



Library Commission Members

Natalie Piernak, Chairman

Emma Howard, Vice-Chairman

, Secretary

, Treasurer

, Trustee

William Rudd, Trustee

Lorie Barnwell, City Treasurer Trustee

NOTICE

WARREN PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Warren Civic Center Library

Mark Twain Room

1 City Square, Suite 100

Warren, MI 48093

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT there will be a regular, in-person meeting of the Warren Public Library Commission on **Thursday, April 16, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.**

CONTACT/ACCOMMODATIONS INFORMATION:

* If you require disability-related accommodations in order to participate in this meeting or event, please contact the ADA Coordinator by email - adawarren@cityofwarren.org or telephone - (586) 574-4671 at least 48 hours before the meeting or event.

WARREN PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WARREN CIVIC CENTER LIBRARY- MARK TWAIN ROOM
1 CITY SQUARE, SUITE 100
WARREN, MI 48093
April 16, 2026
6:00 p.m.

- **Call to Order**
- **Roll Call**
- **Approval of Agenda**
- **Approval of Minutes**
 - **Regular Meeting March 19, 2026**
- **Financial Reports**
 - a. Monthly Line-Item Budget Report
 - b. Suburban Library Allocation Account
 - c. Branch Income Report
- **Director's Report**
 - a. **Statistics/Output Measures**
 - Unique Management report
 - b. **Branch Updates**
 - **Busch** –
 - **Burnette** –
 - **Miller** –
 - **Civic** –
 - c. **Current Projects**
 - Bid for Magazines to be awarded to Magazine Subscriptions Services
 - The construction of the new library is progressing
 - d. **Services**
 - Received check from SLC for ProPay credit transactions in the month of February 2026 totaling \$1,002.68.

e. Staffing

- **New Hires/Departures –**
 - O. Valniuk, Office Assistant at Burnette, transferred to the Controller's Office on April 7, 2026
- **Staff Transfers –**
 - G. Haines, Office Assistant at Civic, transferred to the Burnette Branch on April 7, 2026
- **Short-term leave –**

f. Marketing/Outreach

- eNewsletter update: All programs listed in the eNewsletter for children, teens, and adults.
- Outreach program focused on Warren residents; home delivery of materials to persons with disabilities and homebound - suspended temporarily.
- March is Reading Month
 - 241 participants in reading challenge
 - School visits
 - 16 visited the library
 - 12 visits to schools
 - 1,519 children
- Two staff members set to attend MLA Spring Institute annual conference held in Grand Rapids, MI on March 18 - 20, 2026 (see attached reports).

g. Discussion items:

- Status update on naming of the new branch
- Election of Officers
- Ongoing Commission Training
- Director and Commission Evaluation

- **Audience Participation**

Members of the audience who would like to address the Library Commission this evening may do so under the audience portion. Patrons have 3 (three) minutes to speak.

- **Action Items:**

- Election of Officers

- **Friends of the Warren Public Library**

- **S.L.C. Report**

- **Commissioner's Comments**
- **Next Meeting Date – May 21, 2026**
- **Adjournment**

WARREN PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

WARREN CIVIC CENTER LIBRARY – MARK TWAIN ROOM

1 CITY SQUARE SUITE 100

WARREN, MI 48093

MARCH 23, 2026

6:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Natalie Piernak.
2. **Roll Call:**
Commissioners Present: Lorie Barnwell, Emma Howard, Natalie Piernak, and William Rudd.
Also Attending: M. McCarville, Director of Warren Public Libraries, C. Murphy, City of Warren Attorney.
3. **Approval of Agenda:**
 - a. Howard motioned to approve the agenda, supported by Barnwell. The motion carried.
4. **Approval of Minutes:**
 - a. **Regular Meeting February 19, 2026**
 - i. Howard motioned to approve the amended February 19, 2026 minutes, supported by Barnwell. The motion carried.
5. **Financial Reports:** M. McCarville reported on the financial state of the Warren Public Library Branches. The FY27 Budget Request has been submitted.
6. **Director's Report:**
 - a. **Unique Management:** Continuing to collect money for lost and missing items for the library system.
 - b. **Branch Updates:** Busch additional shelving in adult room has been ordered. The Library of Things collection is available at Miller. Burnette will be adding a Library of Things collection. The Sunday hours at Civic Center are well received by patrons.
 - c. **Current Projects:** The request for bid placed on BidNet for magazines. The construction of the new unnamed library is progressing and the furniture has been selected. The new Library website went live on March 17, 2026.
 - d. **Services:** Received a check from SLC for ProPay credit transactions totaling \$713.46

