile</b>	1,608	1,754	2,058	1,709	1,722	87	1,475
<b>Digital</b>	6,805	6,671	7,644	8,824	10,620	16,216	14,797
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104,699</b>	<b>111,081</b>	<b>108,297</b>	<b>100,293</b>	<b>101,845</b>	<b>25,178</b>	<b>89,614</b>

d. Report of District Consultant

- The District Advisory Council (DAC) approved the district negotiated agreement and budget for 2021-2022, which has been submitted to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries.
- The District submitted its annual request for state aid.

- The Office of Commonwealth Libraries has given verbal approval of rolling over \$25,000 from 2020-2021 into 2021-2022. These funds were excess funds due to pandemic & legislative changes to spending, so the District is hopeful that it can use these funds toward the purchase of a new ILL delivery van in Erie County. The Office of Commonwealth Libraries is still working on the formal procedure for spending this funding after the close of the fiscal year.

#### 4. Board and Committee Reports

##### a. Report of County Council Liaison

None

##### b. Report of Friends and ERLF

Peg provided an update for the Friends, beginning with the announcement that a new president will be named July 1. Sara Sheehan will become president, Kathleen Horan will be VP, Marcy will continue as treasurer while training a replacement, and Hank Barbour will become secretary.

Friends have a new fundraiser this year, Scavenger Hunt Bingo. The game will run from July 3-11 in advance of the Mini-Great American Book Sale. The book sale is being held at Blasco Library in the lobby area from July 15-17. New bookmarks with all 2021 sale dates have been ordered and are being sent to the library locations.

#### 5. Unfinished Business

none

#### 6. New Business

none

#### 7. Adjournment

Mary Ann motioned to adjourn at 12:32 PM. Julie seconded.

#### 8. Appendix

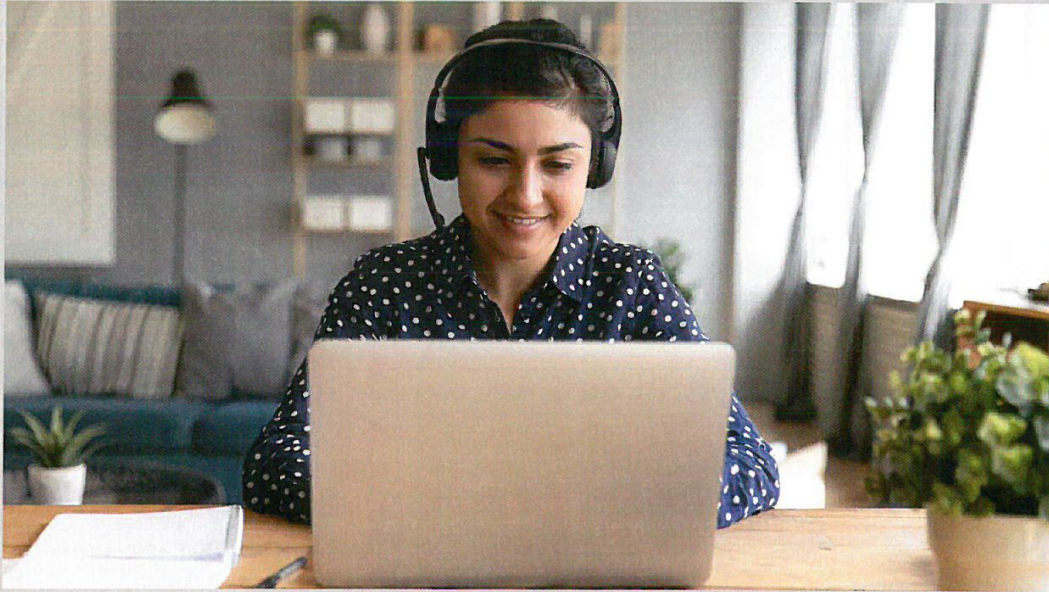
##### a. News Articles

Find the library's latest media releases at: <https://eriecountypa.gov/about/county-news/news-releases/>

A Publication of the Public Library Association

# PUBLIC LIBRARIES ONLINE

## NEWS & OPINION



## The Library Comic Convention Goes Virtual

by [Rachel Stevenson](#) on June 2, 2021

COVID-19 has caused many issues for in-person programming for libraries. Comic conventions are big events at libraries all over the US. I talked with staff at three libraries to hear how they turned their in-person library Comic Conventions to virtual events.

JD Smithson, Communications Coordinator, at the Couer d'Alene Public Library in Couer d'Alene, Idaho talked about their library's change to a virtual event. The library's Comic Convention is always held in August. They decided in May that the 2020 event would be virtual.

