

Westchester Public Library
Board of Trustees
Minutes
March 11, 2021

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, March 11, 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, Will Scharp, Nick Tilden, Abbe Trent, and Rondi Wightman; Board member absent: Michael Livovich.

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 7:00 pm.
Board President Nick Tilden introduced and welcomed new Board Trustee Will Scharp.

(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 Kathryn Cochran to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2021 regular Board meeting as presented. Rondi Wightman seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Financial and Statistical Reports

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo 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 Abbe Trent to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of February 12, 2021 through March 11, 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. The Westchester Township History Museum virtual live program series on Duneland history has had phenomenal response. Since demand has been so great for these programs, it was decided to record each live virtual program, edit it afterward for privacy of participating patrons, and then post it to the Library's YouTube channel.

During February, 10,015 people visited the Library. Staff created three Recorded Virtual programs with 609 attendees/views, and 23 Live Virtual programs were created with 554 Live Virtual attendees. Staff answered 100 reference questions, 70 tech help questions, and 58 new library cards were registered. The Facebook challenge engaged 328 people. Graphs showing materials circulation statistics were provided.

On the morning of Saturday, February 13, Director Stamm was called by the Museum Curator informing her that the Museum parking lot had not been plowed from an overnight snowfall. Since the Duneland School Corporation (DSC) owns the Museum property, it is their responsibility to plow the lot and driveways. Library Maintenance staff shoveled and cleared as much snow as possible; and by that afternoon, DSC had plowed the Museum lot. This is the first time that the plowing at the Museum parking lot wasn't done in a timely manner, and hopefully this type of issue will be avoided in the future.

On Sunday, February 14, Director Stamm was called at 8:30 pm by Premier Security, the Library's building security contractor, alerting her that a fire alarm was sounding in the mechanical room of the Thomas Branch. The Chesterton Fire Department was onsite at the time of the call but said they needed access to the locked door of the mechanical room. The Maintenance Manager was informed, and he advised that he would head over to the Library and unlock the door since it would take less time for him to get there than it would for Director Stamm to get there. It was determined that one of the steam lines from the boiler condensate tank had come loose, allowing steam to escape into the mechanical room which triggered the fire alarm. The firemen left, and the Maintenance Manager stayed to reattach the line and redirect an overflow pipe that had also come loose. It was confirmed with the fire department a few days later that the interior key they needed was in their Library exterior building-mounted lockbox at the time of the event, but at the time of the alarm, they didn't realize they had it.

There was more snow and ice on Monday, February 15, but the Library was already scheduled to be closed in observance of Presidents Day. The snowstorm continued into Tuesday, February 16 and conditions were at hazard levels, and many area businesses and Duneland schools closed for the day. Director Stamm made the decision at 6:00 am on Tuesday, February 16 to close the Library due to the hazardous conditions. The Maintenance Manager worked several hours onsite ensuring the safety of the buildings and grounds.

At last month's meeting, it was noted that former Chesterton resident Doris M. Swanson passed away, and her obituary listed Westchester Public Library as a recipient of memorials in her name. The Library has since received two checks honoring Ms. Swanson and also honoring Drew Rhed. These checks were received from the daughter of Ms. Swanson, and a letter of thanks was sent to her on behalf of the Library.

The annual financial data required by the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) in its Annual Financial Report (AFR) was completed and submitted by the due date of March 1. Also due annually by March 1 was the Library Annual Report (LAR). This report was completed and submitted to the Indiana State Library (ISL).

The Library will now be included on the Duneland Chamber of Commerce community map. This large, brightly colored, glossy map of the Duneland area is printed once every four years and available to residents and visitors for free. The Library secured a prime advertising spot at the top of the unfolded map. The cost of the advertisement being included on this map was \$1,195 and paid for from the Operating Budget line 3.31 Advertising. This map should be printed and available by mid-summer. Also purchased from the Chamber was a town banner with the Library's name on it in support of the Chamber's beautification initiative. These banners are attached to lampposts throughout town. The cost of the banner was \$250 and paid for from Operating Budget line 3.31 Advertising.

