

Westchester Public Library
Board of Trustees
Minutes
September 12, 2019

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held at the Thomas Public Library Bertha Wood Room, 200 West Indiana Avenue, Chesterton, Indiana on Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 7:00 pm.

Board members present: Kathryn Cochran, Michele Corazzo, Michael Livovich, Drew Rhed, Nick Tilden, Abbe Trent, and Rondi Wightman

Also present at this meeting were Library Director Lisa Stamm, Attorney Terry Hiestand, Minutes Recorder Christine Hoover, and two members of the public.

This meeting was called to order by Board President Rondi Wightman at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the minutes from the August 8, 2019 Board meeting as presented. Michael Livovich seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Financial and Statistical Reports

A motion was made by Nick Tilden to approve the Financial and Statistical Reports as presented. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Claims and Warrants

A motion was made by Drew Rhed to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants as presented from the time period of August 9, 2019 to September 12, 2019. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Librarian's Report

As discussed during the August Board meeting, Director Stamm is recommending that the Library offer the Hoosier S.T.A.R.T. Deferred Compensation Plan to full and part-time employees. The S.T.A.R.T. plan would be in addition to the existing Fidelity plan offered only to full-time employees. All employees, both full- and part-time would be eligible to participate in S.T.A.R.T. after they have satisfactorily completed their six-month new-hire probationary period. The Hoosier S.T.A.R.T. 457 (b) Plan and its two amendments are included in the Board documents.

Todd Williams, Retirement Plan Advisor with Hoosier S.T.A.R.T., was available at tonight's meeting to explain the S.T.A.R.T. plan and its benefits and to answer any questions. He advised that S.T.A.R.T. is a State of Indiana plan with about 55,000 state and local government employees enrolled. It has approximately \$1.5 billion invested. The Library does not pay any fees to have its employees enrolled in the plan. He explained that another benefit of being enrolled in this plan is that employees have access to retirement planning and advisement through S.T.A.R.T., and he would be available to educate employees on the various options available to them through S.T.A.R.T. He recommended that the plan be effective no earlier than November 1, 2019 to allow time for the paperwork to be approved by the State Auditor and to give time for employees to learn more about the program before enrolling.

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to accept the S.T.A.R.T. Deferred Compensation Plan for Westchester Public Library employees to be effective November 1, 2019. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed. The Resolution and Adoption Agreement were then signed by Board President Rondi Wightman and Director Lisa Stamm.

Since the Library's new website launch in July, there has been an average combined circulation increase of 23% of eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMovies, and eMusic, and there seems to be more interest in Library services. There have been numerous comments from patrons pleased with the new website, and the Museum has had more inquiries about the school programs it offers. Also, the Museum has had a significant uptick in local and out-of-state in-person researchers, and there has been a jump in online requests for digital materials.

Service highlights were related from the past month featuring positive feedback from patrons regarding their Library experiences.

During the month of August, 30,451 people visited the Library. There were 28 programs presented with 339 attendees, and 262 people utilized Library meeting rooms. Staff answered 120 reference questions and 178 tech help questions. Included in the Board meeting documents are graphs showing materials circulation statistics.

On August 13, Hageman again lost internet connectivity. Duneland Schools was contacted, and they worked with the Library to repair the issue. In this case, the fix was to splice some fiber to Thomas to restore connection to Hageman. This is a temporary measure, and until the larger issue is addressed, the internet service is vulnerable to problems.

On August 18, strong storms resulted in lengthy power outages at Thomas, Hageman, and the Museum. The Museum power came back first but they remained without phones or internet. Thomas and Hageman came up a few hours later.

On August 19, the Library's IT Assistant demonstrated to Duneland Schools that, after the storm, the connectivity problem did not lie with the Library fiber or fiber boxes. The issue was resolved, and at a later date the Library IT Assistant and Director Stamm met with Kevin Wilson, Director of Technology for Duneland Schools. This meeting was to figure out the emergency call chains, troubleshooting methods, and how to best work together to resolve connectivity issues.

