

Westchester Public Library
Board of Trustees
Minutes
May 13, 2021

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 7:00 pm. This meeting was held electronically due to the current public health emergency.

Board members present electronically were: Heather Augustyn, Kathryn Cochran, Michele Corazzo, Will Scharp, Nick Tilden, Abbe Trent, and Rondi Wightman.

Also present at this meeting electronically were Library Director Lisa Stamm, Library Assistant Director Heather Chaddock, Thomas Kuhn of CSK Architects, Attorney Terry Hiestand, and Minutes Recorder Christine Hoover.

This meeting was called to order by Board President Abbe Trent at 7:13 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.)

As a result of business conducted at the executive session meeting held immediately prior to this regular meeting, a motion was made by Rondi Wightman that based on the job performance evaluation, the Director's salary be adjusted within the approved salary schedule range effective immediately. This motion was seconded by Will Scharp. All voted in favor, and the motion passed. Attorney Terry Hiestand requested details of the salary adjustment as talked about in the executive session for the clarity of the minutes. Director Stamm stated the original motion made was sufficient, permissible, and contained appropriate language, as advised by other public libraries, coming out of the executive session for the public vote.

Will Scharp revised and specified the motion that the Director's salary be increased by 12% and be granted a \$5,000 one-time wage adjustment effective immediately. Rondi Wightman seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the minutes from the April 8, 2021 regular Board meeting as presented. Michele Corazzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor, with Nick Tilden and Will Scharp abstaining since they did not attend the April 8 meeting, and the motion passed.

Financial and Statistical Reports

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to approve the Financial and Statistical Reports as presented. Heather Augustyn seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Claims and Warrants

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of April 9, 2021 through May 13, 2021 as presented. Nick Tilden 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. National Library Week was held in April, and Library patrons were treated to free licorice, a Library trivia game on Facebook, and other giveaways and prizes.

During April, 11,899 people visited the Library. Staff created one in-person program with six attendees, 20 Live Virtual programs were created with 355 Live Virtual attendees, and 113 people were engaged in a Facebook activity. Staff answered 88 reference questions, 93 tech help questions, and 62 new library cards were registered. Graphs showing materials circulation statistics were provided.

The Westchester Township History Museum received a \$1,500 donation from the Flora Richardson Foundation. This is an annual gift from the Foundation to express their gratitude and offer support to the Museum for housing their archives on a long-term basis. The Library received a \$150 donation from Delta Theta Tau in April and placed these funds in the Unrestricted Gift Fund.

Tim Miller of TLM Services has decided not to continue landscaping for the Library. Another company will be hired to provide landscaping and lawn care; but in the meantime, Library Maintenance staff is handling lawn mowing.

Director Stamm was interviewed on Chesterton High School's radio station WDSO for their "Porter County Perspective" show. This aired on April 22 and 23 as part of WDSO's 30th Annual Radiothon held during High School Radio Week. This interview is now posted on WDSO's YouTube channel.

The Graphics Department has been working with the new Chesterton Tribune sorting out details for ad sizes, special nonprofit rates, and new deadline structures. An ad is set to be published promoting the Library's restored hours at Thomas Branch. Also being developed is an encompassing ad to include in the Chesterton Tribune's monthly feature Community pages at a cost of \$600 per year. The Library will continue to advertise its programs, initiatives, public notices, etc., which are also being sent to the daily edition of the Northwest Indiana Times newspaper.

Director Stamm reported on some recent developments in the Indiana Library Federation (ILF). The ILF President resigned from her role after alleging racism from the ILF Executive Director and the ILF Board. An ILF Board Member resigned soon after having allegedly witnessed the ILF Board behave in ways that served to silence or abridge the rights of minorities. These allegations have caused great consternation in the Indiana library community. Director Stamm is attending related meetings to stay informed.

Beginning Sunday, May 2, pre-pandemic hours have been restored at Thomas Branch and include Sunday Curbside Pickup hours. Summer programs will occur outdoors with participants being masked and distanced. Craft Kits and Curbside Pickup and a hybrid of live virtual and in-person programming will continue for now.

Director Stamm reported that it was just announced today that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) now advises that it is not necessary for individuals fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to wear face masks indoors. For now, the Library will continue to uphold its current Mask Resolution, which is not a permanent policy, while waiting to see how things unfold with the virus and its variants in the coming days and weeks; additionally, vaccination rates in Porter County are low. While the majority of patrons appreciate and abide by the mask-wearing policy, there are a few patrons who refuse to wear a mask. Staff have been trained to remind patrons of the Library's mask policy, and they are also advised to

avoid confrontation with irate patrons and do their best to help those patrons with what they need in an expedient manner.