Dr. Seuss Enterprises recently announced that six Dr. Seuss titles would no longer be published due to racial imagery/content. Director Stamm initially decided to keep the titles in circulation while

determining what to do with them. Soon after the announcement, numerous holds were placed and patrons were coming in to get the titles, so Director Stamm temporarily pulled them from circulation to protect them since these items suddenly became highly valuable and therefore a possible target for theft. These titles will be reviewed and may be permanently removed from the collection since (a) they will no longer be published and (b) contain outdated content and racially insensitive imagery – same as any other material with these factors would be evaluated.

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has now required that all employers make it possible for employees to anonymously share workplace Covid-safety concerns with their employer's Administration Department. If any Library employee has a concern about Covid-safety at the Library workplace and for whatever reason does not feel comfortable talking about it with their Manager or Director Stamm, the OSHA anonymous method is available. So far, no Library employee has utilized this service.

In February, \$85.30 was added to pandemic-related expenditures and spent on paper towels. The total expenditure so far for pandemic-related expenses is \$13,969.96.

The only staff change for the past month is the separation of part-time Clerk Tyler Thomas.

Old Business

Trustee Reappointments

In February, the Duneland School Corporation Board reappointed Trustee Kathryn Cochran for a four-year term. The Porter County Council has been notified that Trustee Michael Livovich was nearing the expiration of his current term and that the WPL Trustees moved to recommend him for reappointment. The formal reappointment document for the Council to complete was sent, and an email response was received from their Administrative Assistant stating they were in receipt of the recommendation.

NIPSCO Telephone Poles

The NIPSCO telephone pole replacement project reported on last month was delayed due to the hazardous weather in February. NIPSCO advised that the replacement work, requiring the Baugher Center and Thomas Branch to be closed for an extended power shutoff, should occur on March 21. All precautions are being taken by the Library to ensure proper shutoff procedures are being followed to make this shutoff go as smoothly as possible.

CSK Contract Template

Attorney Terry Hiestand and CSK Architects have agreed upon a finalized general contract template for the Library. This contract is included in the Board documents. Attorney Hiestand stressed that this is not a contract for construction management; but CSK will periodically check on the project, draw plans, make suggestions, supervise bids, and authorize payments to the contractors, among other things. A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the negotiated Standard Abbreviated Form of Agreement between Owner (Westchester Public Library System) and Architect (CSK Architects, P.C.) as presented to the Board. Michele Corazzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Thomas HVAC/Needs Assessment Update

Tom Kuhn of CSK Architects advised that Giannini Associates had a crucial update to their Thomas HVAC planning. Initially, it was thought that the ductwork could be cleaned and reused, but now they advised that due to age and deterioration, all of the Thomas ductwork must be replaced. The ducts are original to the building and obsolete, they are lined with fiberglass and not properly encapsulated which can

lead to fibers becoming airborne in occupied spaces. The ducts also leak, and replacing them would yield energy efficiency and cost-savings. Modern-day ductwork is now built with antimicrobial lining which is an important safety feature in this time of Covid-19 and potential future airborne viruses.

This need for new ductwork will increase the HVAC portion of the Needs Assessment from \$800,000 to possibly \$1.5 million dollars. Bob Nicksic of James F. Giannini and Associates, the HVAC consultant hired by CSK Architects, is currently figuring out the new cost details. The work would require that the Thomas Branch be closed for a period of 3-5 months. Director Stamm asked if the work could be done with Library staff working inside so at least Curbside Pickup could be offered to patrons. Mr. Nicksic is considering whether and how that might work, along with ways to possibly lessen the closed period. He also advised that he does not believe that the Thomas roof would have to be removed to do this HVAC/ductwork. Mr. Kuhn felt it was more cost effective to renovate Thomas rather than build a new facility.

Mr. Kuhn advised that the drawings are complete for the replacement of the Hageman roof project, the other initial large project from the Needs Assessment. He advised that Hageman does not need to close during this roofing project. He does not think the Hageman roof project will exceed the public bid threshold of \$150,000, meaning this job can be put out for quotes. Director Stamm is working on the timing process and other DLGF aspects of this project.

