

Board of Trustees
Minutes
November 11, 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, November 11, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

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

Also present at this meeting were: Library Director Lisa Stamm, Library Assistant Director Heather Chaddock, Attorney Lisa Baron, Bob Nicksic of Giannini & Associates, and Minutes Recorder Christine Hoover.

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

Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting: Budget Adoption

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to approve the minutes from the October 26, 2021 Special Meeting: Budget Adoption as presented. Nick Tilden seconded the motion. All voted in favor, with Kathryn Cochran, Will Scharp, and Rondi Wightman abstaining since they were not present at this meeting, and the motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the minutes from the October 14, 2021 regular Board meeting as presented. Heather Augustyn seconded the motion. All voted in favor, with Nick Tilden abstaining since he was not present at this meeting, and the motion passed.

Financial and Statistical Reports

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

Approval of Claims and Warrants

A motion was made by Will Scharp to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of October 15, 2021 through November 11, 2021 as presented. Heather Augustyn 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.

In the month of October, 15,622 people visited the Library. Staff created 23 in-person programs with 380 attendees, and four (4) Live Virtual programs with 22 Live Virtual attendees. Staff answered 80 reference questions, 113 tech help questions, and 108 new library cards were registered. Also noted is that Kanopy, a video streaming service which launched after last month's meeting, saw 137 circs in its first half-month. Graphs showing materials circulation statistics were provided.

Six shelving units with built-in steel dividers were purchased at a cost of \$175 each for the Friends of the Library space in the Baugher Center, and CD shelves were also purchased and installed in the vault. More shelving may need to be purchased. Bins with 8" tires and 600 pounds of weight capacity will be

purchased for transporting donated materials from Thomas to the Baugher Center in inclement weather. Director Stamm determined that the Library would not be accepting any more item donations for the Friends until January 2022.

The owner of Alkon, the Library's website developer for the past 19 years, has sold the business to SunAnt. The owner of Alkon advised that nothing about any of Alkon's services or pricing would be changed with the new company.

For health and safety reasons, Director Stamm again decided not to hold a staff holiday get-together. Instead, all staff members will get their choice of a local gift card in the amount of \$15. This totals approximately \$1,000 and will be funded through Unrestricted Gift.

Staff changes for the past month include the hiring of part-time Clerk Madeline Zandstra and the separation of part-time Cleaner/Landscaper Leo Lesniak.

Old Business Hageman Roof

The larger gutters installed as part of the Hageman roof project are working well with no leaf or other backup problems as of yet, and there is no more heavy downpour directly over the staff entrance.

New Business Thomas HVAC

In November 2020, \$68,500 was encumbered from Operating funds into the 2021 budget year to spend on the design work of the project to replace the Thomas HVAC system. Ideally, those encumbered funds should be spent before year-end of 2021 to avoid having to encumber those same monies into another budget year. Bob Nicksic of Giannini & Associates has been working on this project and is on track to meet this goal. In April of 2021, it was determined and strongly recommended by Giannini and CSK Architects to replace the ductwork at Thomas as part of the HVAC project. The Board agreed to this recommendation and the additional cost of \$23,200 to the overall design work. This additional cost would be paid from 2021 Operating funds.

Bob Nicksic was available at this meeting to explain some of the details of the next steps of this project and answer any questions. He recapped the main points of this project which are to replace the entire HVAC system in Thomas Library. This will include the retention of the existing steam boiler and adding heat exchangers along with new rooftop units allowing more fresh air ventilation in the buildings. VAV locations will be reconfigured for more effective and efficient temperature control and zoning with controls that can be supervised remotely. He advised that security protocol of the system will be provided by Precision Controls. The decision to utilize the existing steam boiler was made due to the fact that the boiler is only about seven years old and has a life expectancy of approximately 50 years. It is also an oversized unit which means it can run on a lower setting to adequately service the building. Also, replacing the steam boiler with a hot water boiler would have added an extra \$100,000 to \$200,000 to the project. A question was asked regarding the use of solar/green energy, and Mr. Nicksic advised this would be something that would affect the electrical system more than the HVAC system. However, the efficiency of this new HVAC system will provide energy savings.

A motion was made by Will Scharp to approve that Giannini & Associates plans, once they are finished, may be put out for public bid in December 2021 or whenever they are ready. Heather Augustyn seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

With this Board approval, Giannini's plans (when finished in early to mid-December), may be put out for bid, and Tom Kuhn will begin the bid process when it is time. Director Stamm would then begin the paperwork and process with DLGF for an Additional Appropriation along with the paperwork and process with the Porter County Council to request an Additional Appropriation. This Additional Appropriation would come from either the Rainy Day or LIRF and would pay for the work done by the awarded bidder in spring of 2022. The estimate of the work itself would cost around \$1.5 million. Director Stamm requested that the HVAC and ductwork plans be drawn as much as possible in a manner that allows staff to remain working inside Thomas even if Thomas is periodically closed to the public. Staff can then still serve the public via Curbside Pickup. The entire project will require complex planning and scheduling in conjunction with temporary re-homing of staff along with the items that make their workdays possible into different areas of the building during different phases.