- e. Staffing: A Library page at the Miller Branch resigned and A. Givens was hired to fill that opening. A. Libby returned to work after a short-term leave on February 27, 2026.
 - f. Marketing/Outreach: Spring quarterly printing of Warren Today, Activity Guide was mailed out to Warren residents. Two staff members are attending MLA Spring Institute in Grand Rapids. Two other staff members will be attending the Public Library Association annual conference in Minneapolis, MN.
 - g. Discussion items:
 - i. The fiscal year 2026-2027 library budget was presented. There was discussion about the requested personnel positions. Discussed the progress of naming of the new library branch. Increasing the award amount of Spartan 6 Security's contract award to \$60,000 to cover year-round service at the Burnette Branch. Going Fine Free for Adult Print materials (books, magazines and pamphlets). Two staff members to attend MLA Advocacy Day on April 28, 2026. All Library Commission Members are encouraged to attend. There will be ongoing training and evaluation of Commission and Director.
7. **Audience Participation:** An audience member raised concern about library funding being used for security guards and having the Director involved the evaluation process.
8. **Action Items:**
- a. Barnwell motioned to increase Spartan 6 Security current contract from \$40,000 to \$60,000. Howard supported. The motion carried.
 - b. Rudd motioned to approve the fiscal year 2026-2027 library budget. Piernak supported. The motion failed with a vote of 2-2. In favor: Piernak, Rudd. Opposed: Barnwell, Howard.
 - c. Barnwell motioned to postpone the approval of the fiscal year 2026-2027 library budget. Howard supported. The motion carried.
 - d. Howard motioned to go Fine Free for adult print materials (books, magazines and pamphlets) Barnwell supported. The motion carried.
9. **Friends of the Warren Public Library:** McCarville met with Friends Member Marge to discuss the Children's Garden at Civic Center. The Friends Board met on March 16, 2026.
10. **S. L. C. Report:** McCarville attended the SLC Advisory Council meeting.
11. **Commissioner's Comments:** A special meeting was proposed for April 8th at 6:00 p.m. at the Civic Center Library Mark Twain room pending commissioners schedules.
12. **Next Meeting Date:** April 16, 2026
13. **Adjournment:** Barnwell motioned to adjourn the meeting, supported by Rudd . The motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF BUDGET, EXPENDITURES, AND ENCUMBRANCES

