

3-4-2009

West Bend Library Board Meeting will be moved...

Ginny Maziarka

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Recommended Citation

Maziarka, Ginny, "West Bend Library Board Meeting will be moved..." (2009). *West Bend Community Memorial Library (Wisconsin)*, 2009. 161.

https://dc.uwm.edu/west_bend_library_challenge/161

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West Bend Library Board Meeting will be moved...



What was anticipated to be a lengthy Library board meeting Tuesday night turned out to be a very short evening for everyone involved.

That's because an overflow crowd forced the postponement of a meeting that was scheduled to discuss a recent complaint filed by West Bend residents Ginny and Jim Maziarka about questionable materials available within the West Bend Community Memorial Library.

The large crowd of people that included students and adults of all ages had hoped to offer their opinions on this subject, but the numbers exceeded the 265-capacity limit of the council chambers at City Hall. The room also included all four Milwaukee television stations.

"We have exceeded room capacity, and the meeting will have to be postponed to a later date to accommodate the (large) crowd," Library Board President Kathryn Engelbrecht told the audience. "We apologize for the inconvenience, but it's for the safety of everyone."

Members of the West Bend Police Department became concerned about the steady flow of people entering the chambers minutes before and shortly after the scheduled 7 p.m. start. After consulting with the Library Board, Library Director Michael Tyree and West Bend Assistant City Attorney Cheryl Wentland, Engelbrecht announced that due to a fire code issue, the meeting could not start until a representative of the West Bend Fire Department arrived to take a people count.

A subsequent count by Fire Department Shift Lieutenant Chuck Briske and the Police Department determined that the room was over capacity and the meeting would have to be postponed. Engelbrecht announced the decision to a crowd, which filed out of the Chambers disappointed but in an orderly fashion.

"It's disappointing that the meeting didn't take place, but we agree with the Fire Department," Ginny Maziarka said. "It is there right to call the meeting off because of the large crowd."

The board meeting was originally scheduled to take place at the Library, where it is normally held on a monthly basis, but the combination of limited space and the anticipated large crowd forced it be shifted to a larger venue.

"I know there's a lot of disappointed people," Tyree said. "I thought with a large place that we could have had the meeting tonight."

The Library Board was scheduled to hear opinions regarding the Library offering pro-homosexual content through books in the YA (Young Adult) Zone and via a link on their Web site.

The Maziarkas had requested the Library to provide an equal balance of faith-based and ex-"gay" books that oppose a prohomosexual ideology, a change in a book recommendation list which is currently titled, "Out of the Closet," the removal of two books for their explicit graphic sexual nature and the removal or password protection of a Web page that lists book titles about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender topics.

"We're disappointed by what happened, but this will give the community a chance to do more research (on this

issue),” Ginny Maziarka said. “All we want to see is more balance in our library.”

Despite the meeting’s postponement, Jim Maziarka was impressed by the turnout. “This speaks volumes of the level of interest and the community involvement,” he said.

No timetable was made by the Library Board as to when the meeting will be rescheduled or when location will be determined.

(By the way, that Jim Maziarka guy is really cute...) :-)