

Westchester Public Library
Board of Trustees
Minutes
January 14, 2021

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 7:00 pm. This meeting was held electronically due to the current public health emergency.

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

Also present at this meeting electronically were Library Director Lisa Stamm, Attorney Terry Hiestand, and Minutes Recorder Christine Hoover.

This meeting was called to order by Board President Nick Tilden at 7:05 pm.

(Since this meeting is being conducted electronically due to the current public health emergency, all action items have been voted on by roll call.)

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Rondi Wightman to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2020 regular 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 Michael Livovich to approve the Financial and Statistical Reports as presented. Kathryn Cochran 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 for the time period of December 11, 2020 through December 31, 2020 as presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Drew Rhed to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of January 1, 2021 through January 14, 2021 as presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Librarian's Report

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

December statistics show that 10,441 people visited the Library. Four (4) Recorded Virtual programs were created with 303 attendees/views, and 15 Live Virtual programs were created with 222 live virtual attendees. Staff answered 94 reference questions, 77 tech help questions, and 55 new Library cards were issued. Facebook challenge engaged 75 people. Graphs showing materials circulation statistics were provided along with a summary of electronic circulations over the past six years to include 2020 and a newly modified physical circulations graph beginning with statistics corrected in 2018 through 2020.

Two overhead light ballasts in the staff stairwell of the Baugher Center were failing. The stairwell's primary light hadn't worked in years, and staff entering the building through the shipping and receiving (staff) door had to walk the length of a long hallway in the dark in order to turn on the lights. Once Director Stamm was made aware of these issues, Ellis Electric was called. They repaired and replaced the stairwell lights and installed conduit wire and a new light switch inside of the shipping door. This work was done at a cost of \$1,188 for the hallway light repairs and replacements, and \$1,271 for the addition of the hallway wiring and light switch, for a total cost of \$2,459.

In December of 2019, the Board approved Director Stamm's recommendation that the Library I/T Assistant be permitted and reimbursed to attend technology classes according to the Library's Educational Assistance Policy. As such, the I/T Assistant spent the past year attending Ivy Tech classes online while working to help the Library navigate the pandemic. He finished his schooling and is now CompTIA A+ and CompTIA Security+ certified by completing 24 credits of current, expansive I/T coursework. He expressed his gratitude to the Board for the opportunity to increase his skill set.

The Annual Report to the Indiana State Library (ISL) is currently being worked on. It has been taking significantly more time as a whole this year to determine the correct information and statistics in conjunction with the many new ISL rules specific to the pandemic and subsequent changes in service and program models. In conjunction with the Annual Report, the Annual Salary Report 100R is completed and ready in Gateway to be reviewed and electronically signed in Gateway by Board Treasurer Drew Rhed. This must be done before the end of January.

Two \$250,000 Library Improvement Reserve Fund (LIRF) CDs matured and were reinvested through Horizon Trust and Investment Management.

At the end of December, Hageman Branch received a surprise inspection from the Porter County Health Department specific to COVID-19 safety measures. They reported that they were pleased by the extent of the Library's "exemplary" safety standards and practices.

Director Stamm has determined it necessary to hire an Assistant Director to be responsible for the numerous tasks, projects, and departments that she currently manages, especially in light of the large capital projects that have begun and the even larger impending projects. She intends to advertise for the position of Assistant Director in mid- to late January, or early February, and expects to conduct interviews in the weeks following.

The pandemic and its resultant issues, concerns, increased workloads, and tragedies is taking a toll on staff. The Library and other area libraries have encountered an uptick in the past few weeks of patrons flouting the mask policy or being angry about not being able to sit and stay or congregate in Library meeting rooms. A few recent incidents have occurred of people refusing to wear a mask; and in each case, they were not civil or calm about it and seemed to be seeking confrontation. Director Stamm decided that the Library would offer a face shield to those who proclaim they cannot wear a mask.

Director Stamm stated that temporarily going to Curbside-only is a strong consideration, but for now, the Library will remain open and staff will continue to stand together on the Library's Mask Resolution and Health & Safety procedures. Staff will take an even more supportive role if encountering a maskless patron by stating the rules, reminding them that there is still a worldwide health emergency, offering a face shield, and helping them with what they need in an expedient manner. It was noted that the majority of patrons follow and appreciate Library rules.