CITY OF WARREN-LIBRARY

PERIOD 07/01/25 - 06/30/26

as of 3/31/2026

	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>CURRENT BUDGET</u>	<u>YTD EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>YTD ENCUMBERED</u>	<u>YTD UNENCUMBERED</u>	<u>% REMAINING</u>
271-9271-70300	151,961.00	151,961.00	127,938.09	0.00	24,022.91	16%
271-9271-70600	1,573,587.00	1,573,587.00	1,136,464.33	0.00	437,122.67	28%
271-9271-70714	300,000.00	300,000.00	177,311.30	0.00	122,688.70	41%
271-9271-70900	20,000.00	20,000.00	5,548.76	0.00	14,451.24	72%
271-9271-71000	17,000.00	17,000.00	4,998.16	0.00	12,001.84	71%
271-9271-71302	25,000.00	25,000.00	26,833.33	0.00	(1,833.33)	0%
271-9271-71303	9,200.00	9,200.00	10,066.67	0.00	(866.67)	0%
271-9271-71500	168,266.00	168,266.00	122,160.91	0.00	46,105.09	27%
271-9271-71900	443,080.00	443,080.00	330,517.20	0.00	112,562.80	25%
271-9271-71904	175,768.00	175,768.00	131,823.00	0.00	43,945.00	25%
271-9271-71905	28,229.00	28,229.00	20,335.09	0.00	7,893.91	28%
271-9271-71906	2,182.00	2,182.00	1,609.57	0.00	572.43	26%
271-9271-72100	48,053.00	48,053.00	33,623.70	0.00	14,429.30	30%
271-9271-72101	45,497.00	45,497.00	93,616.72	0.00	(48,119.72)	-106%
271-9271-72200	290,226.00	290,226.00	217,674.00	0.00	72,552.00	25%
271-9271-72201	168,117.00	168,117.00	121,814.63	0.00	46,302.37	28%
271-9271-72401	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
271-9271-72700	90,000.00	90,000.00	32,689.63	38,481.78	18,828.59	21%
271-9271-72702	20,000.00	20,000.00	7,853.63	7,874.34	4,272.03	21%
271-9271-80100	406,700.00	417,700.00	141,693.91	59,225.38	216,780.71	52%
271-9271-80117	250,000.00	250,000.00	146,433.69	0.00	103,566.31	41%
271-9271-80130	75,000.00	75,000.00	0.00	0.00	75,000.00	100%
271-9271-80200	4,500.00	4,500.00	19,373.97	165.45	(15,039.42)	0%
271-9271-80301	1,000.00	1,000.00	854.27	0.00	145.73	15%
271-9271-82201	21,200.00	21,200.00	8,569.83	0.00	12,630.17	60%
271-9271-82202	127,000.00	127,000.00	49,070.30	0.00	77,929.70	61%
271-9271-82207	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00	0.00	40,000.00	100%
271-9271-85300	17,700.00	17,700.00	5,934.02	0.00	11,765.98	66%
271-9271-86100	200.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	100%
271-9271-86300	4,000.00	4,000.00	659.17	0.00	3,340.83	84%
271-9271-86400	15,000.00	15,000.00	4,917.86	50.00	10,032.14	67%
271-9271-88011	50,000.00	50,000.00	15,210.43	18,064.00	16,725.57	33%
271-9271-90200	100.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	100%
271-9271-91000	52,600.00	52,600.00	39,449.97	0.00	13,150.03	25%
271-9271-92000	250,000.00	250,000.00	137,703.90	0.00	112,296.10	45%
271-9271-93000	57,500.00	57,500.00	11,854.99	5,179.06	40,465.95	70%
271-9271-95000	293,900.00	293,900.00	220,425.03	0.00	73,474.97	25%
271-9271-96470	107,112.00	107,112.00	104,496.18	0.00	2,615.82	2%
271-9271-96471	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
271-9271-97400	379,000.00	3,077,738.00	190,958.48	2,512.67	2,884,266.85	94%
271-9271-98000	63,500.00	105,500.00	20,388.14	0.00	85,111.86	81%
271-9271-98100	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
271-9271-98200	352,000.00	352,000.00	217,950.77	0.00	134,049.23	38%
271-9271-98500	0.00	38,205.00	10,838.00	0.00	27,367.00	72%
271-9271-98505	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%

TOTAL	6,144,178.00	8,934,121.00	3,949,661.63	131,552.68	4,852,906.69	55.79%
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**SUBURBAN LIBRARY COOPERATIVE
CENTRALIZED PURCHASING EXPENSE FORM**

LIBRARY NAME: Warren Public Library
BALANCE AS OF : 3/3/2026

\$13,915.59

VENDOR	PURPOSE	AMOUNT
Deposit- cash for sale of 4 Dell Optiplex 5070		\$ (480.00)
Deposit- check for sale of 1 Dell Optiplex 5070		\$ (120.00)
Deposit- check for sale of 1 Dell Optiplex 7490		\$ (125.00)
Deposit- cash for sale of 2 Dell Monitors		\$ (20.00)
		\$
		\$
TOTAL EXPENSE REQUESTS		<u>\$ (745.00)</u>
NEW BALANCE AS OF : 3/27/2026		<u>\$14,660.59</u>

PLEASE ATTACH INVOICES OR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION OF EXPENSE REQUESTS

I VERIFY THAT THIS PERSON(S)/ITEM(S) HAVE NOT BEEN REIMBURSED/PAID FROM ANOTHER SOURCE

DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE Man McCarroll

DATE March 27, 2026

MM

**SUBURBAN LIBRARY COOPERATIVE
CENTRALIZED PURCHASING EXPENSE FORM**

LIBRARY NAME Warren Public Library

BALANCE AS OF March 31, 2026

\$14,660.49

VENDOR	PURPOSE	AMOUNT
		\$ _____
		\$ _____
		\$ _____
		\$ _____
		\$ _____
		\$ _____
		\$ _____
TOTAL EXPENSE REQUESTS		\$ _____
NEW BALANCE AS OF _____		\$ _____