They held a variety of virtual events that were reflective of the in-person event. "We had an online cosplay contest, online fan-art contest, take-home craft kits, a gift wrapped sci-fi/fantasy book giveaway, online

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gaming on Discord and three virtual panels,” said Smithson. “We advertised vendors on the website.” They held an “extra” online event that had not been held in the past which Smithson described as a geeky to do list they named “fandom quest.”

Although their attendance numbers dropped, with 2200 people attending in 2019 and 771 in 2020, Smithson noted a positive was that they were able to reach people who cannot physically get to the library. For their upcoming 2021 Comic Convention, Couer d’Alene Public Library will be doing a hybrid program with small programs outside and by appointment.

The Erie County Public Library in Erie, PA also moved their Comic Convention, LibCon, to a virtual environment in 2021. Abby Zielinski, librarian assistant, explained why. “The LibCon Erie team felt that this event needed to happen in some capacity due to its overall popularity. This is one of our library’s largest events and is a huge draw for the teen population. We knew we could transfer some elements of this event to a virtual platform. We had to cancel the event in 2020 and did not want another year to go by without some version of this event.”

Zielinski stated that attendance was lower than the in-person event, but feedback was positive overall. Some of the events, like the cosplay costume contest, did better in-person. However, the art contest had double the entries from previous years.

There were some definite pros to the online LibCon as far as Erie Public Library was concerned. “One pro to having a virtual con is you can share premade content. With three staff members, we were able to create and manage two contests, sixteen video panels, six live events (Zoom) and two digital escape rooms. During the in-person event we would have to depend on third party participants and the LibCon Erie team to create that much content. Another pro is that the ninety percent of the content was available after the event day. We had patrons continue to view the content even after the event.”

Like Couer d’Alene, Erie will keep some aspects of a virtual con for future events. Per Zielinski, “There are a few aspects of the virtual con that we will use when we return to an in-person LibCon. One was running a bracket-like voting system throughout the day. The Teen Advisory Board helped pick the superheroes that were in the bracket which updated every thirty minutes. This proved a very popular activity for this event. We will definitely have a hybrid version in the future, because it allows people who may not normally be able to attend engage with the content and participate in programs. For example, if patrons were not able to make it to a panel, we shared PDF files, links, etc. afterwards so everyone could access it. One program we would like to adapt for next year is our cosplay Q&A. We encouraged cosplayers to record themselves answering a few interview questions as their character. We then shared these videos on our social media accounts. These were rather popular. We may incorporate this element into our in-person con to encourage more participation/ interaction with our cosplay community.”

Some libraries took their Comic Conventions to the extreme and instead of holding a one-day event created a week-long virtual con. The Mission Viejo (CA) Library was one of them. Lauren Regenhardt explained the library's Comic Convention history, "The Mission Viejo Library is in Southern California and our community is full of families and retirees. We are lucky to have some 'big names' in our community such as Marv Wolfman (DC and Marvel fame), and YA author Neal Shusterman, both of whom we have had at least once in our Comic events. We marketed heavily on our webpage <https://cityofmissionviejo.org/mission-viejo-library-comic-fest>, and put flyers in all our curbside bags. We started marketing on Facebook the month of the event."

Regenhardt said the week-long Comic Convention was successful by their standards and they were surprised because they thought everyone would be "Zoomed out." Each presentation had between 18-30 active attendees. They also stated that the virtual aspect allowed them to have panelists from around the country that they couldn't otherwise afford because of tight budgets.

When asked if the library would continue to have a virtual aspect to its Comic Convention, Regenhardt responded, "I'd love to have a virtual option moving forward not just so attendees from around the world can watch, but so we could have panelists and presenters that we might not normally be able to afford in person. Virtual programming has opened up a new world for us and for the publishing world, so we're excited to see what future virtual events hold for us!"

Although each library staff member mentioned that attendance was lower and that they missed the excitement of the in-person event, most recognized the benefits of virtual library comic conventions, including exciting discoveries, expanded opportunities, and improved accessibility. As with other library programs that turned virtual during the pandemic, many library Comic Conventions will continue in a hybrid fashion, offering patrons the opportunity to choose how they are most comfortable participating.

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Tags: [library comic convention](#)

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The Northwest Pennsylvania Pride Alliance for a second year will be forced to hold its annual PrideFest as an online event because of continued concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Erie Virtual Pride Festival will be held at the LECOM Stage at the Erie Playhouse on June 26. The event will be available on the NWPAPride Alliance's Facebook page and the Erie Playhouse's YouTube channel.

June is Pride Month, a time during which people recognize the contributions and influence the LGBTQ people have made around the world, and raise awareness, including through political demonstrations, about issues facing the LGBTQ community. Pride Month is celebrated in June to mark the anniversary of the Stonewall Riots of June 28, 1969, and the historic U.S. Supreme Court ruling making same-sex marriage a right nationwide on June 26, 2015.

