

Board of Trustees
Minutes
June 10, 2021

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held at the Baugher Center, 100 West Indiana Avenue, Chesterton, Indiana on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

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

Board member absent: Will Scharp

Also present at this meeting were Library Director Lisa Stamm, Library Assistant Director Heather Chaddock, Children's Department Manager Justine Carlotta, and Minutes Recorder Christine Hoover.

This meeting was called to order by Board President Abbe Trent at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Executive Session Minutes

A motion was made by Heather Augustyn to approve the Executive Session Minutes from the May 13, 2021 meeting as presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Rondi Wightman to approve the minutes from the May 13, 2021 regular Board meeting as presented. Kathryn Cochran 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. Kathryn Cochran 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 May 14, 2021 through June 10, 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.

Justine Carlotta, the new Thomas Branch Children's Department Manager, was introduced at tonight's meeting. Ms. Carlotta spent a few minutes speaking to the Board about herself and her background.

During May, 12,525 people visited the Library. Staff created two in-person programs with 15 attendees, and five Live Virtual programs with 53 Live Virtual attendees. Staff answered 94 reference questions, 78 tech help questions, and 86 new library cards were registered. Graphs showing materials circulation statistics were provided.

Museum Curator Serena Ard collaborated with Chesterton High School (CHS) on a work-study internship for a high school senior interested in learning about museum work and curation. The student will spend

one class period, (approximately one hour 2-3 days per week) during both semesters of the school year at the Museum learning what museum work entails and assisting with projects assigned by the Curator. This student will be evaluated by the Curator and rated on reliability, attendance, and willingness to work and learn. The student will create a final project for the CHS teacher to demonstrate what was worked on and learned during this experience and will earn full class credit.

On May 17, both the Museum Curator and the Museum Educator heard sounds of birds chirping from the upstairs of the Brown Mansion. Library Maintenance tried to locate the source of the noise, and Duneland School Corporation (DSC) also sent a Maintenance person to inspect. Two birds were found in a small, unused and blocked-off area in the attic. Both of the birds were captured and released outside. It was determined that the birds probably entered through any number of small openings in the chimney or between the rafters, planks, and in the walls. The Museum chimneys have been a longstanding problem, and Library Maintenance will be obtaining quotes for professionals to install mesh caps/vents 6-8 inches above the tops of the chimneys. The Curator learned that it is permissible to install these types of vents to chimneys per the Indiana Landmarks Historic Registry. More will be reported on this project at a later date.

In May, one \$250,000 Library Improvement Reserve Fund (LIRF) CD and two \$250,000 Rainy Day CDs matured and were reinvested through Horizon Trust & Investment Management.

On May 21, the Library van wouldn't start while parked during a delivery in the alley behind the Baugher Center. The Library Maintenance Manager examined it and determined the battery was bad and replaced it with a new battery; however, the engine still wouldn't turn over. The van was then towed to a Ford dealership where it had been brought before for maintenance and repair. They discovered that the cables leading to the battery had rotted and corroded, and the corrosion had spread to the starter. Since the repair was taking longer than expected, and Anton Insurance advised that the Library's auto insurance policy covered rental vehicles, a cargo van was rented from U-Haul and utilized for the duration of the time the van was in repair. The cost of the van repairs was \$1,437.33, plus \$100 towing charge from Gaston's Towing; and the rental cost of the U-Haul was \$125.14.

During a standard HVAC equipment inspection, it was noted that components had failed and needed to be replaced in two of the rooftop HVAC units at the Baugher Center. Precision Controls removed and replaced the blower motor and capacitor with new OEM parts, removed and replaced the combustion blower assembly with new OEM parts, and tested and verified proper operation for a total cost of \$1,620.

On May 25, the Thomas Branch and Baugher Center suffered an unexpected power outage due to NIPSCO working on new telephone poles in another part of the town. Any power outage at Thomas causes the servers to go down, and all four Library locations lost internet service. This outage lasted approximately 35 minutes. All patrons safely exited the premises except for one patron who was on the second floor looking at DVDs and could not exit the building without the use of the elevator. The patron was made as comfortable as possible upstairs during this time. When the power was restored, the servers and other electronics were turned on in the correct order. Since the outage was relatively brief and technical components were sustained to some degree by temporary battery backup, there was no permanent mechanical or technical issues due to this outage.

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) changed mask requirements for vaccinated individuals stating that masks and social distancing are unnecessary for those fully vaccinated. Since many businesses have relaxed their requirements based on the CDC announcement, and the Governor of Indiana declared June as continued health emergency, Director Stamm is suggesting an amended Mask Resolution to go into effect July 1, 2021. The current Mask Resolution has been updated to address new CDC guidelines while maintaining safety as much as possible for child patrons under the age of 12 who cannot yet receive the vaccine, and for others who may be vulnerable.

Library Managers and Director Stamm conducted last-minute meetings to discuss new mask language for outdoor programs on Library flyers, online calendar, newsletter, and many other in-house signs. With the changes in masking safety and the availability of the Covid-19 vaccine, Director Stamm determined that the Library could drop its 30-minutes-or-less requirement for in-person visits and computer use. It was also determined that the Library can restore its furniture to public areas and place the furniture in ways to ensure more social distancing than pre-pandemic times. All Managers, including the Director, assisted in the furniture replacement plan; and as of now, many pieces of furniture have been put back into the public space. Toys, sensory bins, and puzzles are not yet going to be put out, nor will indoor programs be hosted at this time.