The same storms on August 18 brought down a huge tree branch that took a second large branch with it, from a tree on the edge of the Library property in the south parking lot across the street from the Baugher Center. The torn limbs fell to the parking lot side leaving the rest of the tree perilously lopsided toward the neighboring yard. These limbs were sizeable enough to necessitate professional removal, and the remaining tree was found to be rotten inside. The immediate neighbors to the parking lot were informed of the Library's intent to remove the branches and tree and that a professional tree service would need to enter their yard to deconstruct the tree piece by piece. Permission was granted by these neighbors to use their yard, and they were appreciative to the Library for addressing the issue promptly.

Wever Tree Service, operating under the auspices of and a quote from Justin's Tree Service, completed the work which included grinding away the stump, for a total of \$2,150.

Four Library Improvement Reserve Funds (LIRF) CDs matured in August and were reinvested by Horizon Trust and Investment Management. Interest in the Rainy Day account accrued to \$250,000, and this amount was used to purchase another CD through Horizon.

An internal security camera was installed at the Thomas Library staff door. To install this camera, Ellis Electric had to pull network cabling from the data closet on the second floor to the camera location on the first floor. This lengthy installation added to the cost of the project which totaled \$1,125. A security camera will also be installed at the staff door at Hageman, and the cost is estimated to be \$487. This is significantly less than the Thomas cost due to not having to run cable between floors.

A remote release mechanism was added to the primary door to the Administration office. This "buzzer" will allow the Administration office door to remain locked during business hours, but now the Bookkeeper will be able to press a button to grant access to visitors. Tri-State Door Solutions installed the mechanism at a cost of \$1,684.14.

On August 13, the fire alarms sounded at Thomas Library during operating hours. The staff did an excellent job of quickly getting patrons and themselves out of the building. Director Stamm and the Maintenance Manager walked the building after determining there was no fire or smoke around the detector that triggered. It was concluded that the detector located in the staff hallway falsely triggered. The fire department and Martin Security quickly arrived and confirmed there was not a fire or smoke, and the final pronouncement was that a bug likely walked across the inside of the detector and triggered its sensor. The Maintenance Manager was instructed to advise the cleaning crew to regularly dust for potential cobwebs and any other bug detritus around the sensors.

Director Stamm noted that the Library has never conducted a fire drill and plans to conduct fire drills at each location during the fall. This recent false alarm and ensuing staff response was a good test to see what changes in staff actions need to be made should the fire alarm go off again. Director Stamm stated that the only thing she required that staff change after this false alarm was that they not lock department or other primary entry doors on their way out. Not locking doors makes for a quicker exit and would alleviate even the slightest chance that a person might be accidentally locked in during an emergency.

The Library's calendar software is extremely outdated and limited in functionality and features. Director Stamm is upgrading it to the most current version of the Demco calendar software (SignUp) and adding new room reservation software (Spaces) both of which are far more user, staff, and device-friendly. The new room reservation software will permit patrons to view room availabilities and make reservation requests through the website. This will save staff time and general confusion about room availability. Another function of the new software will allow select Managers to enter program information directly thus relieving the Bookkeeper of this responsibility. The old calendar-only version cost \$367 annually. The cost of the modern software of both SignUp and Spaces is \$1,276 per year with an additional one-time Spaces implementation fee of \$418. This annual cost also includes staff online training sessions

and customizable sandbox (test) versions as well as guidance and support. Director Stamm felt these costs were fair, and the migration of this software will be completed by the end of October.

Director Stamm is planning an advocacy workshop and dinner presentation for Northwest Indiana Library Trustees and Directors on behalf of the Northwest Indiana Library Board Association (NILBA) to occur in Merrillville on October 29. John Chrastka, Executive Director of EveryLibrary, will lead both the workshop and dinner, and the titles of these presentations are "Caucus the Good Idea" and "Library Political Literacy: Thriving, Interesting, Prosperous".

The Library's first In-Service day is set for Friday, September 27. Staff attendance is mandatory, and the Library will be closed for the entire day. Speakers are scheduled on the topics of professionalism and collegiality, emergency event training, and everyday workplace common sense safety tips and practices. There will also be group activities to build camaraderie and encourage a team-based mentality, and staff will be recognized and gifted for Years of Service. Total costs for presenters, refreshments, lunch, snacks, recognition and other gifts are \$2,334.50, and this will be funded through Gift Funds.

