

Board of  
Trustees  
Minutes  
February 9, 2023

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, February 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.

Board members present were Heather Augustyn, Nick Tilden, Abbe Trent, Will Scharp, Rondi Wightman, with Michele Corazzo in attendance viz Zoom.

Board members absent: Kathryn Cochran

Also present at this meeting were: Interim Library Director Heather Chaddock and Library Bookkeeper Kelsey Stearns.

This meeting was called to order by Board Vice President Will Scharp at 7:02 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the minutes from the January 12, 2023 regular meeting as presented. Heather Augustyn seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Financial and Statistical Reports

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the Financial and Statistical Reports as presented. Nick Tilden 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 January 13, 2023 through February 9, 2023 as presented. Heather Augustyn seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Librarian's Report

Service highlights were relayed from the past month featuring positive feedback and gratitude expressed by patrons regarding their Library experiences.

In January, 13,359 people visited the Library; WPL created 36 in-person programs with 707 attendees and 1 live virtual program with 13 attendees; WPL answered 10 reference questions and 116 tech help questions; 261 people utilized library meeting rooms; and WPL registered 125 new library cards.

The *Libby* app has added the option for patrons to request ebooks that are not already in WPL's collection. This was a feature in the previously utilized *Overdrive* app, which was missed by patrons after the changeover. WPL staff pushed for this feature to be added in the *Libby* updates, so much so that a representative enabled WPL to be part of the early adopters group. The feature is now live, allowing easier access for the community to request ebook purchases.

On Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, the *Chesterton Tribune* ran a feature about WPL's long-running "Tickle Tales" classes for children ages 9-24 months. The article focused on the efforts of two WPL employees, as well as some of the storied history of the Hageman Branch.

Work is underway on the Library Annual Report to the Indiana State Library. Staff members have been gathering statistics to ensure submission before the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

WPL is the recipient of various donations throughout the year, but in January, there was an outpouring

of gifts to the Library in memory of Lynnette Huddleston Duhamel. Lynnette was a longtime local librarian with a successful and storied career, working for many years within the Portage Township School Corporation, as well as serving on the INCOLSA Board of Directors and other various State Library Committees. After her passing on January 13<sup>th</sup>, her family requested donations to WPL in lieu of flowers, and the Library has received a total of \$775 so far in Lynnette's memory.

Trustees Nick Tilden and Abbe Trent are both up for reappointment this year.

In January, two \$250,000 LIRF CDs matured and were reinvested by Horizon Trust & Investment Management at the following rates: M & T Bank Corporation, NY at 4.5% and First National Bank of Middle TN at 4.35%

One new staff member, Pamela Schmidt, has joined the WPL team as a part-time clerk.

### Old Business

#### Thomas HVAC

On January 23, one of the massive, new air conditioning units was installed via crane onto the roof of the Thomas Branch. Another payment was made to Circle R Mechanical for \$224,854.54 to cover the cost of this unit and all attending supplies needed to get it installed. This most recent architect-approved Application & Certificate for Payment was paid from the Additional Appropriation from WPL's Rainy Day Fund. WPL's Maintenance Manager and Interim Director Chaddock met with the contractors for the HVAC project on January 30<sup>th</sup> to review their progress and learned that the second RTU will not ship until April. This is regrettable, as the crew had wanted to save time and money by only renting the crane once, but given the continued delays in manufacturing, they needed to install the first one when they received it, in order to not delay progress on the project. Circle R Mechanical has said that they will be able to adjust for the late second RTU, and it will not extend the timeline of the project overall.

Asbestos abatement from Amereco for Phase 1 is set to occur in the evenings on February 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, so as not to interrupt the workflow of the daytime crews working in the same space. All precautions have been taken for everyone's safety. The rate per shift is \$3,975.00 and they estimated this first abatement project, removing asbestos from joint compound in the Phase 1 area, would take 3 shifts.

#### Museum

Interim Director Chaddock met with Duneland School Corporation Superintendent Chip Pettit on January 25<sup>th</sup> to review the terms of the Library's lease and address the status of the Library's attempt to purchase the Brown Mansion in the midst of the YMCA's expressed intent to purchase the entire Chesterton Middle School property. DSC seeks to assist with the needs of both parties (YMCA and WPL), but will not move forward with the sale of the Brown Mansion until they receive official plans from the YMCA for the property. The YMCA's timeline now has the submission of their schematic design for Q2 of 2023, which will potentially mean July. Hearing this, Interim Director Chaddock negotiated that WPL move to a rental rate of \$1.00/month for the Brown Mansion in 2023, on a month-to-month basis. Chip agreed, and the DSC School Board was presented with this new lease agreement at their February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, which they accepted.

