



Library Advisory Board Meeting Wednesday, September 18, 9:00am In person- Lincoln Branch Library

District 1-Mary Fischer	District 4- Howells	District 7- Aoh (President)
District 2- Rosenthal	District 5- Vacant	At-Large- Murphy (Secretary)
District 3- Vacant	District 6- Kimberly Grove	At-Large- Groves (Vice-President)

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of Minutes – August 19, 2024**
3. **Public Comment- (limit to 15 minutes)**
4. **Library Reports**
 - a. Staff Report- none
 - b. Report of the Director- Jessica Stefano
 - c. Review of Financial Report- Deana Cooper
 - d. Statistical and Other Reports- Deana Cooper
 - e. Report of District Consultant-Jessica Church
5. **Board and Committee Reports**
 - a. Report of County Council Liaison- Councilman Horton
 - b. Report of Friends of the Library- Kathleen Horan
 - c. Report of Erie Regional Library Foundation-
6. **Unfinished Business- None**
7. **New Business**
 - a. Slate of Officers
8. **Adjournment**
9. **Appendix**
 - a. Announcements
 - b. News Articles

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Connections-

Summer Reading Recap- The library had a spectacular summer reading turnout! We had a total of 3275 patron registrations and over 8048 returned entries!

To capitalize on the success of the summer program, the library plans to explore options for a winter reading program.

WQLN Library PSAs- Jessica worked with WQLN and the Friends of the Library to record PSAs for the National Library Card sign up month. These PSAs will run on WQLN radio through the end of September. More PSA's will be recorded for future use.

Library will be participating in two events in early October as members of the Beehive Network. The first is the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership, Erie Homecoming event for local business and entrepreneurs. The second is the PA Economic Development Association annual conference.

Capacity-

Staff Development Day - Annual Staff Development day is scheduled for Monday, October 14. We plan to focus on a mix of on the job training, continuing education and safety reviews.

Personnel Updates-

Re-organization update- The proposed reorganization plan has been approved by County Council. Several internal leadership positions have been filled. The new department structural transition is in progress.

The internal posting came down yesterday for the newly re-classed Branch Supervisor positions. We plan to conduct interviews early next week. Our hope is to fill both of these positions internally.

The library recently promoted two library clerks to Library Assistants. Bethany Lenda and Zara Ostrander accepted the positions. Both are currently clerks at the Branches. They will begin their new roles on Monday, September 30. Their clerk positions will post as soon as they begin their new roles.

The library is in the interview process for a full time clerk at Millcreek and 2 part time floating clerks.

The Assistant Director of Literacy Services and the Collections Coordinator positions are posted. They will be on the County website until October 1.

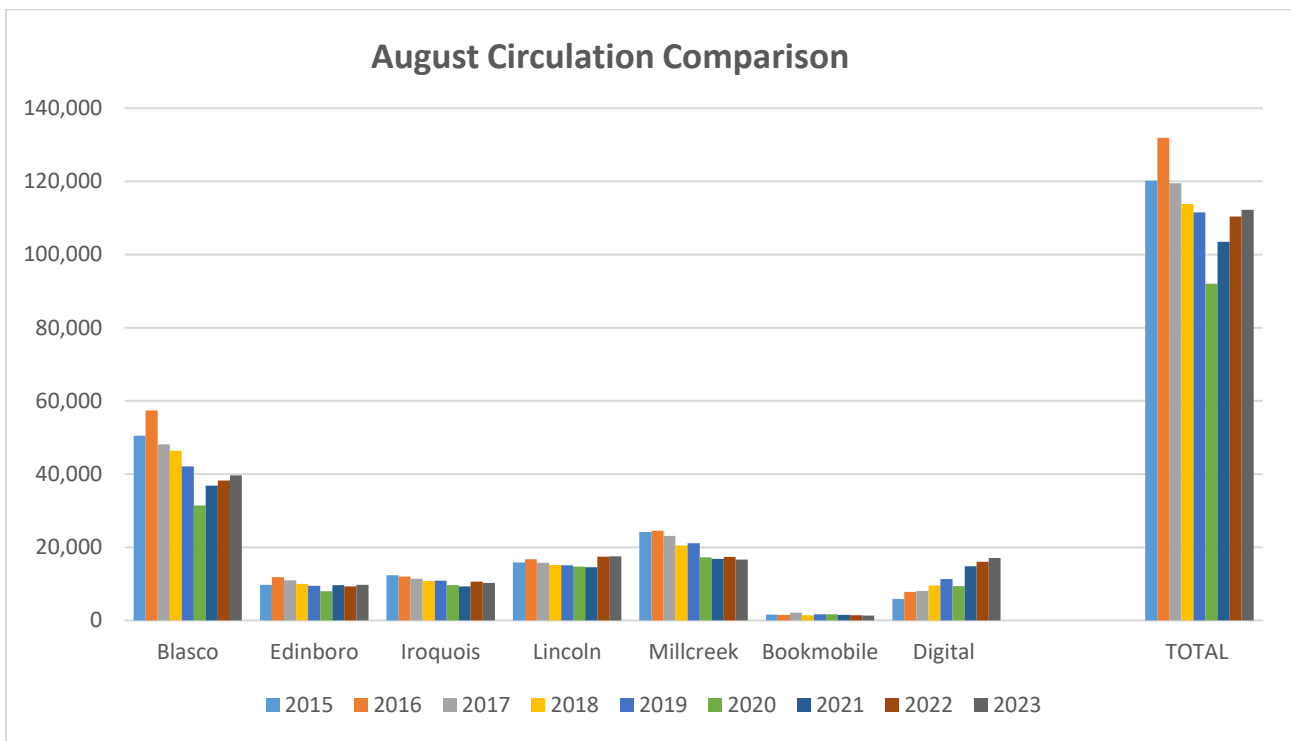
c. Review of Financial Report- Deana Cooper
Report attached

