

NJLA Personnel Administration Subcommittee (PAC) Minutes - May 20, 2024, at 2 p.m. via Zoom

Zoom meeting information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84057318683?pwd=dk9ldTlqTUQ4ZTc4UUtjcjNHeUh0UT09>

Meeting ID: 840 5731 8683 / Passcode: 281067

+1 646 931 3860 OR +16469313860,,84057318683#,,,,*281067# (one-tap mobile)

+1 646 558 8656 OR +16465588656,,84057318683#,,,,*281067# (one-tap mobile)

Attendance: Ellen Callanan, Amy Joyner, Yolanda Keahey, Nicole Poyer, Eric Schwarz, Jeff Trout, Katy White.

Planned absences: Alfreda Richardson.

Start: 2:02 p.m.

1. Introductions.
2. Approval of minutes from April 15.
3. NJLA 2024 Conference: [Labor Unions in NJ Libraries program](#) will be held Friday, May 31 from 9 to 9:50 a.m.
 - a. Amy Joyner joined us as a guest to discuss the upcoming program. Among other topics, we discussed the differences between a library's union status and civil service status. Amy said that some employees at Rutgers are civil service, but not library workers. Ellen wrote in chat: "All of our library employees, including clerical positions, fall under Civil Service and are also represented by a union." Nicole confirmed that Morris County Library is unionized. Eric mentioned that he would bring up the two statuses at the program.
 - b. Speakers -- each to get about 5-7 minutes to speak:
 - i. Allison Ryan, Adult Services Supervisor at the Montgomery Branch at Somerset County Library System of New Jersey, represented by OPEIU (Office and Professional Employees International Union) Local 32.
 - ii. Beth Zak-Cohen, Librarian, Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center at the Newark Public Library. President of AFSCME, Local 2298, Council 63.
 - iii. Amy Joyner, Treasurer Secretary of AFSCME COLT Local 1761, Council 63, representing library workers at Rutgers University.
 - iv. Moderator: Eric.
 - c. Schedule at <https://njlaconference.info/>
 - d. Possible items for the speakers to cover:
 - i. Name of union
 - ii. Dues amounts/percentages.
 - iii. How long have you represented the library workers?
 - iv. Whom do you represent in the library and, if applicable, other areas of the organization?
 - v. Which library workers are not represented by the union?

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- vi. Benefits of the union. What would be different if there were no union?
 - vii. Challenges the union faces
 - viii. Can you explain the contract ratification process?
 - ix. Is your library civil service? How does this mesh with the union status?
4. Union membership survey being conducted by NJLA of library directors and academic library administrators only (part of a [larger survey](#) running from March 27-May 3). This replaces the survey that we had planned to send to all members.
- a. Two questions on the survey related to unions:
 - i. Is your library represented by one or more labor unions? (yes or no)
 - ii. How is your union aligned? Four choices
 - 1. We have a separate union (local) for our library, OR a contract that is not related to the pay or contract of employees outside the library.
 - 2. We have the same union (local) with our municipality/county/agency/organization, and our terms largely mirror those of employees outside the library.
 - 3. We have the same union (local) with our college/university/school, and our terms largely mirror those of employees outside the library.
 - 4. N/A
 - b. [Results](#):
 - i. 49 libraries responded that they are unionized. There were actually 51 “yes” responses, but there were two sets of duplicates (Clifton Public Library, Ramsey Public Library). This committee knows of four other library systems that are unionized, and the ALA-APA provided the names of three other unionized libraries and library systems.
 - ii. 85 libraries responded that they are not unionized. There were actually 88 responses, with three sets of duplicates (Hasbrouck Heights Public Library, The Morristown & Morris Township Library, Wyckoff Free Public Library). Additionally, one of the libraries (Roselle Park) responded no, but also answered questions about the union arrangement. “Twp of Washington” (Bergen County) and “Washington Township” (Morris County) are not duplicates.
5. Civil Service membership.
- a. The NJ Civil Service Commission maintains a list of [Civil Service agencies by municipality](#).
 - b. Nicole has updated [the list on our website](#). She is working with a contact at the Civil Service Commission (CSC), who said that 21 libraries were missing from the CSC agencies by municipality list. The CSC contact, in turn, is working with the

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Secretary of State office. Nicole is also checking on academic agencies (colleges and universities) and whether they should be listed.

