

Board of Trustees
Minutes
August 11, 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, August 11, 2022 at 7:00 pm.

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

Board member absent: Rondi Wightman

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

This meeting was called to order by Board President Kathryn Cochran at 7:11 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Heather Augustyn to approve the minutes from the July 14, 2022 regular Board meeting as presented. Michele Corazzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor, with Will Scharp abstaining from voting, and the motion passed.

Financial and Statistical Reports

A motion was made by Abbe Trent 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 Nick Tilden to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of July 15, 2022 through August 11, 2022 as presented. Will Scharp 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.

Director Stamm shared final statistics for the 2022 Summer Reading program, and offered congratulations to Library staff for increasing participation across all age groups. In 2022, 570 children, 196 tweens and teens, and 275 adults participated in the program. Comparatively, 2021 saw 429 children, 135 tweens and teens, and 225 adults, which amounts to an increase of 33% in children, 45% in tweens and teens, and 22% in adults this year over last.

In the month of July, 23,391 people visited the Library. Staff created 36 in-person programs with 770 attendees. Staff answered 22 reference questions, 90 tech help questions, and 115 new library cards were registered. Graphs showing materials circulation statistics were provided.

Special programs, giveaways, and social media engagements are underway during August to celebrate WPL's 50th birthday. The Museum Curator has developed historical posts and photos for Facebook and they are popular with WPL's followers. The custom tee shirts have arrived for staff and Trustees to wear as part of the celebration and to promote the Library.

The Thomas Branch experienced two brief, total power outages, caused by power substation overload due to summertime heat. Several streets nearby the branch also experienced power failures. Staff were

prepared with flashlights and other emergency items, but each outage was brief enough (less than 60 seconds) that the branch did not have to close to the public.

In July, WPL received a formal letter (sent annually) from the Indiana State Library affirming that WPL is in compliance with all state standards.

In July, four \$250,000 LIRF CDs and one \$250,000 Rainy Day CD matured and were reinvested by Horizon Trust & Investment Management at the following rates:

LIRF: Capital One Bank 3.15%; Sallie Mae bank 3.15%; American Express 3.30%; Utah Community CU 3.15%. Rainy Day: Capital One 3.15%

WPL is participating a new project called Indiana Library Passport, a free program that showcases over 60 libraries across the Hoosier state and invites people to visit and explore them, checking-in via a passport mobile app. After participants check-in to libraries listed on the Indiana Library Passport trail, they are entered into a quarterly drawing for prize packages, including gift certificates from local (Duneland Pizza is a donor) and national merchants. The Indiana Library Passport program is sponsored by the Indiana State Library Foundation.

In July, Director Stamm met with Anton Insurance to review the Library renewal for Property & Casualty Coverage. Total coverage pricing increased slightly as a result of increased cybersecurity policy components; the annual premium for 2022 was \$34,810, and in 2023 it is \$36,112, for an increase of \$1,302.

Director Stamm summarized her thoughts following last month's discussion about the Guard911 app. Many of the app's users are also trained to call 911 first, before engaging the app, and the app itself contacts 911. The Library would be looking only to potentially use such an app as a means to quickly alert staff in an emergency (staff would still be trained to first call 911 directly), and the Library does not feel entirely comfortable with the primary feature of the app being to alert numerous interested, unknown persons (purportedly former or current law enforcement) to respond to a potentially already volatile situation. At a cost of \$4,750 a year, Director Stamm sought other options to consider alongside the idea as a whole.

Trustee Heather Augustyn shared last month that the Purdue Northwest campus uses an alert app called Pulse; as such, Director Stamm contacted Pulse's parent company, Rave, for information and a quote. For system-wide and 911 alerting in an emergency, with no other use, Pulse would cost WPL \$2,500 per year in a 3-year contract covering all staff in all locations, with a one-time \$500 setup fee. Pulse mentioned that, due to technological limitations and high cost, most organizations are going away from physical panic buttons, as they don't provide any specifics about an emergency. Discussion ensued among the Trustees, centering mainly around the efficacy of an additional alert system when staff would already contact 911. Trustee Abbe Trent said she would rather equip staff with emergency response training to empower them; several other Trustees voiced support for this option. Director Stamm agreed that this type of training was a more actionable and potentially helpful path, and said that she would look into training opportunities for all staff, and engage in discussions with the Management team; she will report more later.

The four steel and wood benches outside the main entrance of the Thomas Branch need to be refurbished; the wooden slats are weathered and rough, and the coating on the steel frames is corroded

and flaking. The wood and steel are sturdy and well-made. There is a company in Wanatah that specializes in industrial abrasive blasting and specialty coatings, and they quoted \$465 per bench to thermally strip the existing coating, blast-clean the frame, apply an epoxy primer and melt, and apply a minimum 4-millimeter-thick powder coating paint and oven-cure it. The process will take 2-3 weeks, and will be done in batches of two.

