



Belleville Public Library & Information Center

221 Washington Avenue
Belleville, NJ 07109
973-450-3434
Bellepl.org

AGENDA
Library Board of Trustees
Wednesday, June 11, 2025 – 6 PM
The Teen Room at the Belleville Public Library & Information Center

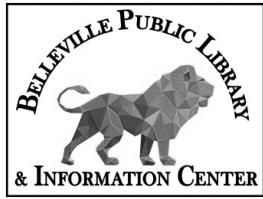
- Call to Order
- Sunshine Notice:
This meeting, published under Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, and commonly referred to as the "Open Public Meetings Act," is hereby notified that notice of this meeting has been given.
- Roll Call
- Approval of the minutes of May 14, 2025.
- Executive Session
- Communications:
 - Nothing to report.
- Committee Reports:
 - Building and Grounds
 - Personnel
 - Budget
- Interim Director's Report
- Old Business:
 - Nothing to report
- New Business:
 - BOOKDROP
 - HVAC
 - 2024 Audit
- Resolutions:
 - 06-0001 Authorization to pay June 2025 Bills.



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- 06-0002 Authorization for the Interim Library Director to pay bills in July and August, 2025.
- 06-0003 Authorization to increase the hourly wages for part-time employees.
- 06-0004-Authorization to Restate an Existing Deferred Compensation Plan.
- 06-0005 Authorization Approving a Salary Increase for the Interim Library Director.
- Public Comments
- Adjournment



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MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Belleville Public Library and Information Center
May 14, 2025

The Belleville Public Library and Information Center Board of Trustees held its monthly meeting in the Teen Room on May 14 at 6:00 PM. Present: Renato Peralta, Mayor Michael Melham, Ralph Tunis, Jeanne Lombardi, Christine Lamparello, Nelson Barrera, Marleni Muñiz and Nicole Shanklin. Frances Bacardi attended.

Renato Peralta opened the meeting, and Frances Bacardi announced that it had been published in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

MINUTES:

As presented, Renato Peralta moved to accept the minutes of March 12, 2025. Nelson Barrera made the motion, Ralph Tunis seconded, and the board approved it by voice vote. Marleni Muñiz abstained.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The board convened at 6:01 PM to address personnel matters. Jeanne Lombardi made the motion, which Nelson Barrera seconded, and the Board approved it by voice vote. The Board returns to the regular session at 6:02 PM. Mayor Michael Melham made the motion, seconded by Ralph Tunis, and a voice vote of the Board approved it.

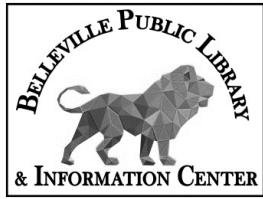
COMMUNICATIONS:

Rory Wells has contacted the library with a request to use space for a "table reading"—a session where actors and readers read through a script aloud, giving performers a chance to rehearse and allowing the writer/producer to hear how the script plays out. The script is an adaptation: a modern retelling of the biblical story of Joseph, featuring a powerful urban mayor in the role of Pharaoh. His greatest challenge is confronting an international virus, for which he must rely on a young Seer with the unique ability to interpret dreams. The Board voted in favor of hosting this event.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Buildings and Grounds:
Nothing to report.

Personnel:
Executive Session



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Budget:

The library has not received its appropriation reserves from the Township for the second quarter of 2025. The Division of Local Government Services recommends that payments to the board be made within 20 days of the quarterly tax due date. Mayor Melham informed the board that he would approach Frank Di Maria, CFO, and ask for the check on behalf of the library..

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

April:

National Library Week, celebrated annually to recognize the vital role libraries and library professionals play in transforming lives and strengthening communities, was observed the week of April 7th. In honor of the occasion, the Friends of the Library distributed pens to patrons at the Circulation desk upon checkout. A festive basket of plastic Easter eggs filled with Welch's fruit gummies was placed in the Children's Room for young visitors to enjoy.

Jewish Family Services of Middlesex County has temporarily postponed its citizenship classes due to the loss of federal grant funding. Classes were scheduled to resume on April 22, though they will be shortened in duration.

The Belleville Beginners class visits began with 43 classes visiting the library over five consecutive Fridays.

The library hosted a Financial Wellness & Literacy Night, presented in collaboration with Robert Sanchez, a PNC branch banker. The event offered attendees practical guidance on personal finance management.

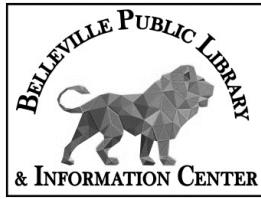
In the Teen Room, programming included a popular Dino & Fairy Garden event, where tweens and teens created themed terrarium gardens to take home and enjoy. In addition to ongoing programming, the room continues to draw strong participation for the Anime & Manga Club and Dungeons & Dragons sessions.

The Children's Room offered a unique Wolly Pets Felting workshop for students in grades 3 through 8. Participants learned needle felting techniques and crafted their Wolly Pokeball Pet.

May:

This is a summary of the recent events that showcase the library's ongoing commitment to community engagement, creativity, and literacy development.

- Maker Space: Reuse & Recycle Craft Event – In celebration of Earth Day
- Books and Badges Storytime with the Belleville Police Department – Building a positive relationship between youth and local law enforcement through the shared experience of story time.



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- Play-Doh Playdate – This program supports early childhood development by fostering fine motor skills, creativity, and social interaction in a relaxed, welcoming setting.
- Cardboard Explosion Puppet Show – Notably, this event also reached a broader audience through a Facebook livestream, which 641 patrons viewed
- Cinco de Mayo Celebration: In recognition of cultural diversity and bilingual learning, this program featured a Spanish language story time and themed crafts.
- Guitars Plus – A music-based program introducing learners to rhythm, instruments, and group play
- PJ Storytime – An evening program encouraging bedtime reading routines.
- Anime Club – Japanese animation
- Belle Crochet – Crafting for patrons of all skill levels.

OLD BUSINESS:

After reviewing private health insurance options, the library employees chose to continue their coverage under COBRA for 18 months, as it allows them to remain on the Township's insurance plan. This plan offers better benefits and is more cost-effective for the library. In addition, the library has secured supplemental coverage through SIP, including workers' compensation, general liability, umbrella, property, and cybersecurity insurance.

NEW BUSINESS:

Effective May 1st, the library has embarked on a new chapter. All services previously provided by the Township have been discontinued and replaced with new software systems, payroll services, and operational programs.

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RESOLUTIONS:

- a) 5-0001: Authorization to pay April and May 2025 bills. The motion was approved by Jeanne Lombardi, seconded by Ralph Tunis, and backed by a unanimous roll call from the Board.
- b) 5-0002 Authorization for the implementation of an Abuse Prevention Policy. Jeanne Lombardi approved the motion, seconded by Nelson Barrera, and a unanimous roll call from the Board supported it.
- c) 5-0003 Authorization to void checks from the operating account. Jeanne Lombardi approved the motion, seconded by Nelson Barrera, and a unanimous roll call from the Board supported it.
- d) 5-0004 Authorization to approve an hourly pay raise for a part-time employee. Nicole Shanklin approved the motion, seconded by Nelson Barrera, and a unanimous roll call from the Board supported it.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.



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ADJOURNMENT:

Ralph Tunis motioned to adjourn, seconded by Nelson Barrera, and approved by the board's unanimous vote.

Prepared and Submitted by Frances Bacardi

NEXT BOARD MEETING SCHEDULED FOR Wednesday, June 11, at 6:00 PM