On April 26, the Library stopped quarantining circulating materials since it is now known that the biggest risk for contracting the COVID-19 virus is direct or airborne contact with particles expelled from mouths and noses. Since the virus cannot sustain itself for more than a few hours on physical materials and surfaces, the risk of transmission from books to someone's nose is extremely low. Library meeting rooms will still be closed to the public due to CDC recommendations to not gather indoors for prolonged periods of time with strangers of unknown vaccination status. Staff also need unfettered access to those spaces to conduct regular and unplanned meetings with enough room for social distancing. Public donations will not be accepted until volunteers can safely return to the Library to sort the donated materials since the room used for this purpose is not adequate to maintain social distancing.

Board members were asked if they are agreeable to conducting meetings in person beginning with the June 2021 regular meeting. All Board members were in favor of doing so, and the Board will resume meetings in-person, masked and socially distanced, beginning with the June 2021 regular meeting.

In April, \$99.10 was added to pandemic-related expenditures spent on disposable keyboard covers. The Library will permanently continue to offer and replenish hand sanitizer stations throughout the facilities. The total spent on pandemic-related supplies is now \$14,424.31.

Staff changes for the month include the hiring of Justine Carlotta as the Children's Department Manager, and Stephanie Cingrani, part-time Clerk. Separated this month was Alicia Adams, part-time Clerk.

Old Business

New Children's Department Manager

Justine Carlotta has been hired as the new Thomas Branch Children's Department Manager. Ms. Carlotta is local to Duneland and has returned to the area after living in California. She will be introduced in-person to the Board at the June meeting.

New Business

Resolution to Establish Nonresident Fees

Since there are no changes made to the Nonresident card or parameters set by the State, Director Stamm recommended that the fee remain in the same amount of \$175.

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to set the Nonresident Fees in the same amount of \$175. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Additional Appropriation

Director Stamm advised that after checking with the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) prior to starting the Additional Appropriation process for the Hageman roof project, she was told that the Library should request and advertise a total dollar amount expected to well and fully cover the project instead of requesting as precise an amount as possible. This way, a built-in reasonable buffer is included for unexpected costs. If the funds are not all used, they would be re-absorbed into the same fund it was appropriated from.

The DLGF has changed the data submission process and now use an online fillable form requiring the same financial data, but now also requiring an upload of a PDF of the *physical* signature sheet from the fiscal approving body. For the Library, that fiscal approving body is the Porter County Council (PCC).

The DLGF requires advertising the public hearing in a newspaper for 10 full days starting with day *after* it is published, so in actuality, it is 11 days through the day of the public hearing. For the Library, the public hearing occurs during the next Regular Meeting of PCC when the Library's Additional request is on the PCC agenda.

PCC has stipulations stating that requests for their Agenda must be received no less than 16 days prior to the meeting date. They requested that the Library complete and submit to them their own Additional Appropriation form in addition to DLGF forms. In the interest of streamlining and since it is *not* required by DLGF for the Library to hold their own public hearing, and since the Board already approved the process for replacing the Hageman roof and the Thomas HVAC projects, Director Stamm dropped the non-required piece of having the Library hold its own public hearing.

Director Stamm completed all necessary paperwork for submission of an Additional Appropriation request of \$50,000 from Rainy Day fund to PCC with a request to be included in their May Agenda. It has been confirmed with the PCC Administrative Assistant that the Library is on the PCC May Agenda. This amount of \$50,000 covers the quote of \$42,488 from Korellis plus the CSK Hageman roof quote of \$2,600, leaving just under \$5,000 for unexpected expenses. These extra funds, if not used, will be re-absorbed into the same fund they came from, the Rainy Day fund. A Notice to Taxpayers was submitted to the Chesterton Tribune and the Northwest Indiana Times for the appropriate publication dates. Director Stamm will attend the PCC meeting on May 25.

Hageman Roof Replacement

On Thursday, April 29, 2021, the Library Maintenance Manager and Director Stamm met with CSK architect Tom Kuhn for a "pre-quote meeting" to answer questions from companies interested in submitting bids for the Hageman roof replacement. The following Tuesday, Tom Kuhn and Director Stamm opened the three companies' bids publicly at the Baugher Center. The lowest bid was from Korellis Roofing at \$42,488. The other companies and their bids were: E.C. Babilla - \$60,187, and Gluth Brothers - \$48,000.