PLEASE ATTACH INVOICES OR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION OF EXPENSE REQUESTS

I VERIFY THAT THIS PERSON(S)/ITEM(S) HAS NOT BEEN REIMBURSED/PAID FROM ANOTHER SOURCE

DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

**SUBURBAN LIBRARY COOPERATIVE
CENTRALIZED PURCHASING EXPENSE FORM**

LIBRARY NAME: Warren Public Library
BALANCE AS OF : 3/27/2026

\$14,660.49

VENDOR	PURPOSE	AMOUNT
Deposit- cash for sale of 1 Dell Optiplex 7060		\$ (110.00)
Deposit- check for sale of 1 Dell Optiplex 5070		\$ (120.00)
		\$
		\$
		\$
		\$
TOTAL EXPENSE REQUESTS		<u>\$ (330.00)</u>
NEW BALANCE AS OF : 4/9/2026		<u>\$ 14,990.49</u>

PLEASE ATTACH INVOICES OR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION OF EXPENSE REQUESTS

I VERIFY THAT THIS PERSON(S)/ITEM(S) HAVE NOT BEEN REIMBURSED/PAID FROM ANOTHER SOURCE

DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE *Maria McCall*

DATE April 9, 2026

MM

BRANCH INCOME REPORT

2025/2026 Fiscal Year

INCOME	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTAL
Copy Machine	\$ 3,127.78	\$ 3,629.68	\$ 3,208.94	\$ 3,556.04	\$ 3,269.02	\$2,938.93	19,730.39
Video/DVD	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00
Non-resident Fee	\$ 164.00	\$ 175.39	\$ 131.39	\$ 218.06	\$ 194.34	\$165.37	1,048.55
Fines	\$ 529.37	\$ 1,238.61	\$ 761.19	\$ 714.92	\$ 994.96	\$ 1,043.24	5,282.29
Lost Materials	\$ 322.97	\$ 1,218.95	\$ 865.25	\$ 631.98	\$ 957.42	\$ 984.95	4,981.52
Miscellaneous	\$ 445.30	\$ 582.80	\$ 482.21	\$ 483.65	\$ 541.00	\$ 596.40	3,131.36
Room Rental	\$ 10.00	\$ 20.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 230.00	\$ 10.00	270.00
Referral Fees	\$ 100.00	\$ 206.00	\$ 246.17	\$ 174.37	\$ 187.66	\$ 104.22	1,018.42

INCOME	January	February	March	April	May	June	TOTAL
Copy Machine	\$ 2,824.49	\$ 3,053.99	\$ 3,664.89				29,273.76
Video/DVD	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -				0.00
Non-resident Fee	\$ 170.00	\$ 192.02	\$ 210.00				1,620.57
Fines	\$ 835.35	\$ 1,130.54	\$ 1,063.93				8,312.11
Lost Materials	\$ 337.15	\$ 887.43	\$ 791.10				6,997.20
Miscellaneous	\$ 495.50	\$ 521.20	\$ 563.70				4,711.76
Room Rental	\$ 50.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 375.00				715.00
Referral Fees	\$ 69.66	\$ 202.37	\$ 253.20				1,543.65

TOTAL REVENUE

53,174.05

UNIQUE MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC.

2016 - 2025 Fiscal Years

	TOTALS	7/1/17-6/30/18	7/1/18-6/30/19	7/1/19-6/30/20	TOTAL
Accounts Submitted	14,969	501	447	297	16,214
Cash Recovered	117,352.86	8,863.82	8,335.96	4,885.58	139,438.22
Materials Recovered	101,148.40	9,072.92	5,955.13	4,805.46	120,981.91
Waived Amount*	32,379.83	3,101.64	2,686.17	1,197.50	39,365.14
Expenditures	73,750.40	3,203.40	3,669.50	3,158.75	83,782.05

	TOTALS	7/1/20-6/30/21	7/1/21-6/30/22	7/1/22-6/30/23	TOTAL
Accounts Submitted	16,214	388	207	408	17,217
Cash Recovered	139,438.22	8,204.81	8,451.74	5,100.81	161,195.58
Materials Recovered	120,981.91	8,436.61	3,995.44	9,717.18	143,131.14
Waived Amount*	39,365.14	3,105.39	1,606.91	5,390.80	49,468.24
Expenditures	83,782.05	3,424.60	2,106.90	4,202.40	93,515.95