The Library received a donation of \$100 from Abercrombie Woods Property Owners Association as a show of thanks for use of the Baugher Center meeting space. Also received was an email from Christine McConnell, Adult Learning Center Coordinator, thanking the Library for its generosity in permitting them to use space in the Baugher Center.

Staff changes for the month include the hiring of Haleigh McKinley as a part-time Tech Clerk and Dan Craig as a part-time Clerk. Separated this month was part-time Clerk DaShaunna Holloway.

Old Business

HVAC Repairs

Precision Controls replaced the contactor tips and blower motor at the Baugher Center. Repair of the heat exchangers in the three units at the Baugher Center has been delayed due to Precision Control's current workload. This is scheduled to be completed during the last week of September.

Additional Appropriation

On August 27, Director Stamm attended the Porter County Council regular meeting to represent the Westchester Public Library in its request for an additional appropriation of \$37,931.76. This money is to be used for the Baugher Center patio repair, and the replacement of the Thomas staff doors. After questions and discussion and explanation about the LIRF and that the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) determined that the Council was the fiscal body to which the Library would take additional appropriation requests before submitting for final approval by DLGF, the Council approved the request. The Library is now awaiting final permission from DLGF, and they have 15 days from submission to alert the Library if there are any issues.

The Council asked how much money the Library has in reserves and were surprised by the amount of \$8 million. Director Stamm informed them about the careful savings and investments made by the Library Board in anticipation of the many projects and needs of our aging facilities. There was also discussion about HEA 1343 and that DLGF is in the process of trying to make clear its language for library and

relevant units. A few Council members suggested they state to the Library verbally during that August meeting that they wouldn't bring the Library to a binding budget review under HEA 1343, but the Council President said that he did not want to make a statement like that quite yet.

County Auditor Vicki Urbanik asked that for additional appropriation requests, the Library complete and submit the County form for additional appropriations in addition to DLGF forms.

Shortly after the Council meeting, an executive assistant of the Council asked via email for the names of all full-time Library employees along with how many employees are covered by health insurance. A Council member visited the Library to inquire as to who the Board members are and who appointed them, and this Council member also stated that the Council didn't understand why the Library was permitted to accumulate reserves. It was explained by Director Stamm that the Library has been legally acting, saving, and investing when possible, as libraries are permitted per IC 36-12-3-11(a)(4).

Director Stamm provided the Board a document showing the Indiana code relevant to LIRF and a written quote and code citation from DLGF as to the fiscal body to which the Library would bring an additional appropriation request. Regarding HEA 1343, DLGF has indicated that they will likely rely on the same code and language in determining the fiscal body which might potentially bring the Library to binding budget review.

New Business 2020 Budget Hearing

The 2020 Westchester Public Library budget is available online (www.budgetnotices.in.gov). Board President Rondi Wightman opened the floor for public comment at this time, and there were no public comments on this matter.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

Other Business Michael Livovich: Future of the Library, information-gathering

Board member Michael Livovich proposed that the committee, Vision 2037, that had been periodically meeting prior to the hiring of Director Stamm consider reconvening to continue the process of discussing plans for the future of the Library. Discussion ensued, and other Board members expressed their thoughts and opinions about the committee meetings.

Drew Rhed asked for a clear plan on what exactly the purpose of the committee meetings would be. Abbe Trent asked for Director Stamm's input. Director Stamm advised that she felt this was not the time for committee meetings because there is still much work to be done with getting the Library updated with better practices, correcting and solidifying internal relations, and managing current, significant legislative issues, to name just a few of the issues being handled at this time. Director Stamm is also working on hiring an Assistant Director along with other professional positions in the Library.

The consensus of the Board was that it would be better to hold off on a committee until the current issues the Library is facing are met and resolved, and they would like the Director to let the Board know when the time is right.

Director Stamm handed out copies of "Board Committee Meeting Rules" as per the Indiana State Library to each Board member.

The Board will hold a Special Meeting for the Budget Adoption on Thursday, September 26, 2019 at 7:00 pm at Thomas Library.

The date of the next regular Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, October 10, 2019 at 7:00 pm at Thomas Library.

Drew Rhed made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Hoover, Minutes Recorder for
Michele Corazzo, Secretary