d. Statistical and Other Reports- Deana Cooper

August 2024 Statistics

Numbers Snapshot

- **583 new cards issued, including 69 e-cards**
- **4173 WiFi logins, 3730 public PC logins across locations**
- **39,725 August patron visits. ↑ 1510 visits from August 2023**
- **August Library Programming Totals- 138 Programs with 2043 attendees.**



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Blasco	50,519	57,436	48,097	46,378	42,130	31,408	36,845	38,277	39,642	36,990
Edinboro	9,763	11,857	10,937	9,988	9,492	7,970	9,615	9,263	9,772	9,409
Iroquois	12,368	12,049	11,435	10,759	10,831	9,609	9,312	10,631	10,241	9,499
Lincoln	15,860	16,702	15,795	15,163	15,032	14,716	14,566	17,455	17,493	14,476
Millcreek	24,176	24,529	23,117	20,525	21,135	17,283	16,806	17,316	16,666	15,528
Bookmobile	1,606	1,538	2,099	1,452	1,664	1,681	1,481	1,448	1,311	1,466
Digital	5,896	7,831	8,038	9,574	11,265	9,408	14,829	15,992	17,098	17,169
TOTAL	120,188	131,942	119,518	113,839	111,549	92,075	103,454	110,382	112,223	104,537

District Services Report as of September 16, 2024
Updates for ECPL LAB Report
Submitted by Jessica Church, District Consultant

State Reports

Erie County Public Library's application for State aid as well as the District Library Center year-end report were approved with no questions or inquiries. Next up will be for the libraries to complete their Plans for Use to describe to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries on how they intend to use their aid. The PLEC libraries will also discuss County Coordination Aid plans for 2025.

Interlibrary Loan Shipping - RFP

The District is finalizing an agreement with the vendor, Quadient, to establish a new means of interlibrary loan shipping outside of Erie & Crawford Counties.

District Member Spotlight: Rice Avenue Community Public Library (Girard)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/racpl/>

Rice Avenue Community Public Library serves the Girard and Lake City communities. The library was a merger of two libraries around 2000. Today, it offers a wide variety of activities to its patrons and visitors including:

- Stay & Stitch: September 23rd (BYO project)
- Used Book Sale & Basket Raffle: September 23rd – October 19th
- Adult Scavenger Hunt: Saturday, September 28 (Team contest - \$10/person)
- Teen D&D Club - October
- Adult Craft Nights, Pre-K Storytime, and more!

If you live in the area or know people that do, send them on over to the Library. They're frequently posting new and exciting things to do!

5. Board and Committee Reports

- a. Report of County Council Liaison- Councilman Horton
- b. Report of Friends of the Library- Kathleen Horan
- c. Report of Erie Regional Library Foundation

6. Unfinished Business- None

7. New Business

- a. Committee for Slate of Officers

8. Adjournment

9. Appendix

- a. Announcements

The next board meeting will be Wednesday, October 16 via zoom

Erie County Public Library to cut open positions

September 12, 2024 | Erie Times-News (PA)

Author/Byline: A.J. Rao; Erie Times-News | Page: A5 | Section: News

[Read News Document](#)

While staff cuts at the Erie County Public Library are a possibility in the upcoming 2025 county budget, a recent vote by Erie County Council could ensure those cuts are avoided.