PrideFest will feature Playhouse performances of scenes from the Broadway shows "Rent," "Kinky Boots" and "Into the Woods," drag performances, and featured speakers including U.S. Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa., and Erie Mayor Joe Schember. There also will be group discussions with Playhouse members about the LGBTQ community's impact on the theater.

"We're doing our best to make it feel as close to an in-person event as we can with the current restrictions and our own self-imposed restrictions," NWPAPride Alliance President Alex Sphon said. "All things considered, given the height of the restrictions that we had to deal with last year, it went pretty well. There certainly were things that in our look back at the events we were able to identify that we needed to improve on and we've certainly done so this year.

"One of the struggles that we had was interaction as far as the show goes," he said. "So we are switching, it's going to be broadcast live on NWPAPride Alliance's Facebook page, and then it's also going to be on the Erie Playhouse's YouTube. So there's going to be multiple ways to watch it, to interact and really talk to other people in the community while the show's going on."

The day after PrideFest, on June 27, the NWPAPride Alliance will hold a Drive Your Pride event at Presque Isle State Park. The event will substitute the annual Pride parade this year. Participants are encouraged to decorate their vehicles as "personal parade floats" with flags, streamers, and signs. They will gather outside of the Tom Ridge Environmental Center at 1 p.m. and Drive Your Pride will hit the road at 2 p.m. **Pride Month 2021**

Sphon said that despite several COVID-19 health and safety restrictions being lifted there wasn't enough time to shift course and return to in-person events. However, Sphon and the NWPAPride Alliance board will be discussing in-person events for the coming months, including a Pride Picnic and Pride Waldameer Day in August, as well as a Pride night event at an Erie SeaWolves game.

Another event that's part of Pride Month celebrations in Erie is a free, confidential HIV testing event June 4 from 6 to 9 p.m. in the parking lot of the Zone Dance Club, 133 W. 18th St., for anyone

age 14 and older. Neither parental consent nor tickets are required to be tested. A rapid test, which involves a finger prick, will produce results after 2 minutes.

The HIV testing event is the second of four planned in Erie in 2021. It's being organized by the NWPB Pride Alliance, Northwest Alliance, Greater Erie Alliance for Equality, the city of Erie, Erie Gay News, Dickey's BBQ and others. Northwest Alliance will conduct the tests using their new mobile testing unit. Each person tested will receive a \$5 Country Fair Cash Card and a coupon for a free sandwich at Dickey's BBQ.

From the Archives: Erie Pridefest 2019 attracts about 2,500 to Perry Square

Those are just three of several events taking place in June in Erie.

Throughout June, the **Erie County Public Library** will host "A Look Back: A History of the LGBTQ+ Community in Erie" at Blasco Library, 160 E. Front St. First displayed in 2019, the updated and expanded exhibit can be found on the second floor of the library.

The exhibit will be located next to the 2021 LGBTQ Juried Art Exhibit, which is being curated by the Greater Erie Alliance for Equality. The exhibit features more than 50 works of art — paintings, sculptures, photographs, fiber, pastels, drawing, fine jewelry and mixed media — by 25 LGBTQ artists from Northwestern Pennsylvania. Erie Arts & Culture funded the 2021 LGBTQ Juried Art Exhibit through a grant.

For more information about "A Look Back: A History of the LGBTQ+ Community in Erie" visit [www.facebook.com/erielgbthistory](https://www.facebook.com/erielgbthistory) or email [ErieLGBTHistory@gmail.com](mailto:ErieLGBTHistory@gmail.com). For more information about the 2021 LGBTQ Juried Art Exhibit, [greatereriealliance.com](http://greatereriealliance.com), email: [GEAInfo@gmail.com](mailto:GEAInfo@gmail.com) or call the Greater Erie Alliance for Equality at 866-229-1974.

For information about the library, including hours of operation visit [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org) or call 814-451-6900.

Other regional Pride Month events include:

\* UPMC Pride Flag Raising, 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, front lawn of UPMC Hamot, 201 State St.: Employees will raise the Pride flag in recognition of Pride Month. "We are proud of our commitment to provide the best possible care to all, and to treat everyone equally and respectfully, without exception, UPMC will raise the flag in honor of Pride Month," UPMC Hamot spokeswoman Karen Beardsley said in a statement. "We recognize, understand, and appreciate that it is healthy and right to embrace our differences, among staff and patients, and that we work best when we work together as a team."