	TOTALS	7/1/23-6/30/24	7/1/24-6/30/25	7/1/25-6/30/26	TOTAL
Accounts Submitted	17,217	458	400	607	18,682
Cash Recovered	161,195.58	6,082.21	4,974.03	5,780.64	178,032.46
Materials Recovered	143,131.14	11,367.17	10,888.18	10,314.34	175,700.83
Waived Amount*	49,468.24	3,428.84	3,230.04	2,729.00	58,856.12
Expenditures	93,515.95	4,717.40	4,233.30	4,010.30	106,476.95

*Waived amount reflects the \$5.00 processing fee that is cancelled once the patron returns the materials or pays for the lost item. Amounts as of 4/1/2026

A. Swierczynski

Spring Institute 2026: Play It Forward

Reception- Grand Rapids Children's Museum

I learned so much about programming and the importance of play for children at this year's Spring Institute. The first keynote speaker, Maggie Lancaster - CEO of the Grand Rapids Children's Museum, talked about the different types of play and how play as a form of learning is at risk. Kids might have a hurried lifestyle or a change in family structure as well as spending a lot of time with academics and looking at screens, but museums and libraries have the opportunity of helping them learn through play. Play can be constructive, social, exploratory, creative, structured, pretend, and/or independent. As a Library Technician, I want to do my best to support our community with early development programs like story time. The different sessions helped me come up with ideas and inspiration for future programs.

One session was "Big Playdate Big Fun." This program focused on creative dramatic play for ages birth to five years old. Creative dramatic play can look like families playing house, kids building train tracks on the floor together, a life-sized Candyland game, or an arcade of all different types of ball activities. The main focus is that children have a place to explore and play whether it's through free play, guided play, or structured play. Programs like this would bring our community together as families can play together and meet new friends. However, programs like this might be difficult to plan without a designated program space as set up may take some time.

Another session talked about building science literacy with paleontological programs. This year's Collaborative Summer Library Program theme is "Unearth a Story," so there will be a big focus on dinosaurs and paleontology. The presenters of this program walked us through teaching about paleontology as a non-expert and gave us tons of resources to use and share with patrons. Another session shared their experience offering "Baby Raves." These are high-energy programs for ages birth to six that offer music, movement, and sensory play. These can build caregiver confidence, encourage joyful interaction between the community and the library, and support early literacy development. How can a Baby Rave support early literacy? Through call and response songs/chants, nursery rhymes (with a fun beat), story elements in remixes, and fine motor coordination (glowsticks!). Other name suggestions were given for this program such as "Baby Prom" or "Cabin Fever Wiggle Party." I also attended two workshops; Baby Storytime and Yoga Storytime. These workshops gave me confidence to try new activities and to try to offer more meditative programs for children.

As a newer employee, I was very happy to have this opportunity to learn and connect with so many other youth library workers. Whether they were part time, full time, older, younger, or never worked in a library, these people all had something valuable to share. I have already made adjustments to my current story times and hope to plan more exciting and collaborative programs for our patrons in the future.

Spring Institute 2026: Play It Forward

Reception- Grand Rapids Children's Museum

Spring Institute's early arrival reception was held at the Grand Rapids Children's Museum and was a great place to visit and get to explore. There are so many play themes within and even though we couldn't do something like that on a grand scale it would be cool to have rotating themes. For example, there is a whole section made to be a pizzeria! Rather than have all the small bins of toys out at once, we could do something like that and rotate it out each month to give new ideas and ways to play. Kids could make their own pizza out of felt pieces we could have available, laminated menu order lists where they could mark off the toppings that someone is ordering with dry-erase markers, these could really get them playing, especially with others or their adults who come with them.

The museum also had sample sensory bins as simple as yarn and pom poms in a bin with little tools to scoop and play with. These bins can even match with stories such as the one they had set up for "cloudy with a chance of meatballs" in which they used yellow yarn and brown pom poms for spaghetti and meatballs.

Thursday, March 19th

Opening Keynote- Maggie Lancaster, CEO of the Children's Museum

Maggie gave a great opening keynote about how she got started at the Children's Museum. She talked about a lot of the outreach and partnerships they do. They even have a van they use and set up small stations for the kids to play. She also provided a nice list of other similar places throughout the state. We actually have the Discovery Center in Mt Clemens, so maybe we can reach out to them and see what sort of partnerships they might do.