Director Stamm felt the Library might be able to make the HVAC work for another year at most. A question was raised by the Board asking if the existing duct work can stay in place while only adding a new HVAC system, with installation of new duct work being done at another time. Also asked was, once the new duct work is done, is it reconfigurable in the future. Director Stamm will reach out to Mr. Kuhn for clarification on these questions and indicated that she will invite Mr. Kuhn to attend another Board meeting to answer further questions. Director Stamm also reported that she asked DLGF whether the HVAC and Hageman roof projects may be paid for from Rainy Day fund (instead of LIRF), and they said yes.

Assistant Director Position

Numerous applications were submitted for the Library Assistant Director position, and in-depth interviews were conducted. The candidate chosen by Director Stamm for this position is internal, but a formal announcement will not be made until the internal candidate's soon-to-be-open position is filled. Interviews are being scheduled for this now-open position.

New Business

Collection Development Policy Update

A new bill, SB 288 Material Harmful to Minors, gained traction would have removed legal/criminal protections for librarians and any other library staff if they were accused of disseminating materials considered harmful to children. This issue caused Director Stamm to reach out in writing to the Library's Senators, and she shared a portion of what she wrote. The ILF demonstrated to legislators that public and school libraries already have safeguards and protections in place and that the bill was unnecessary. SB288 did not advance, but bill authors stated they will bring it back or insert its language into other bills.

Director Stamm took a closer look at the Library's process for patrons to challenge materials and made several changes to that portion of the existing Collection Development Policy for the Board's review. She also created a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form, which is procedural and not a Board action item.

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the updates made to the existing Collection Development Policy, with one correction as noted on page 3 of the policy changing the wording to “Library Board of Trustees”. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Strategic Plan

The Library’s five-year (long-range) strategic plan expired at the end of 2020, and a new plan can be created in 2021 either to be executed in 2021 or to begin in 2022. Director Stamm explained that a well-written strategic plan takes considerable work, teamwork, data gathering and crunching, and clear statement of intent and methods to measure outcomes. With the extensive capital needs of the Library, this strategic plan is a good opportunity to meet the numerous ISL-required elements of a strategic plan and to lay groundwork for the larger capital plans. A good strategic plan could be utilized to point the Library in the right direction with its capital projects by its mission and vision in conjunction with community ideas.

With such an undertaking, most libraries hire outside consultants to facilitate its development. Director Stamm reached out to Midwest Collaborative Library Services (MCLS). MCLS is known to be extraordinarily knowledgeable in public libraries, they are easy to work with, and they work closely with and are held in high regard by ISL. They include principles from the Harwood Institute for conducting community conversations. MCLS was asked to put together a quote for creating a sound strategic plan, and they presented a not-to-exceed quote of \$19,500. Director Stamm felt this quote is competitive, and in fact very good for the Library’s size and the scope of the Library’s current and future needs. MCLS would be able to schedule the Library to start the approximately four-month process in late summer or early fall, which would be ideal considering the other projects being undertaken. MCLS also advised their staff will not be traveling to libraries and only doing virtual planning until all their staff members have had the Covid-19 vaccine. MCLS advised they were successful in doing their strategic and other planning virtually during the pandemic.

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to accept the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services Proposal for Services, Westchester Public Library Strategic Planning as presented. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Election of Officers

Will Scharp made the following nominations for officers of the Board of Trustees: Michele Corazzo - President; Abbe Trent - Vice-President; Rondi Wightman - Treasurer; Kathryn Cochran - Secretary. A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to close the nominations and elect the slate of officers as nominated. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Outstanding Checks Cancellation

There are seven outstanding checks totaling \$141.75 issued by the Library that are over three years old and no longer viable. These checks must be cancelled and absorbed into Operating, and the Bookkeeper's task of cancelling these checks requires Board approval in March, per State Board of Accounts.

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to cancel the outstanding checks as presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Librarian’s Report

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the Librarian’s Report as presented at tonight’s meeting. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

Other Business

There was no Other Business at this time.

The date of the next regular Board of Trustees meeting will be Thursday, April 8, at 7:00 pm at the Baugher Center, or TBD.

Nick Tilden made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:25 pm.

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