

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD

CAROL FITZGERALD
VIVIAN ERICKSON
CANDACE VESSELLA
DIANNA BOEHM
MARY HOLLOWAY



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Sussex County Library Advisory Board (LAB) Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 19, 2026
10a -11:30a

West Complex Meeting Room Virtual participation is available.

Email Rachel Lynch at Rachel.lynch@sussexcountyde.gov for login information.

Attendees:

In Person: Carol Fitzgerald (CF), Vivian Erickson (VE), Candace Vessella (CV), Rachel Lynch, Alison Miller

Virtual: Catharine Kramer, Katie McDonough, Kelly Kline, Lea Rosell, Melissa Johnson, Rachel Lawson, Pamela Batten, Anne Hiller Clark, Karen Johnson-Kemp, Meghan Palazzo, Maureen Miller, Mary Brittingham, Kristen Gramer, Jill DiPaolo, Kevin, Julia Merola, Jessica Webb, Gail Bruce

Absent: Mary Holloway (MH), Dianna Boehm (DB)

Call to Order & Adoption of the Wednesday, August 19, 2026 Agenda. 10:01 am

Motion: CF Seconded: VE

Approval of Wednesday, June 17, 2026 minutes, as amended

Motion: VE Seconded: CF

Announcements:

- Library Study presented at LAB meetings as LAB is only library meeting open to the public
 - BerryDunn Consultants hired by Sussex County for comprehensive library study of both Independent and County-run libraries
 - Public comment welcome during Public Comment section of agenda with reminder of procedures
- Annie Norman retired and now running for 374th District Representative
- Welcome to Anne Hiller Clark, acting state librarian
 - National Book festival to be held in Washington DC
 - Study of school libraries in DLC and scores comparison

Sussex County Libraries

- System Updates
 - Library Study
 - Gina's email about study introduction
 - Article in Cape Gazette
 1. Quotes Gina as County CFO. Quotes Candace as Chair of LAB, thus representing all of LAB
 2. Reminder that members of Sussex LAB support all libraries, regardless of governance



3. Be cognizant of comments/comparisons that are divisive and misleading
4. Governance of nonprofit organizations and government agencies are noncomparable
- Answers to questions about upcoming study
 1. Should libraries contact the consultant directly?
 - No, consultants will contact the libraries
 2. Will monthly LAB meetings be sufficient to keep Library Board members and other stakeholders informed in a timely way?
 - Yes
 3. How will questions raised at LAB meetings receive timely responses?
 - At monthly LAB meetings
 4. Will the consultants make in-person visits to all 14 libraries?
 - Consultants will schedule meetings with each library either in-person or virtually
 5. How will library Stakeholders (Library Board Members, Library Directors, and Friends' Groups) be informed about the LAB Meetings?
 - Agendas posted via the Sussex County online calendar. LAB meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of every month.
 6. Who makes up the County's project team and who is considered the other project stakeholders?
 - Sussex County hired BerryDunn in lieu of a working group. Gina Jennings, Rachel Lynch, and Alison Miller will be BerryDunn contacts.
 7. When will the "virtual kickoff presentation" take place with the County's project team and other project stakeholders? When will the consultant's Project Plan be made available to the Public?
 - Kickoff Presentation and Project Plan will be at the September 16, 2026 LAB meeting.
- System meeting summary- updates/concerns
 - Peace week presentation by Boyd Sorenson
 - Bed bugs discussion regarding possible infestation of furniture as opposed to books
 - Internet outages
 - Library Study – no information to date
 - Transit van fire. No one was harmed, but items were damaged.
 - Good Neighbor Day outreach program
- Library Advisory Board (LAB) updates
 - LAB report
 - CF – Summer Reading coming to close. Parties are planned, Delmar to have Bouncy house in the library
 - VE – Milford construction continues and library open. Greenwood and Milton libraries were visited. Invited libraries to DE Friends event
 - CV – Rehoboth construction continues. Lewes summer reading and other programs well attended.
 - DB – not present
 - MH – not present

This Agenda is subject to change to include the addition or deletion of items, including Executive Sessions, which arise at the time of the Meeting. Agenda items listed may be considered out of sequence.

DDL/Steering/DE Libraries/COL

- Council on Libraries report
 - Briefings heard for FY28 bond bill requests. Presentations on request to be at September meeting
- Consortium Director's Meeting report (in place of Public Library Steering Committee Meeting)
 - Del-Tech items over 5 years do not need to be kept and may collect fines.
 - DHSS collection going to Del-Tech libraries as float books. Libraries with these float materials may pass onto Del-Tech
 - Due to toner specifications and cost, reviewing print/copy fees
 - ERate update
 - Service Library areas for Harrington and Duck Creek
 - NOMA opening celebration

Public Comment

- Members of the public will have the opportunity to comment on items related to the posted agenda.
 - CV issued a statement
 - 3 library directors expressed concern over representation on the County Project Team

Next meeting date: Wednesday, September 16, 2026, at 10:00am West Complex 1st Floor meeting room. Virtual participation is available.

Adjourn at 10:34 am

Motion: CF Seconded: VE

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