Director Stamm then read aloud the specific changes made to the Resolution Regarding Face Masks in Library Buildings.

It was noted that this Resolution can be changed independently by the Director, with full reporting to the Board of any changes, as more information about Covid-19 is gathered or information shifts.

A motion was made by Rondi Wightman to approve the Resolution Regarding Face Masks in Library Buildings dated June 10, 2021, with the grammatical correction made as noted on the second page, as presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed. Board members then signed the updated Resolution Regarding Face Masks in Library Building stating their agreement to it.

In May, \$90.06 was spent on pandemic-related expenditures. The total now spent on pandemic-related expenditures is \$14,514.31.

The only staff change for the past month was the hiring of part-time Clerk Sam Haines.

Old Business Landscaping Company

David's Lawn Care has been retained for lawn cutting, trimming, and removing related debris from the lawns of Thomas, Hageman, and Baugher Center for a cost of \$225 each time they perform these services. David's is developing quotes for work on the overall landscaping needs of Library properties based on using more native plants and easy-to maintain perennials.

Indiana Library Federation

On May 20, Director Stamm attended (via Zoom) a special Indiana Library Federation (ILF) meeting created at the behest of ILF members to address members' questions and concerns about the current legal cases alleging racism and intolerance. No concrete information was provided, nor was a definitive answer given to the largest question of whether the full scope of the accusations and investigations would be made public. ILF intends to hold another update meeting in July.

Hageman Roof & Additional Appropriation

On May 25, Director Stamm attended the Porter County Council meeting to request approval for the Library Additional Appropriation request to use \$50,000 of its own Rainy Day funds to replace the Hageman roof. All Council members voted in favor. The signed Resolution was uploaded in conjunction

with completing the online data forms required by DLGF for their final decision. DLGF approved the request on June 3. CSK Architects was advised of this, and materials are being obtained for the project to begin near the end of June.

Regarding leaves in the Hageman gutters, the Library's Maintenance Manager advised that leaves clogging up the gutters haven't been a problem. He thought that the larger gutters specified in the existing plans will work well. He suggested waiting to see how the larger gutters work before adding leaf guards.

It was determined that publishing public notice for the Additional Request in the newspapers requires publication once, 10 full days before and including the date of the public hearing in two newspapers.

Director Stamm confirmed that the CSK portion of the \$2,600 for the Hageman roof replacement was already apportioned in the Library encumbrance of funds from 2020. This means that if there are no issues discovered when Korellis replaces the roof, their fee of \$42,488 will come from the Additional Appropriation of \$50,000, and the remainder will be reabsorbed unused back into Rainy Day fund.

New Business

Draft Budget in July

Director Stamm intends to do a draft budget for review at the July Board meeting instead of the June meeting. This is because the DLGF announces the official Max Levy Growth Quotient (MLGQ) on June 30, and this amount is what the entire budget is based upon. DLGF advised to wait to prepare the draft budget after the official MLGQ is released on June 30 as this will get the Library in line with DLGF best practices for budget season. Next year's Schedule of Board Meetings will reflect the change of the draft budget from June to July.

MCLS Strategic Planning Committee

In May, Director Stamm met (via Zoom) with MCLS representative Pam Seabolt along with Assistant Director Heather Chaddock, and firm dates for the separate Strategic Planning and Staff Committee meetings and retreats were put in place. The updated Timeline is in Drive, and Trustees Kathryn Cochran and Heather Augustyn were advised of the meeting dates specific to the Strategic Planning Committee.

It was determined that meetings will be held in-person at the Baugher Center with observation of whatever Covid-safety protocols are in effect at the time. Details as to whether/what the Library will provide for refreshments or meals are still to be determined and will be funded by the Library's Unrestricted Gift Fund. The kickoff meeting will be held on August 3 from 10 am- 12 pm, and the intent is to finalize the report in December 2021 for implementation in 2022.

Director Stamm then verbally reviewed and further elaborated on the MCLS Strategic Planning Timeline that was provided to Board members.

Employee Coronavirus Sick Time Temporary Policy

Director Stamm thanked the Board for their support of staff during the pandemic through the approval and extensions of the "Employee Coronavirus Sick Time Temporary Policy". This policy was implemented in September 2020 as a supplement to Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and extended after FFCRA expired at the end of 2020. It is Director Stamm's recommendation that the Board rescind this temporary policy as the Covid-19 vaccine is now widely available and the policy has not been needed or utilized by staff since early March of 2021. In total, 15 people used it in 2021 from January to March, totaling 268 hours, which averages to two days per person.

A motion was made by Nick Tilden to rescind the Employee Coronavirus Sick Time Temporary Policy. Rondi Wightman 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 of June 10, 2021. Nick Tilden seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

Other Business

Director Stamm passed out paperwork that needed to be signed by Board members for votes made at meetings held electronically over the past several months.

The date of the next regular Board of Trustees meeting will be held at 7:00 pm on Thursday, July 8, 2021 at the Baugher Center. Board members decided to make mask-wearing at this next meeting optional.

This meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

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