A motion was made to approve the month-to-month lease at a rate of \$1.00 per month through the end of 2023 by Heather Augustyn. Rondi Wightman seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

## Memorial Benches

After deciding upon language for the memorial plaques to honor Terry Hiestand and Drew Rhed at last month's meeting, WPL submitted the language to NuToys Leisure Products for a final quote to create a pair of comfortable, durable benches for the community to enjoy. The total for the bench proposal, including fabrication, engraving, and delivery is \$4,305.

## Health Insurance Error

Interim Director Chaddock met with the Library's insurance carrier, Anton Insurance, and brought them up to speed on the current status of the health insurance error. The Library does have liability insurance in case of potential claims against the Library for this error. This information was shared with Lane Gensburg, as well as the Board's intent to send a combined first correspondence to the affected employees, containing the following information: an explanation of the error's discovery, a chart explaining the reimbursement calculations for the premium overcharges, as well as for the overpaid Indiana income tax and FICA that resulted from the premium payments being made post-tax rather than pre-tax, a check for the total amount, and a release of claims for each person to sign. Lane is currently working on drafting this correspondence, which will also be reviewed by Library Attorney Lisa Baron.

Additionally, the Library Bookkeeper discovered, after preparing and distributing 2022 W-2s for WPL staff, that she had been advised incorrectly on the procedure to withhold for employee FICA taxes in her initial training, leading to health deductions being withheld post-tax through December 2022, instead of being corrected and deducted pre-tax starting in October, as previously reported. This is essentially the final iteration of this long-term withholding error working itself out. In 2022, this only affects a total of 3 employees. Lane Gensburg advised us on how to proceed with reimbursing staff for 2022, and is working on drafting a statement for employees to sign. The affected employees have been alerted to this error and their pending reimbursement.

## Dune Acres Property

Lauren DeFauw from McColley Realty forwarded an email from the buyer for the Dune Acres property on February 1st. They said that the land survey should be completed the week of February 20, 2023, and they asked to schedule the closing on February 28, 2023. As of today, all systems are go to close this deal, and Lauren will continue to provide updates as needed.

## New Business

### Inventory List

In the process of moving furniture in the computer lab of the Thomas Branch to allow for asbestos abatement in that area, WPL's Maintenance Manager discovered a stack of ripped and broken leather and chrome chairs. Given that WPL currently has a dumpster for construction debris in the back alley of the Thomas Branch, and the contractors have allowed the Library to use it to dispose of any refuse the Library may have, Interim Director Chaddock gave the Maintenance Manager the go-ahead to discard these unusable old chairs. These chairs were still on the Library's inventory list, so per WPL's Capital Assets Policy, the updated Inventory Ledger was submitted for the Board's review and approval.

A motion was made to accept the disposal of the chairs and amendment to the inventory ledger by Heather Augustyn. The motion was seconded by Rondi Wightman. All voted in favor, and the motion

passed.

A motion was made to approve the Librarian's report as presented by Abbe Trent. The motion was seconded by Nick Tilden. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

Other Business

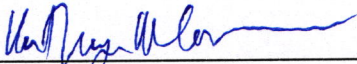
Heather Augustyn announced that she will be moving out-of-state and would therefore need to give up her seat with the Library Board of Directors.

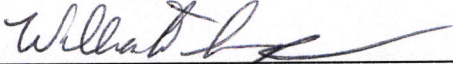
Nick Tilden announced that he would also not be seeking reappointment for his term. The March 9, 2023 board meeting will be the last board meeting both members will attend.

Rondi Wightman announced that she will be making an appointment with the Library's insurance brokerage, Anton Insurance to discuss her concerns about the Library's HSA contribution schedule. Discussion about these concerns took place. Interim Director Chaddock invited the Trustees to the impending meeting with Anton Insurance and the discussion was tabled until the next regular meeting.

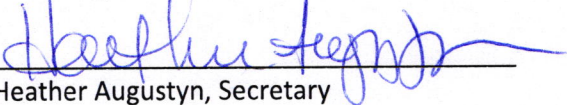
The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be March 9, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Baugher Center.

Nick Tilden made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 PM.

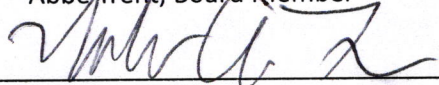
  
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Kathryn Cochran, President

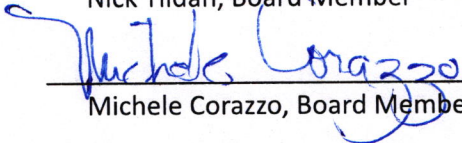
  
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Will Scharp, Vice-President

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Rondi Wightman, Treasurer

  
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Heather Augustyn, Secretary

  
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Abbe Trent, Board Member

  
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Nick Tilden, Board Member

  
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Michele Corazzo, Board Member

Respectfully submitted,

Kelsey Stearns, Minutes Recorder for  
Heather Augustyn, Secretary