

## Board of Trustees

### Minutes

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

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

Board members absent: Rondi Wightman

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

This meeting was called to order by Board President Kathryn Cochran at 7:00 pm.

#### Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the minutes from the February 27, 2023 Executive Session as presented. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, with Heather Augustyn abstaining, and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Will Scharp to approve the minutes from the February 9, 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 Will Scharp 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 February 10, 2023 through March 9, 2023 as presented. Abbe Trent 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 February, 12,122 people visited the Library; WPL created 29 in-person programs with 688 attendees; WPL answered 15 reference questions and 93 tech help questions; 239 people utilized library meeting rooms; and WPL registered 94 new library cards.

The Library Annual Reports were submitted to Gateway and the Indiana State Library on time and accurately.

Thomas Branch staff have experienced an uptick of vandalism and rowdy behavior within the branch, centered around a particular group of patrons. After a series of escalating incidents, as well as complaints from fellow patrons, Interim Director Chaddock made the decision to ban this group from the Library for a period of one month.

Interim Director Chaddock made the decision to close all WPL locations at 11:30 AM on Friday, March 3 for the safety of staff and patrons due to the impending Winter Storm Warning. All locations were able to open on time on Saturday, March 4.

The Board met in Executive Session on Monday, February 27 to interview two potential candidates for appointment to the Board, following the departure of Trustees Nick Tilden and Heather Augustyn in March. Discussion was held regarding the best recommendations for the open seats. A motion was made by Will Scharp to recommend Mike Livovich for the Porter County Council seat, Justin Martinson for the Duneland School Corporation seat, and Abbe Trent for the Westchester Township seat. Heather Augustyn seconded this motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

#### Old Business

#### Thomas HVAC

After opening up the ceiling in the Phase 1 area to renovate the lighting and HVAC systems, various electrical conduits were discovered which were not on the blueprints the architects used for their original plan. Many of them were found to be hung improperly, and need to be brought up to code and re-routed to allow for the new HVAC ductwork installation. In addition, several leaks in the roof were also discovered, necessitating additional drains be installed on the roof. Tom Kuhn from CSK Architects requested that the Change Orders necessary for this work to be completed were quoted as a “not to exceed” amount. The total for this work was estimated to come in at \$31,905.80, which will be paid from the 2022 Encumbered Funds.

At a February 27 progress meeting, the on-site project manager from Circle R Mechanical delivered an updated timeline for this project, due in part to some of these additional discoveries. Phase 1 is now expected to last until the end of April, with Phase 2 beginning May 1. The entire project now has an end date of one month later than initially predicted. While Phase 1 will be longer, the rest of the phases should move more quickly. Overall, this project continues to go well, and the improvements made thus far are promising.

#### Museum

On February 27, Attorney Lisa Baron received a message from the Duneland School Corporation’s attorney requesting confirmation of WPL’s interest in purchasing the Brown Mansion.

The Library is still interested in purchasing the Brown Mansion. Discussion took place to determine the desired purchase price. Nick Tilden expressed concern that the School Corporation may now have competing interest on the property, and thought that if something has happened to change the original plan for the Brown Mansion, the WPL Board of Trustees should have that information in order to properly discuss its options. Attorney Lisa Baron will speak with DSC’s attorney to gain some insight into DSC’s request and report back.

#### Health Insurance Error

Tax attorney Lane Gensburg submitted the final draft of a letter for current and former employees affected by the bookkeeping error, which was submitted to attorney Lisa Baron and the Board for review. Lane asked for WPL to consider its position on including a waiver of liability with the initial

correspondence, or to require it to be signed before funds are dispersed. Interim Director Chaddock forwarded this inquiry, on Lane's recommendation, to Anton Insurance, but has not yet received a reply.

Attorney Lisa Baron suggested the waiver include softer verbiage that indicates, in accepting the funds, the receiver would acknowledge satisfaction over the matter. The Trustees agreed with attorney Lisa Baron's suggestions and asked that she craft a new version of the waiver, discuss it with attorney Lane Gensburg, and return it to the Board for approval.

#### Dune Acres Property

Interim Director Chaddock attended the closing for the Dune Acres property at McColley Realty in Valparaiso on February 28. After realtor commissions and closing costs, the total amount deposited into WPL's Unrestricted Gift Fund was \$188,785.00. Westchester Public Library would like to once again thank Walter Placko for his gift. Its intent was to benefit the Library, and the funds secured in this sale will serve the Library and the surrounding community for many years to come.

#### New Business

#### Employee HSA Disbursement

On March 1, Rondi, Will, Kathy, Abbe, WPL's Bookkeeper, and Interim Director Chaddock all met with Paul Sciarra and Jim Anton of Anton Insurance to discuss options and potential liabilities involved with WPL's long-time practice of making a single, annual disbursement to each eligible employee's Health Savings Account. At the meeting, Paul Sciarra acknowledged that the Library's full funding of the Health Savings Accounts was generous by industry standards. Interim Director Chaddock agreed, and shared that this is something WPL promotes heavily when advertising open full-time positions, and it is greatly appreciated by Library staff. Paul said that some entities do an annual single disbursement, while other will do it bi-annually, or even quarterly. In considering WPL's health care package as a whole, Paul said that 2024 plans will come out mid-October, and the Library may want to consider the cost benefits of moving to a traditional plan versus an HSA high-deductible plan.

A motion was made to table this discussion until the next meeting by Abbe Trent. Heather Augustyn seconded this motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

#### Election of Officers

Board Trustees discussed a slate of nominees for the election of new officers. A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to approve the slate of nominees as follows: Will Scharp for President, Rondi Wightman for Vice-President, Michele Corazzo for Secretary, and Abbe Trent as Treasurer. Heather Augustyn seconded this motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

#### Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

#### Other Business

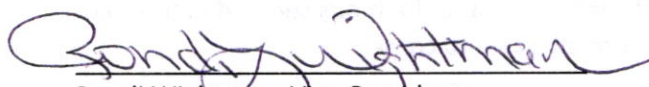
Interim Director Chaddock expressed gratitude to Trustees Nick Tilden and Heather Augustyn for their years of service to the Library.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be April 13, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Baugher Center.

Nick Tilden made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 PM. Heather Augustyn seconded this motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

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Will Scharp, President

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Katherine Cochran, Board Member

  
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Rondi Wightman, Vice-President

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Abbe Trent, Treasurer

**ABSENT**  
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Michele Corazzo, Secretary

Respectfully submitted,

Kelsey Stearns, Minutes Recorder for  
Heather Augustyn, Secretary