Attorney Terry Hiestand was asked to review the standard roofing contract, and he was provided with a copy of this contract approximately one week ago. Attorney Hiestand had questions and comments regarding the roofing contract and whether or not the bid made by commercial contractor Korellis was in the best interest of the Library; he suggested a residential roofing company would suffice. His concerns included why the cupola was being replaced; the use of standard roof shingles as opposed to installing a standing seam (metal) roof; the need for appropriately-sized gutters that would adequately shed leaves; and that the bids received were from a small group of companies. He had recommended that all bids be rejected based on those concerns.

Tom Kuhn addressed Attorney Hiestand's concerns by stating the size of the gutters has been changed to 6" by addendum and are continuous steel gutters, and these types of gutters are handled by commercial contractors. Mr. Kuhn said he would obtain prices for adding gutter guards, which could be installed at a later date. The funds for adding gutter guards could come from Building Improvement funds if there isn't enough money left over from the initial Appropriation to cover this extra cost. The cupola was being replaced because he was asked to make that part of the project by the Director, who was acting on the intent of the Board, to replace the Hageman roof while keeping its "neighborhood look" intact. Mr. Kuhn then explained that the cupola is functional and serves as a roof vent. The existing cupola is in poor condition and needs to be replaced at an approximate cost of \$5,000.

Regarding a standing seam roof, Mr. Kuhn advised that would be far more expensive to put on a standing seam roof, and right now it is very difficult to even get metal supplies. The shingles quoted for this project are available, and they were for a high-quality 50-year asphalt fiberglass-based shingles with a lifetime limited warranty. He also advised that he typically invites a dozen general contractors to bid on projects from several counties in order to attract the best commercial contractors for the job. Mr. Kuhn advised that a project manual and drawings are typically given to the Board for approval prior to putting the project up for bid; however, that was not done in this case as it appeared to be a standard, simple roofing contract.

Director Stamm reminded the Board that Tom Kuhn of CSK Architects was hired by the Board for this project and other projects the Library is undertaking due to his expertise and excellent reputation in this field, and the Board previously gave approval to move forward with the Hageman roofing project. Director Stamm suggested to the Board that Library projects would not move forward expediently if, after completing all of the necessary steps including submitting documentation to the Porter County Council so that the Library's Additional Appropriation request is on their agenda, the project is suddenly pulled for reconfiguring and re-bidding. In the best interest of the Library, she would like the consensus from the Board to go forward on this project. Trustee Rondi Wightman indicated that she understood the Hageman roofing project to have been fully approved by the Board and for Director Stamm to move forward with it. Trustee Kathryn Cochran assumed the roof would be replaced with the same type of materials (shingles) as currently in place, and she stated she was in favor of using commercial contractors doing this job. The Board was unanimous in their agreement to move forward with this roofing project and not re-bid the job.

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran as follows: The Board should award and approve the contract to Korellis Roofing in the amount of \$42,488 to replace the roof and cupola at Hageman Library. The Board should authorize the Director to sign the contract as soon as it is physically ready to sign which would be after the Library has received DLGF approval for the Additional Appropriation. The Board should authorize the Director to approve change orders up to a pre-determined amount of \$5,000. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS) Strategic Planning Committee

Director Stamm would like the Board to consider appointing one or two Trustees to participate in the Strategic Planning Committee. This Committee is comprised of the Director, Assistant Director, Branch Managers, other staff members, and one or two Trustees. This formal appointment by the Board signifies that any Trustees on the Strategic Planning Committee understand that they represent the entire Board, and that their role on the Committee is to serve as part of the process as a whole and not act as any sort of final or determining voice. Anyone serving on this Committee should have flexibility for a two-hour kickoff meeting, time to conduct two or three brief Harwood-type interviews with specific community members, and participate in a half-day retreat. It is not known at this time if meetings will be in-person or virtual.

A motion was made by Rondi Wightman to nominate Kathryn Cochran and Heather Augustyn to serve on the MCLS Strategic Planning Committee. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Electronic Meeting Policy

As a result of the electronic meetings necessitated by the pandemic, the State of Indiana determined in April that units may hold electronic meetings as long as they have a designated policy in place. Although it is preferable that Trustees attend meetings in-person, the Library will need to purchase and implement technology to permit sufficient audio/visual for hybrid meetings held in the Baugher Center meeting room. Director Stamm wrote the Electronic Meeting Policy based on and including all State stipulations as they apply to Indiana public libraries, and she then read aloud this Policy to the Board. A motion was made by Will Scharp to approve the Electronic Meeting Policy as provided. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Librarian's Report

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to approve the Librarian's Report as presented at tonight's meeting of May 13, 2021. Heather Augustyn 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 held at 7:00 pm on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at the Baugher Center.

This meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Hoover, Minutes Recorder for
Will Scharp, Secretary