\* Pride Ashtabula County 2021, noon to 5 p.m., Saturday, 1498 State Route 46 South, Jefferson, Ohio: The event, sponsored by the LGBTQ Community Club of Ashtabula County, will feature a talent show, drag performances, music, pony rides, face-painting and free HIV testing. [Facebook.com/PrideAshtabulaCounty](https://Facebook.com/PrideAshtabulaCounty).

\* Jamestown Pride Festival, 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., June 12, Jamestown Public Market, 17 W. Third St.,

Jamestown, N.Y.: The festival will start at Tracy Plaza with a Pride flag raising and a remembrance ceremony on the fifth anniversary of the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida. Jamestown Pride will be part of the Jamestown Public Market, with Pride-themed tents and activities, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Activities will also take place from noon to 9 p.m. at Wintergarden Plaza on North Main Street. Free 8 p.m. performance by RuPaul's Drag Race Star and Jamestown native Pandora Boxx.

\* Warren County Pride Day, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., June 26, Betts Park, 400 Ludlow St., Warren: The event, according to event organizer Warren County Pride, will feature a variety of quality out-of-town speakers, entertainment, and attractions.

\* GayDay Crawford, 3 to 10 p.m., July 11, Diamond Park, 903 Diamond Park, Meadville: The annual event is billed as "a day to celebrate diversity in Crawford County, showcase small business and have a good time with your neighbors and friends." There will be food, activities and music throughout the day.

Contact Matthew Rink at [mrink@timesnews.com](mailto:mrink@timesnews.com). Follow him on Twitter at @ETNrink.

#### **CITATION (MLA STYLE)**

Rink, Matthew. "Pride Month: Virtual festival, vehicle parade, art exhibit among events planned for Erie." *Erie Times-News: Web Edition Articles (PA)*, sec. News, 1 June 2021. *NewsBank: America's News*, [infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=NewsBank&docref=news/182D93D0D13A4358](http://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=NewsBank&docref=news/182D93D0D13A4358). Accessed 2 June 2021.

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# Erie community college students will have access to county's library system

Kevin Flowers  
Erie Times-News  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Students who attend the Erie County Community College will have extensive access to the county's library system, as well as the libraries at Penn State-Behrend and Edinboro University.

The community college will also hire a designated librarian to coordinate efforts that provide library access to the college's students, and the community college will be able to use meeting space at county library facilities at no cost.

Those are among the details in a memorandum of understanding signed by Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper and the college's



Gay

interim president, Judith Gay, at the Blasco Library's Hirt Auditorium on Monday

afternoon.

The objective is to develop a system that allows college students to use multiple library sites "to aid their coursework," according to the memorandum.

The school could start offering classes as early as the fall.

The agreement also means that the new community college will not have to create its own brick-and-mortar library, which will save taxpayers millions of dollars, said Corry Mayor David Mitchell, a member of the community college's board of trustees.

"This will greatly benefit the students. It will open up a whole new avenue of use for the public library and the libraries at Behrend and Edinboro to a population that has been underserved," Mitchell said.

There is no plan to house classes at the library's main or branch locations; the community college is still exploring options in terms of a permanent site.

According to the memorandum of understanding's terms:

- The college will "hire a designated librarian to coordinate the provisions of library services" to students.

- The community col-

lege and county government will work together to provide "academic databases" via the library system that students can use.

- The college will require all staff and students to have library cards that provide joint access to all of the libraries.

- A landing page will be created on the community college's website that will detail all available library resources for students.

- The county and the community college will work with Behrend and Edinboro "to provide access to additional libraries and resources" for the community college's students.

- County and community college officials will exchange "data, reports and documents as agreed that will contribute to the improvement of student experiences and the general success" of those who attend the community college.

- Meeting space at the libraries will be provided to the community college for free.

Dahlkemper said the agreement is an example of how "collaboration and government cooperation can actually bring together something that is unique and impactful for students.

"It allows the Erie County Public Library to provide staff, databases, library cards, meeting

spaces and so much more to the students," Dahlkemper said. "It also emphasizes the value our library system provides to all residents."

Dahlkemper also credited Elaine Dessy, who stepped down May 14 as the county library system's executive director, as being a key player in forging the library use agreement.

Dessy, who told county officials he was retiring, "really saw this as being transformational," Dahlkemper said.

Gay, the college's interim president, said the agreement both maximizes a county asset — the library system — while giving students access to vast academic resources at multiple sites.

"Why not bring these assets together for the benefit of students in Erie County?" Gay said.

The community college's board has not made any decision on where the college will be located, but it could consider temporary and permanent locations, as well as multiple locations, to offer classes.

The board also continues to search for a permanent president and has been interviewing candidates for the position.

Contact Kevin Flowers at [kflowers@timesnews.com](mailto:kflowers@timesnews.com). Follow him on Twitter at @ETNflowers.



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