Concurrently, the Library will outsource the 32 custom-sized, thick wooden slats to be refinished by local company Jiminez Painting for a total cost of \$800. WPL's Maintenance crew will then put everything back together and reinstall the benches in their same locations. New benches cost a minimum of \$2000 each; by refurbishing the Library will retain four existing, solid quality benches for a total cost of \$2,660.

Director Stamm had a formal meeting with DLGF to go over all entries to the Library's 2023 budget in Gateway, and got approval on all numbers. The 2023 budget hearing will occur as part of the normal agenda during the September 8th Board meeting. The Board will meet two weeks later, on September 22nd, for the budget adoption special meeting.

Staff changes for the month include the hiring of part-time Clerk Alison Saager. Staff separated this month were part-time Clerks Ann Schwerzler and Aidan Aitchenson.

Old Business

Thomas HVAC

Director Stamm contacted the Town of Chesterton regarding the Nov. 15th expiration date of the HVAC permit. The Town said that while Nov. 15th is the date by which all work is supposed to be completed, they understand the disruptions to supply chains. As such, they offered to extend the Library's permit for an additional 3 months without fees, and assess from that point. Director Stamm thanked them for the extension without fees and said that if, once work actually begins, it proves necessary to extend the permit again with fees as part of normal process, the Library will do so.

Museum Birds

Director Stamm is still working with DSC to have the birds and roof issues remedied at the Museum. The birds were discovered in an upstairs, non-public closet-type area, and the goal is to remove them safely at the same time as blocking their entry point, so they cannot return. In late June, a new water stain appeared on the ceiling of the back stairwell, which had been repaired in December. On August 4th, DSC had a roofing company visit the Museum to assess the roof leak, which has grown. DSC said that they generated a purchase order to start looking into the bird issue.

Regarding the potential sale of the Museum to WPL by DSC, the DSC Board met with the YMCA Board last week; prior to it, DSC Superintendent Chip Pettit told Director Stamm that the hope was that DSC and YMCA forge a formal partnership to develop the property. If this comes to pass, DSC will suggest that WPL be involved in further conversations. Director Stamm will report more on this later.

Memoriams

Last month, the Board determined that they would bring to this meeting some language ideas for the plaques honoring Drew Rhed and Terry Hiestand. The price of the entirely steel bench is approximately \$2,360 each and includes delivery. Director Stamm and WPL Maintenance are also considering other bench styles that may prove more comfortable for extended periods of sitting, which may change

pricing. Pricing for plaques depends upon the amount of words or characters. The “WPL font” will be shared with the bench company in hopes they can replicate it for the engraving. The Board ultimately decided to wait to vote on their ideas for language on the plaques until all Trustees were in attendance.

Dune Acres

Lauren DeFauw with McColly Real Estate will provide Director Stamm with a proposal as to listing the Dune Acres property in time for the September regular meeting.

New Business eRate Consortium Resolution

Director Stamm presented the Annual Resolution to renew participation in the Indiana State Library Consortium for Public Library Internet Access (e-Rate), the discount telecommunications program available to libraries from the federal government, that gives discounts for following CIPA (Children’s Internet Protection Act) protocol on public computers. Michele Corazzo made a motion to continue participation in eRate the Consortium. Heather Augustyn seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Employee Handbook

Director Stamm proposed two edits to the WPL Employee Handbook, as follows:

1. Proposed addition: Page 23; 6.2 Violence in the Workplace:

In accordance with IC 34-28-7-2, all Westchester Public Library employees and all contractors hired by Westchester Public Library who own a firearm or ammunition must, during their Westchester Public Library working hours, keep any firearm or ammunition locked in the trunk of their (the employee's or contractor's) vehicle, or stored in the glove compartment of their locked vehicle, or stored out of plain sight in their locked vehicle.

2. Amendment: Page 13; 3.3 Vacation, Sick, and Other Time Off:

Current language: Employees who miss more than three consecutive unscheduled days due to illness may be required to present a physician’s release that permits them to return to work.

Proposed language: Employees who have three or more unscheduled absences due to illness in any 2-week period may be required to supply a physician’s release that confirms their absence(s) and/or permits them to return to work.

Heather Augustyn made a motion to accept the changes to the WPL Employee Handbook. Michele Corazzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Salary Schedule

After much thought and research regarding the Library’s salary schedule, Director Stamm developed new full- and part-time salary schedule ranges for the Board to consider, with the idea that any changes would be implemented on January 1, 2023.

Director Stamm began by saying that while the proposed salary schedule would be adjusted as a whole, she was not recommending the adjustment of any individual, current full-time employee salaries, as the

individual, current full-time salaries are fair and include as part of compensation health benefits and PERF contributions by WPL. Director Stamm added that every full-time employee, herself included, knows, agrees with, and appreciates these benefits as part of their compensation.