Big Playdate, Big Fun: Creative Dramatic Play for Birth-Five

Becky Leboeuf (Delta Twp), Sydney Adams (Delta Twp), and Natalie Wessels (Delta Twp)

Delta Township runs large playdate programs 2-3 times a year. The programs typically have some sort of them and have lots of free play activities that encourage both family play as well as solo play. The programs are open to all ages- but geared to certain ages and they also include a baby area that has no choking hazards. Many of the items used are either items they already have or simple recycled boxes, tape, etc.

They discussed the benefits of play including cognitive, social, physical, and emotional skills. The playdates can be a great way for children to play with their adults and other kids. There are lots of different ways to play, it can be free play, guided, or structured. Play can also be a solitary, parallel, or cooperative way to play. Play can focus on motor skills, constructive skills, pretend skills, creativity, and following directions.

Delta tries to make sure these programs are not craft heavy and more play focused. One of my favorites they talked about was their "Tape Town" Playdate. Some of play sections were so simple too, like putting tape down on the floor to act as roads, then having boxes to be

M. Meservy

buildings, it's like one of those road rugs, but bigger! There's so many ways you could go with this too, like setting up a building to be a vet and then having vet supplies with it. You could set up a tunnel or boxes with blue streamers to be a car wash. These playdates are a fun way to be really simple and creative. Delta also tries to do community collaboration with these events as well, such as their "Tiny Town" where they had the fire department come, and other stations set up such as a farmer's stand, a bakery, a vet, etc. There's lots of ways to get the community involved with this.

Design a Teen Program with Joy

Jennifer Sunderhaus (Shelby Twp)

We want our teens to get something out of our programs. Whether that is having learned something or just had joy while being here. Some of the ways she discussed bringing joy into programs include creating a safe space, empowering teens, supporting what works, and integration. She talked about how to build trust with teens and how a relationship with the library can help them gain social skills, confidence, and they have adult role models. With our programming we can also help teens be creators and leaders.

She also discussed how to really evaluate our programming. Do we consider needs or wants? Do we have too many or too few programs (quality over quantity)? Do we take in what teens want in programming? We should also reflect more on our programming- how did it go? What did we expect vs what we got, etc?

Jennifer also pointed out how important staff wellness is. We can't create great programs if we are feeling burnt out or overwhelmed.

Gaming in Libraries: Bridging Educational Gaps for Teens

Clare O'Tsuji (Kent District)

Following more of Clare's talk with having an in-house collection for their teens, we could easily fit a few games in the teen room. Their collection didn't start off popular and teens mostly played UNO, but they began rotating the games so that the teens wouldn't get bored of them and would have to try something new. I think this could also be fun if we did a once a month program where I could simply be available to teach any of the games or even just be someone they could play with. I think having something more passive like this would be great for teens at Warren, The kids have all these great toys and steam games and the teens feel left to the wayside at times. At Busch Erin started printing off fun coloring pages and we would put them out with some colored pencils for the teens after school and quite a few would excitedly take some and color together. They were also great about putting away the supplies they used before they left the building.

Clare also gave a list of great games that are easy to learn and don't take hours to play. She also discussed how teens aren't engaging in school, many have difficulties learning, and how much education they lost during the pandemic. She connected how games can teach teens skills such as math, logic, and critical thinking. Games can improve memory and problem solving as well as promoting creativity and community. There are lots of great games that can teach phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

M. Meservy

Although this talk was focussed on having board games out for teens to play with, it really got me thinking about a board game collection to circulate. I have had people ask previously and I think it could be a really great collection. We do currently have a few games in our Library of Things, but they are just basic games like Battleship, Dominoes, and Clue and patrons have to sign the contract which feels excessive for board games.. These are great games, but I would love to see more complex ones. Board games can be quite expensive and are great to be something to try out before buying. Oftentimes, if pieces get lost they can either be played without them or can be 3-D printed or even come with extras. It would be great if teens and adults could even play them in the library, we could simply have a rule that they can't go into the children's area as they have small pieces and are usually for older ages. This is where maybe we could reach out to Macomb Community College, they have a Vet Tech program and perhaps they would be willing to come in and pretend to be vets with the kids. Maybe we could have art majors come in and draw with the kids during an art themed play date.

Afternoon Keynote- Katie Mann and Annie Clark (OneSpot Theatre)

Katie and Annie discussed their workshops that they offer while also giving plenty of pointers to help libraries with different activities. They talked a lot about ways to offer opening environments to those who may not be able to do all the steps. It's good to keep in mind not everyone will have the same motor functions as everyone else and it's a great thing to keep in mind alternatives. They showed a song they do in "sign language" that they have adapted to be a bit simpler for those who don't have the same finger dexterity needed for some of the signs.

