

6-16-2009

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Recommended Citation

Concerned West Bend Citizen, "New WB Library Board is Less Qualified" (2009). *West Bend Community Memorial Library (Wisconsin)*, 2009. 401.

https://dc.uwm.edu/west_bend_library_challenge/401

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Tuesday, June 16, 2009

[New WB Library Board is Less Qualified](#)

Last night the West Bend City Council voted in 4 new, and largely inexperienced, library board members, thus [continuing their irresponsible oversight](#) of this important community institution.

Rather than having a retired University of Wisconsin-Washington County librarian and a 24-year member of the city Library Board, an attorney who served for two decades, or a retired middle school and high school reading and language arts teacher on the board, West Bend will now be served by a collection of citizens that, as Alderman Schlotfeldt puts it, have "a more diverse background" and lack degrees in education.

Is the absence of a degree in education supposed to be seen as a positive?

Included in the new batch are Jim Fowler, who works in health care and apparently is Roman Catholic (not sure how Ginny will feel about that!). Also joining the board is Judy Schaar, who works at St. Joseph's Hospital ([as does Ginny!](#)).

Alderman Richard Lindbeck agreed to replace Alderman Nick Dobberstein as the city council's representative. Hopefully Lindbeck will spend more of his time actually in West Bend so he doesn't have to [abstain from controversial votes like in the past](#).

A couple of the alderman complained that the candidates weren't present for questioning or that they didn't have any background materials. That's a reasonable complaint, but lack of personal contact that didn't stop them from refusing to reappoint the sitting members. The council didn't ask for the outgoing board members to come in and explain their actions. They [just declared](#) that the board members' "ideology" wasn't in line with the community. How they came to that conclusion without actually talking with the board members remains a mystery. If it is so important to talk with the nominees prior to appointment, they simply should have delayed the vote until that could happen.

End result? West Bend has a new library board with less experience and qualifications. All good people, I'm sure, but it is hard to see how the community will be better served with this change. Time will tell.....

// Folks leaving comments seem to agree that the new members are solid people that should do a good job on the library board. Good to hear.....