

Board of Trustees
Minutes
March 10, 2022

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, March 10, 2022 at 7:00 pm.

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

Board members absent: Heather Augustyn and Will Scharp.

Also present at this meeting were: Library Director Lisa Stamm, Library Assistant Director Heather Chaddock, Attorney Lisa Baron, and Minutes Recorder Christine Hoover.

This meeting was called to order by Board President Abbe Trent at 7:04 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Nick Tilden to approve the minutes from the February 10, 2022 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 Kathryn Cochran 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 Michele Corazzo to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of February 11, 2022 through March 10, 2022 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.

In the month of February, 12,359 people visited the Library. Staff created 24 Live Virtual programs with 416 Live Virtual attendees. Staff answered 41 reference questions, 68 tech help questions, and 87 new library cards were registered. Graphs showing materials circulation statistics were provided.

The Winter Reading Challenge held in February engaged 132 participants. Also last month, two programs were conducted in collaboration with The Caring Place on teaching young adults how to recognize and build healthy, safe relationships. The programs were well-received by patrons, and The Caring Place sent notes of thanks to the Library and expressed interest in working together with the Library on future projects.

During the month of March, the Museum Curator developed a now-annual Facebook series focusing on historical women of Duneland. This year, a companion scavenger hunt is being offered giving patrons a chance to win one of two Indiana State Park passes.

Based on patron attendance patterns and significant cost increases, Director Stamm has decided to split the summer film and concert series into two separate series: a summer movie series and a summer concert series. In the past, the movies and concerts were held on the same dates and at the same location. Beginning this year, the movies and concerts will be held on alternating weekends. Distinct promotional fliers and other materials plus social media and press releases will inform the public of this change.

Director Stamm reported that recent bills SB17, HB1134, SB167, and HB1040 all containing problematic language regarding legal threats to school and public libraries over “materials harmful to minors” have been defeated. Director Stamm warned that attempts to include the language in other bills will continue, and the issue is far from over.

Director Stamm and the Museum Curator determined that it would be best to change the Museum’s Saturday hours to be open on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month rather than being open every Saturday. This change is due to the fact that there has been less traffic to the Museum since the pandemic and a much smaller pool of volunteers to help out. Being open every Saturday involved having one full-time staff member and one part-time staff member responsible for being there each Saturday of the month. Being that the Museum has only two full-time staff members and one part-time staff member, this meant the full-time person working on Saturday would be off on a weekday which was problematic for workload, workweek interactions, and general staffing coverage. The Museum’s other existing hours would remain the same.

The Friends of the Library will be having their spring book sale at the Baugher Center during the weekend of April 9. Later in April at the Baugher Center, the Friends will host a Technology Sale featuring obsolete and unneeded technology equipment. A list of these outdated, surplus, or defunct technology items to be sold at the Technology Sale in 2022 was provided in the Board documents for the Board’s approval.

In January, there was a small delay in confirmation from Horizon of a matured and reinvested Library Improvement Reserve Fund (LIRF) CD. Confirming now, one \$250,000 LIRF CD matured in January and was reinvested into a U.S. Treasury bond. In February, one \$250,000 LIRF CD and two \$250,000 Rainy Day CDs matured and were reinvested, along with interest, in non-Treasury options. All three CDs were reinvested by Horizon Trust & Investment Management.

The Annual Financial Report (AFR) was completed and submitted to the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) through Gateway on time. Director Stamm created from scratch a Depreciation Schedule Key and based life expectancies on standard accounting parameters, alongside IRS Publication 946, to satisfy the depreciable assets requirements by the State Board of Accounts (SBOA). For books and other circulating materials, a 10-year spread from 100% value down to zero value was used. Director Stamm and the Maintenance Manager went over again every single item in the Library’s existing inventory and found more items to be removed or quantities edited, and a few items to be added. The fully updated, now granular inventory list is included in the Board documents for review and approval.

Should SBOA have any questions, a folder containing all documentation – the Depreciation Schedule Key, the revised and updated Capital Assets Policy, and the working sheets used to complete this task – are readily available. Included in Board documents is a screenshot of the depreciable assets page as submitted to SBOA in the AFR.