6. General discussion of library unions
 - a. Recap/comments from April 15 meeting with Angela Jones, Chair of the ALA-APA SSLW Committee (ALA Allied Professional Association Standing Committee on the Salaries and Status of Library Workers)..
 - b. Recap/comments on [ALA-APA Salaries and Status of Library Workers Committee to Host Two Webinars](#) - May 1 and May 8:
 - i. Empowering Library Workers: Navigating Unionization in Challenging Environments. May 1st, 2:30 – 4:00pm. Comments from the audience will not be recorded so that they can speak freely. Angela noted that comments from the audience will not be recorded so that people may speak freely. [Recording](#).
 - ii. What Comes after Unionization: Effective Engagement with Library Workers will be held May 8th, 1:00pm-2:00pm. Angela said that this is an event for administrators/library leaders “focused on how they have approached working with a unionized workforce. There is a whole slew of rights that come with unionization. You are no longer an at-will employee no matter what state you are in.” She said that some library directors are happy about unionization because it streamlines communication. [Recording](#).
 - c. ALA-APA: List/map of unions
7. PAC name and mission (functions). NJLA is updating its bylaws, and this should be part of the discussion. Eric will work on this with Carina Gonzalez and Jeff Cupo. (See current mission [here](#).)
 - a. New name to better reflect mission: “Subcommittee on Library Work and Workers”
 - b. New proposed functions:
 - i. To educate members of the association on employment and libraries in New Jersey, in general and specific to types of libraries (such as academic/special/public/school, small vs. large libraries).
 - ii. To educate members on labor unions in libraries and civil service status in libraries.
 - iii. To educate workers and libraries on common benefits and rights in New Jersey and in library environments. These include but are not limited to pensions and retirement benefits, sick leave, salaries, asking about citizenship and/or salary history on job applications, and overtime pay.
 - iv. To gather, publish, and distribute data relating to the improvement of salary and working conditions of library personnel in New Jersey.
 - v. To recommend to the Executive Board programs relating to the improvement of salary and working conditions.
 - vi. To provide assistance to members seeking information relating to working practices.

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8. Annual salary guide
 - a. [2024 Salary Guide](#).
 - b. Future guides, including meeting goals of collecting salary data from libraries; and having more granularity in terms of regions and funding mechanisms within NJ, beginning vs. experienced personnel, and job titles. Can we use databases and/or other previously untapped statistics?
 - c. We may want to conduct a survey at some point in the future about salaries. One question to ask is whether a library meets or uses the NJLA salary recommendations.
 - d. Occasional questions from NJ libraries about the job titles. The titles in the guide were derived from historical civil service titles. A library director asked about “library assistant.” The civil service “local” (non-state position) job description for library assistant is [here](#). Titles can be looked up [here](#).

9. News from NJLA Executive Board Assistant Director Katy White:
 - a. NJLA’s strategic plan will be completed by the conference. Carina Gonzalez and Jeff Cupo are reviewing all of the committees. Some committees have low engagement.
 - b. [NJ Senator Andrew Zwicker](#) is sponsoring the [Freedom to Read Bill](#).
 - c. A number of school librarian positions in Hunterdon County may be eliminated. The South Orange and East Brunswick school districts are eliminating library positions.
 - d. Library network aid, which funds LibraryLinkNJ and the Talking Book and Braille Center, has been cut by about 20%, but NJLA is feeling positive that funds will be restored.
 - e. The NJLA Conference will likely combine with the NJ Association of School Librarians (NJASL) for a conference in February 2026 at the Hard Rock in Atlantic City, replacing the May conference at Harrah’s.

10. Informational items:
 - a. The [PAC](#) is a subcommittee of NJLA’s [Member Services Committee](#). Background from [NJLA Code for Committees](#):
 - b. Collaboration tools: [shared folder in Google Drive](#) (under Shared Drives). If you are on this subcommittee, you should see it under your Shared Drives in the Google Drive associated with your email address (if any). Alicia Gough at NJLA (agough@njla.org) can help any individual member with this.

11. Our next meeting will be held June **24**, 2024 (**fourth** Monday) from 2-3 p.m. via Zoom (same Zoom information as for this meeting) – [iCalendar \(.ics\) file](#). (This date was changed after the May 20 meeting.)

End: 3:08 p.m.

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Committee members:

- Eric Schwarz, Chair, Clarence Dillon Public Library, eschwarz@dillonlibrary.org
- Alfreda Richardson, Vice Chair, Rutgers University, alfredar@libraries.rutgers.edu
- Melissa Brisbin, Livingston Public Library, melissa.brisbin@livingston.bccls.org
- Ellen Callanan, Sussex County Library, callanan@sussexcountylibrary.org
- Tony Joachim (Chair, Member Services Committee), William Paterson University, joachima1@wpunj.edu
- Yolanda Keahey, Jersey City Public Library, ykeahey@yahoo.com
- Heather Kristian (Co-Chair, Member Services Committee), Pennsauken Free Public Library, heather.kristian@gmail.com
- Nicole Poyer (subcommittee intern), Somerset County Library System of New Jersey, npoyer@sclibnj.org.
- Lorraine Ruiz, Kenilworth Public Library, lr Ruiz@l mxac.org
- Jeff Trout, Cape May County Library, jefft@cmclibrary.org
- Katy White, NJLA liaison, kwhite@njla.org.