Director Stamm advised that she thought both full-time and part-time staff would benefit from having professional therapeutic support available to them. She is looking into an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that the Library could potentially offer so that staff could seek confidential mental health support. Recently, Director Stamm met with a South Bend company called New Avenues to discuss EAP options. Director Stamm is also looking into having live virtual training sessions on coping skills, and this could possibly be funded by using Operating Funds for staff training. Director Stamm may send out an anonymous survey to staff to see what their interest in mental health support may be. The Board expressed their support for whatever decisions Director Stamm makes regarding how to handle patrons who refuse to comply with the Library's pandemic-related policies and staff mental health support.

In December, \$256.70 was spent on pandemic-related cleaning supplies and Curbside Pickup plastic bags. The total expenditures so far for pandemic supplies is \$13,805.66.

There were no staff changes during the past month.

Old Business CSK Architect Contract

Tom Kuhn of CSK Architects sent in a template for the contracts to be generally used for the Library's impending projects. This template was forwarded to Library attorney Terry Hiestand to review the legal language. Mr. Hiestand had suggestions for Mr. Kuhn, and they are revising the contract template. Once a final version is agreed up, these documents will be provided to the Board for their review.

Duneland School Corporation (DSC) /WPL Trustee Reappointment

As was newly determined by the DSC last summer, when a DSC-appointed Library Trustee nears the expiration of their term, DSC will follow a formal process to post/advertise the role for one month, interview candidates the following month, and make a placement (the month after that) during its regular School Board meeting. DSC also asked that a Library trustee join their interview panel. Board President Nick Tilden stated he will sit on the DSC panel as the Library representative, and Director Stamm will advise DSC of this.

DSC-appointed Library Trustee Kathryn Cochran is nearing the end of her current, first term on March 31, 2021. DSC advised that a current Trustee who wishes to remain in the role must apply as any other person.

Director Stamm supplied the rules for Trustees from the State Library to DSC who in turn used this information and added their own questions for candidates in writing their advertisement for the Trustee appointment. This notice is posted on the DSC web page and the Library's web page under "Library Board Agendas and Minutes". Applications for this DSC Trustee appointment are due by February 1, 2021.

It was noted that Trustee Michael Livovich is nearing the expiration of his second term on March 31, 2021. Director Stamm will reach out to the County Council to let them know.

New Business PLAC

The quarterly PLAC statement needs to be signed the next time the Board is able to meet in-person.

Rainy Day Transfer

Public libraries are permitted by law to annually transfer up to 10% of the prior year's total budget amount into the Rainy Day fund at the beginning of a new year, if there are funds remaining to do so at the close of the prior year.

The 2020 total budget was \$3,679,571, and 10% of that is \$367,957. After examining the December 31, 2020 balance in the Operating Fund, and in consideration of possible effects of the pandemic in the upcoming June tax draw, Director Stamm is recommending a transfer of 2.5% for a total of \$91,989 into the Rainy Day Fund. This will leave an amount in the Operating Fund that should cover expenses and allow a buffer should the 2021 June tax settlement be affected by the pandemic.

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to authorize the transfer of 2.5% of the total 2020 budget in the amount of \$91,989 into the Rainy Day Fund. Michael Livovich seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Review and Readopt Trustee Bylaws

These Bylaws do not need to be reviewed, readopted, or resubmitted at this time. The Library is current through January 2022.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

Other Business Amended December 31, 2020 Minor Transfers

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the Amended December 31, 2020 Minor Transfers as presented. Rondi Wightman seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

The date of the next regular Board of Trustees meeting will be on Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 7:00 pm at the Baugher Center unless otherwise announced.

Drew Rhed made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 7:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Hoover, Minutes Recorder for
Abbe Trent, Secretary

The Board then reconvened as the Board of Finance and was called to order by Board President Nick Tilden at 7:55 pm.

Election of Officers

Kathryn Cochran nominated the slate of officers to the Board of Finance as follows: Nick Tilden as President, Michele Corazzo as Vice President, Abbe Trent as Secretary, and Drew Rhed as Treasurer. These officers currently serve in these capacities on the Board of Trustees.

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to close the nominations and elect the slate of officers to the Board of Finance as nominated. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Investment Summary

Horizon Trust Investment Management provided a 2020 investment summary in the format matching that of the summary provided last January. The reason the ending 2020 balance on the Investment Summary is different than what is listed on the Bank Balances report is because the Investment Summary reflects money market balances which fluctuate daily pending accrued interest.

Review and Readopt Investment Policy

Director Stamm recommended that no changes be made to this policy at this time.

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to readopt the Investment Policy with no changes made. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Drew Rhed to adjourn the Board of Finance meeting at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Hoover, Minutes Recorder for
Abbe Trent, Secretary