The Library Annual Report (LAR) was completed and submitted on time to the Indiana State Library. In covering 2021, the Library surpassed all requirements and correctly parsed programming statistics as required based on IMLS stipulations surrounding virtual programming. A noteworthy statistic for 2021 is that the Library created 89 different standalone, take-home Craft Kits and gave out a total of 1,886 kits.

After discussing staff interests and comfort levels with the Managers, Director Stamm recommends that the Library change the masking requirement for all Library staff to be mask-optional while at work. This decision was made based on numerous factors such as that Porter County has reached “yellow” status in the pandemic; Duneland and other area schools have made the decision to go mask-optional for staff and students; and the Town of Chesterton and businesses and organizations in many counties and states decided to go mask-optional. Further details related to going mask-optional will be made clear to staff and were outlined for the Board. Director Stamm added that this or any version of a similar Resolution may be reinstated if needed.

Plans are underway to resume in-person programming, alongside outdoor programs, in June. Patrons and groups will not be permitted to gather indoors at the Library just yet as the upcoming HVAC project will limit the amount of available space for patrons and groups. The Bertha Wood Room will be unavailable for extended periods which will lead to higher demand for the Baugher Center for both public and staff use. Library use of spaces takes precedence over public use, and the Library does not have separate, staff-only meeting and work spaces available.

The Duneland School Corporation has invited Director Stamm to serve on a selection committee to identify finalists for their “Teacher of the Year” and Employee of the Year” honors.

Staff changes for the past month include the separation of part-time Museum Researcher Tori Binelli and part-time Clerk David Thompson. Paige Avery McCurdy went from being a part-time Page to a part-time Clerk.

Old Business

Thomas HVAC

At the end of February, the Porter County Council approved the Additional Appropriation request of \$2,228,413. The DLGF made the final approval shortly thereafter. A pre-construction/introduction meeting between numerous involved parties, including Amereco for the asbestos assessment, is scheduled for March 23. Along with Director Stamm, the Maintenance Manager, the Assistant Director, and IT Manager will also attend this meeting. It was noted that this HVAC project is further complicated by pandemic-related supply chain delays which makes the planning of Library activities and programs more stressful for staff. The Board discussed potential off-site, temporary space options that might be available for Library use during the HVAC construction process.

Museum Assessment

KIL Architecture has drafted but not finalized their Museum assessment. So far, there is nothing surprising or particularly alarming in their findings or recommendations either financially or structurally. More will be reported on when the finalized report is in hand.

New Business

Electronic Meeting Roll Call

During the January Board meeting, six Trustees attended in person, and one Trustee attended the meeting electronically. In the case of any Trustee attending virtually, voting on action items needs to be done by full roll call which is required per Library policy. At this time, for the record, a motion was made

by Kathryn Cochran to reaffirm action items voted on from the January regular meeting and subsequent Board of Finance meeting. Nick Tilden seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Technology Sale

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to approve the sale of the outdated technology items as presented. Rondi Wightman seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Resolution Regarding Face Masks in Library Buildings

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to rescind the Resolution Regarding Face Masks in Library Buildings. Rondi Wightman seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Unacceptable Behavior Policy

Director Stamm recommends a change to the Unacceptable Behavior Policy to allow for drinks being permitted only if they are covered with a lid at all times while inside the Library.

A motion was made by Rondi Wightman to approve the change to the Unacceptable Behavior Policy as recommended and presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Inventory List

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the updated Inventory List as presented. Nick Tilden seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Election of Officers

Michele Corazzo made the following nominations for officers of the Board of Trustees: Kathryn Cochran – President; Will Scharp – Vice-President; Heather Augustyn – Secretary; Rondi Wightman – Treasurer.

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

A motion was made by Nick Tilden to accept the Librarian's Report as presented. Michele Corazzo 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 14, 2022 at 7:00 pm at the Baugher Center.

Nick Tilden made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 7:50 pm.

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