Director Stamm increased the salary schedule ranges of salaried employees based on area, competitive rates and in order to give that section of the schedule room in the margins. She ensured that no professional full-time role had a starting range of less than \$40,000. By adjusting the full-time portions of the salary schedule, WPL has room for (standard) inflation and cost-of-living increases over the years as tenured employees stay on. Director Stamm reiterated that she did not propose any wage adjustments for current full-time employees, but that she did plan for them to receive the Board-approved 3% cost-of-living increase beginning in January 2023.

Director Stamm explained that the biggest change she proposed was to increase the hourly rates of WPL part-time employees. Compared to nearby library systems, current WPL hourly rates for part-time employees are low. The bulk of part-time staff (Clerks, Technical Clerks, and Cleaners) start at rates that are at least \$3 less than equivalent roles in other, area library systems.

Director Stamm conducted research and conferred with veteran human resources and other relevant industry professionals to learn how to fairly and accurately make a large increase to part-time hourly wage ranges, and how to apply such a change to the hourly rates of current employees. She said that, in order to adjust part-time hourly wages appropriately, the first step would be to modify the salary schedule hourly ranges by setting competitive starting rates. Then, adjust every single part-time employee's current hourly wage by adding to it the lump sum difference between the old starting rate of their current role in the existing salary schedule, and the new starting rate in the new salary schedule.

Director Stamm gave as an example WPL's current salary schedule starting rate of \$9.80 per hour for Clerks, and suggested it be adjusted to a starting hourly rate of \$13 (which is fair/generous and is competitive with area systems). The difference between the old starting rate and the new starting rate would be \$3.20. In that case, every current Clerk would be given a lump-sum adjustment of +\$3.20 to their current hourly rate. Doing it that way accounts for years-of-service and subsequent cost-of-living increases any current Clerks may have already received, and keeps them at accurate and fair levels when compared with one another. That way, whether a Clerk has been with WPL for 1 year or 8 years, the lump sum adjustment of +\$3.20 would increase their specific, individual wage to current rates, and ensure that no part-time employee currently working at WPL earns a lower hourly wage than an incoming part-time employee in the same role.

Director Stamm learned that Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) recommends that hourly part-time wage ranges show a 60% increase span, meaning, the minimum (starting) rate multiplied by 60% results in the maximum rate. Using this formula, if WPL increased the minimum rate for Clerks to \$13, the maximum rate would be \$20.80. Director Stamm increased all of the part-time starting rates on WPL's salary schedule to be more in line with area library systems, and applied the 60% span accordingly.

Both the existing and proposed Salary Schedules were provided to the Board. Director Stamm removed the nonexistent IT Assistant and Cleaner categories from the full-time section of the salary schedule, and adjusted the titles in the rest of the full-time section to reflect the language WPL uses in-house. She completely removed the existing "After Six (6) Months Hourly" increase in the part-time hourly range

section, opting instead to pay a competitive rate from the get-go, versus give a minor adjustment after a probationary period.

Director Stamm calculated the total dollar amount that implementing the proposed wage changes would add to the annual amount paid to all current part-time employees in next year's Operating budget, and she calculated it without a 3% cost-of-living increase for part-time staff. As part of her figuring, which occurred after the budget was developed and approved for 2023, she determined that the 2023 budget can sustain the hourly wage changes. However, she did not recommend, nor would it make sense, to do a massive hourly wage overhaul for part-time employees plus add a 3% cost-of-living increase in 2023 for those same part-time employees (the part-time employee hourly rate change is significantly higher than a 3% cost-of-living increase).

When Director Stamm removed the 3% cost-of-living in 2023 for part-time employees and did the calculations based on the specific lump sum wage adjustments, multiplied by the number of hours each part-time employee works in a year, there was a buffer of \$39,251. She recapped that this significant adjustment to part-time hourly wages would be effective January 1, 2023 and would replace a 3% cost-of-living only for part-time employees (she explained that, for 2024, part-time employees would go back to receiving whatever cost-of-living increase the Library might be able to offer its employees). She further recapped that full-time employees would not have a salary adjustment in 2023 but would receive a 3% cost-of-living increase.

Will Scharp commented that he felt the recommended changes made sense, as inflation seems to be here to stay. Heather Augustyn also voiced her support of the increase, as a means to retain the Library's hardworking staff.

A motion was made by Will Scharp to accept the salary schedule changes as recommended by the Director. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Will Scharp to approve the Librarian's Report as presented. 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

Abbe Trent noted that she was pleased to see all of the local, small businesses represented in the Library's Claims and Warrants.

The date of the next regular Board of Trustees meeting will be on Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 7:00 pm at the Baugher Center, followed by the special meeting for the Budget Adoption on Thursday, September 22 at 7:00 PM at the Baugher Center.

Kathryn Cochran adjourned the meeting at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Chaddock, Minutes Recorder for
Heather Augustyn, Secretary