Museum Assessment

After the October Board meeting, Director Stamm and the Museum Curator requested a quote for a building assessment of the Museum from two companies recommended by Indiana Landmarks. A company utilized by DSC when they did their assessment a few years ago was also contacted about providing a quote.

Responding to this request, Kil Architecture/Planning of South Bend, Indiana provided a quote for architectural consultation for a limited scope Structural and Architectural Exterior Envelop Assessment of the Museum, and their proposal is included in Board documents. Neither of the other two companies contacted have responded.

Board members discussed the proposal by Kil Architecture/Planning and asked why, as outlined in Section VII, number 14, structural analysis of building frames and floors is "optional". Director Stamm will check with Kil and ask why this is considered optional. She will also reach out to others familiar with such an assessment to see what they think about this quote. For comparison, she will try to obtain a quote from another company.

Director Stamm asked the Board what type of possible lease extension they would like the Library to enter into with DSC before a decision is made regarding possibly purchasing the Museum building. Director Stamm will speak with the DSC Superintendent about possible terms of a month-to-month extension, as opposed to renewing a five-year lease.

A question was raised as to who is responsible for the various aspects of maintenance of the building. Attorney Lisa Baron will look at the DSC contract to determine who is responsible for maintenance issues as well as to see if DSC may be responsible to pay for part of the assessment. After Attorney Baron's review of the contract, Director Stamm will approach DSC about the possibility of the Library entering into a month-to-month lease for a reduced monthly fee if the Library pays the cost of the building assessment.

Museum Store Ceiling

During the morning of October 26, the Museum store ceiling partially fell in. Prior to this, the Museum Curator and Museum Maintenance staff noticed that the height of the ceiling was dipping at different points. Maintenance staff removed one of the store's light fixtures to examine what was happening. It was discovered that the current ceiling tiles were glued to the old, cracked plaster above them. Out of concern that the fixture would fall, it was not replaced, but as a temporary measure, a piece of cardboard was installed over the opening. Then, on October 26, pieces of the store ceiling tiles were found on the floor due to the old plaster cracking and not supporting the tiles. Several more ceiling tiles appeared ready to fall. The Museum store was then closed to staff and patrons until further notice. No one was injured, and all Museum art and merchandise was secured.

DSC was alerted of this occurrence, and they were asked if they had documentation and paperwork from a 1980s restoration project since the Library does not have any such paperwork. DSC advised they do not have any documentation and that the project was done in pieces by several individuals. DSC hired Safe Environmental, a company that specializes in asbestos remediation, and they took samples of the insulation, plaster, ceiling tiles, and the adhesive that attached the tiles to the plaster. Their results showed no asbestos present. DSC is having the roof assessed for repair and to ascertain the bigger issues. They advised that the store would have to be emptied for the anticipated repairs to the ceiling. The Curator and staff have since emptied the store of furniture and merchandise.

Both Library and DSC Maintenance discovered that in the attic directly above the store, there was a tiny uninsulated closet-like space that was damp with weeks-old rainwater. The boards and plaster leading to and comprising the store ceiling were also damp. DSC had Gluth Brothers roofers examine the roof. They caulked some areas near the space that was leaking into the attic, but due to subsequent rain, the roof again leaked in the same spot. There is also new, significant water damage in the ceiling above a back stairwell. This issue and its spinoff projects are unresolved, but DSC continues to work on it although there has been no more movement on DSC replacing the roof.

MCLS Strategic Planning

The Key Staff Committee retreat occurred on October 19. It was well-led by MCLS and a successful event. Staff were engaged and came up with goals, objectives, and activities/potential strategies to support the vision honed during the retreats of the Strategic Planning Committee. After this retreat, the MCLS rep compiled and made sense of the information gained during the retreat, and she and Director Stamm will fine-tune these pieces of information. Provided at tonight's meeting is the "WPL Strategic Plan Goals-Objectives-Activities for the Board's review. The next step will be for Director Stamm and the MCLS rep to meet and discuss the implementation and measurement plans. The MCLS rep will provide templates and samples to work with in plugging in the information into the final plan, which will also contain and address all of the State requirements from the Indiana State Library. At that point, the final document will be brought to the Board in December for a vote which will thereby implement the Library's new 5-year Strategic Plan to begin January 1, 2022.

Salary Schedule

The current Salary Schedule was presented tonight for review. Director Stamm recommended that it be continued with the ranges in the schedule as-is. A question was raised as to if the Library's part-time wages are competitive with other part-time establishments. Director Stamm advised that WPL's wages for part-time employees are similar to; and in some cases higher than, other local library systems. Also, a cost of living raise is added in each year for all employees.

Due to the current wage volatility and hiring irregularities experienced throughout the country right now due to the pandemic, the Board would like to watch wages over the next six months for part-time workers and possibly re-address the wage scale after that time.

A motion was made by Nick Tilden to approve the Salary Schedule as presented. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Heather Augustyn to approve the Librarian's Report as presented. Rondi Wightman 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 next regular Board meeting will be held on Thursday, December 9, 2021 at 7:00 pm at the Baugher Center.

A motion was made by Rondi Wightman to adjourn this meeting at 8:25 pm.

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