Friday, March 20th

Morning Keynote with Tony Weaver, Jr

Tony gave a great inspirational talk that really hit home with a lot of the audience. He discussed his early life that led to his graphic novel "Weirdo" and I think it really goes to show how we need to be an open and safe environment for all people.

Free and Play: Building a Not-So-Scary Haunted House

Eileen Wiedbrauk (Ann Arbor) and Katie Dudek-Wike (Ann Arbor)

This was a very fun talk and I would love to do something similar. Eileen and Katie set up a haunted house for anyone who doesn't want that scary halloween experience. Haunted houses typically rely on jump scares and will sometimes touch people- the not so scary haunted house was a great way to allow people who like halloween but didn't want that jump scare experience. They used low lights and included a sensory hour without noise. They used blinking lights and no strobe lights- all the lights could be controlled if needed.

A lot of planning went into this program. Eileen and Katie had to create a plan of how they were going to set it up, create items to go inside, plan lighting, and tear it all down. They used old halloween decorations, hand made items, and donations! Once the word was out about the program, many people offered items and old decorations they no longer used.

Their "haunted house" used fun motifs, such as a witch's house with funny potions and a witch to stand there and point out some of these, but you can also do it without staff having to

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be dressed up and keep it smaller. They created a stormy ceiling with leds that changed and played storm affect noises as well. A cauldron was made out of a home depot bucket, cardboard, pool noodles, and lots of paper mache! Potions were made out of glass bottles and either painted or given labels.

I would love to possibly work with Parks and Recreation and do something like this at Miller during Harvest Treat. We could do something smaller this year and if it went well, we could go bigger the following year.

Roots, Rocks, and Wonder: Science Play in Early Childhood

Wendy Lehman (Rochester Hills)

Wendy runs a very fun program at Rochester Hills that gets kids learning and outside! She runs it as an eight week program. Each week has a focus and the kids get to explore the park, hear a story, and work on a project.

She discussed the benefits and learning experiences including cognitive math (size, counting, matching, etc), cognitive-science (cause and effect, gravity, testing, etc), language and literacy (receptive and expressive language skills, vocabulary, pre-writing skills), social and emotional (self-discovery, understanding, confidence, etc), physical (fine and gross motor skills), and creative (open-ended discover).

Wendy shared her eight themes, books you could read, and the project. Her themes included plants & seeds, rocks, worms, and colors. Some of the projects included creating a bug hotel, painted rocks, nature bracelets. They would also do other activities, such as sensory bins with water where they could see what floated and what sank. Wendy also shared how these programs could be done inside if needed due to weather or if you don't have a park you can use.

Lunch Trivia with Matt Eickhoff

Not necessarily a part of the conference but Matt does really fun trivia and is always looking to travel and hold trivia events at libraries all over the state. I think he could be a fun way to try and get more young adults into the library who we don't see that often.

Exploratory Family STEM Play at the Library

Jodi Krahnke (Ypsilanti District)

Jodi started us off with discussions on different ways to play and benefits to it. Play can help build thinking and problem-solving skills, develop imagination and creativity, and increase physical development.

Jodi discussed how some of the items at their library are toys that are out at any time to play with. They also rotate out the toys. Jodi also gave lots of ideas and themes for play such as balance with yoga, stepping stones, and Keva planks or construction with SuperSpace Tiles and other blocks. Jodi will also encourage trying things multiple times. If they're doing balance, what did they try? Did they try to do it with their arms out or at their sides? Did they try to do it bending low to the ground?

Jodi also brought in lots of their fun STEM toys that they use. Some are ones that would need to be invested in but are really cool and some are just simple like block toys with challenge

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cards. My personal favorite was the Ozobots that are screen-free coding. We were able to play with it by drawing lines on paper and the ozobot followed the lines. You're also able to follow coding instructions and have it do other things by using different colors and patterns in the line.

Closing Keynote with Amy Nielander

Amy Nieland is an author and illustrator who also does parent-teacher workshops and gave us a small demonstration of how they work. They're a fun way that she has kids work together and communicate with their adults, but she also talked about how we can work together to communicate and collaborate within our own libraries to plan programs and events.