Council at its Sept. 3 meeting approved a measure to reorganize the staff structure of the library. The reorganization, which was devised and requested by Erie County Public Library Director Jessica Stefano, eliminates and re-classes certain positions to boost efficiency and cut costs.

Whereas the library's leadership had been comprised of an executive director, an assistant director and nine different managers, the new structure will have an executive director and three assistant directors to oversee the library's main functional areas.

The reorganization eliminates three vacant full-time positions — the assistant director, a branch manager, a librarian — and a vacant part-time clerk position, saving the county an annual \$279,420 in wages and fringes.

Stefano believes the more efficient structure will not only create more promotion opportunities for staff and improve communication and decision-making, but also serve as a bulwark against future cuts, giving her staff more job security.

"Eliminating these three-and-a-half vacant positions does not undermine my staff, it protects them," she said at the most recent Library Advisory Board meeting on Aug. 19.

"Building in efficiencies that allow us to operate close to our state minimum prevents the elimination of any of my staff during the upcoming budget cycle."

The Erie County Public Library is a district library center and must have a minimum of 71 employees to receive state funding. The reorganization would reduce the library's employees from 76 to 72 plus a part-time position.

Erie County Public Information Officer Chris Carroll said four more positions will need to be filled after the reorganization: Two branch supervisors, an assistant director of literary services and a collections coordinator. Another five positions are in the "final stages" of being filled, he added, bringing the projected number of total employees to 82.

When asked by the Erie Times-News if the reorganization guaranteed that no further staff cuts would befall the library during the upcoming budget season, the administration did not provide any commitments.

"Although it is ill-advised to use words such as 'guaranteed' when discussing matters related to a budget that will ultimately be determined by both the administration and council, this is the administration's plan for the structure of the library moving forward," Carroll said.

Former library director: Reorganization is 'strategic retreat'

The fate of the library has been a hot-button issue for much of the year.

After County Council adopted the 2024 budget in December, Erie County Executive Brenton Davis sought to cut eight library positions, citing decreased circulation and what he called a "persistent decline in library use."

Council later voted to override six of those cuts.

Earlier this year, Davis brokered a deal with Gannon University to allow the school to build and operate a Great Lakes research and education center inside Blasco Memorial Library for an initial 25-year period, insisting, among other things, that it could drive more traffic to the county's main public library.

The decision drew backlash from several residents who viewed the project as an infringement on a public space and a potential hindrance to library programs and services.

The center is slated to open in early 2025.

Former Erie County Councilwoman Mary Rennie, who previously served as executive director of the Erie County Public Library, called the reorganization a "strategic retreat" and a "deal with the devil" during a recent council meeting, stating the library director is only agreeing to staff cuts to delay more draconian cuts by Davis later.

"It's no coincidence this plan folds in very neatly with the actions over the past year that have been really a thinly disguised war against the library," Rennie told council.

While Stefano has stated that the reorganization was not the result of a directive from the Davis administration, Rennie argued it's a "short-term strategy" that will ultimately benefit Davis' desire to disinvest in the library.

"Facilities, programming, staffing, expert services — all of those components are important," Rennie said. "And this particular plan jettisons some of the staffing component that actually oversees the development of programs. Programs are not just some gimmick to get people into the library. They are an opportunity for hands-on learning and they are very much needed."

Council approves reorganization in 4-3 vote

County Council voted 4-3 in favor of the reorganization.

Voting in favor were Democratic council members Terry Scutella and Jim Winarski and Republicans Ellen Schauerman and Charlie Bayle. Voting against were Democrats Andre Horton, Rock Copeland and Chris Drexel.

Copeland said he wasn't comfortable with the library operating just above the minimum number of employees and said the administration should instead reinvest the cost-savings into more staff.

Horton said he wouldn't support any reorganization so close to budget season.

Carroll told the Times-News the reorganization was originally anticipated to be part of the upcoming budget, but due to "immediate staffing challenges," it was determined that action was required before the end of the year.

Scutella praised the reorganization as a "proactive move." He also said it's unlikely council will favor further staff cuts following the reorganization.

The Davis administration is required to send a budget to council by Oct. 1.

A.J. Rao can be reached at arao@gannett.com. Follow him on X @ETNRao.