

Board of Trustees
Minutes
April 11, 2024

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held at the Baugher Center, 100 W. Indiana Avenue, Chesterton, Indiana on Thursday, April 11th, and called to order by Rondi Wightman, Board President at 7:05 pm.

Board members present were: Rondi Wightman, Abbe Trent, Michele Corazzo, Justin Martinson, Kathryn Cochran, Will Scharp and Michael Livovich

Also present at this meeting were: Library Director Heather Chaddock, Library Assistant Director Jessica Bartz, Library Bookkeeper Kelsey Stearns, Library Attorney Lisa Baron, Outreach and Events Librarian Amanda Fack, Jeff Berglund of Berglund Construction, Westchester Township Museum Curator Serena Ard, and one member of the public.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the minutes from the March 14, 2024 regular session. Justin Martinson seconded the motion. Kathryn Cochran abstained due to absence. Rondi, Abbe, Michele, Justin, Will, and Michael 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. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Claims and Warrants

A motion was made by Michael Livovich to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of February 9, 2024 through March 12, 2024 as presented. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of March 12, 2024 through April 11, 2024 as presented. Kathryn Cochran 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 March, 13,547 people visited the Library; WPL created 37 in-person programs with 704 attendees; WPL answered 63 reference questions and 93 tech help questions; 201 people utilized library meeting rooms; and WPL registered 168 new library cards.

INDIVIDUAL MEETING ROOMS - The Pillar Booths were successfully installed on Thursday, April 4th; there is now one at the Hageman Branch and three in the Serials Department at the Thomas Branch. Director Chaddock was informed that Pillar's ADA- accessible booths were a new product for the company, and still in pre-production when she inquired about them after the March Board meeting. WPL will be able to fit one last, ADA-accessible booth in a row with the others at Thomas, so one was ordered at a total cost of \$19,890, which includes delivery and assembly. It will ship out in mid May or early June. This gives some additional time to order furniture for the booths, determine a procedure for reserving booths, and train staff on it. There are plans to host a "grand opening" for the individual meeting rooms once the final booth, and all associated details, are in place this summer.

TEEN SPACE - Library staff have been working together to move the entire AV collection at the Thomas Branch to the lower level. This is a huge undertaking, with a total of 29,840 video games, audiobooks, CDs, and DVDs needing to be moved. In the coming weeks, AV department staff will be working downstairs at the Circulation desks, in order to train frontline staff on circulating these new material types. Director Chaddock also wanted to have some friendly faces there to greet AV department regular patrons, and assist them in finding the new locations of their favorite materials during this transitional period.

In the meantime, preparations for the new Teen Space continue. Staff are finalizing the furniture order, decorations, and paint colors. The new shelving has already been built and is ready to be wheeled into place once the old AV shelves are discarded. The walls will be painted and the carpet will be cleaned. Kleckner is on site this week cutting the drywall for entry to the new game room, and Trout Glass has been contracted to build and install sliding glass doors. Demolition and drywall repair from Kleckner was quoted at \$9,200, and the doors from Trout were quoted at \$15,900, to be paid from the Gift Fund as part of the Teen Space remodel.

CDs Reinvested

In March, three \$250,000 CDs matured and were reinvested by Horizon Trust & Investment Management at the following rates:

Utah First Federal Credit Union Salt Lake, 4.80%
MVB Bank Inc, Fairmont West Virginia, 4.80%
Southwest Financial Federal Credit Union, 4.80%

Staff Changes

Joined: Amanda Fack, Events and Outreach Librarian; Whitney Leonard, P/T Cleaner; Michael Donaldson, P/T Cleaner

Separated: Michael Donaldson, P/T Cleaner

Other: N/A

Old Business

PATRON BEHAVIOR UPDATE – Using stills captured from WPL security cameras, Director Chaddock was able to provide images to the CMS School Resource Officer of the two young people responsible for vandalizing the 2nd floor Men’s restroom at the Thomas Branch on Wednesday, March 27. Corporal Ray was able to identify them from their pictures, and issued a Trespass Warning to each of their parents via email, and spoke on the phone with their parents as well. The trespass warning lasts for one year. Staff have been instructed to call the police if they do return within this timeframe. Between this, and banning an additional young person for threatening a staff member in the past month, the behavior issues in the Thomas Branch have calmed down considerably. Director Chaddock has not received contact from any of the affected students’ parents or guardians. For now, staff are capably handling the much smaller infractions that have popped up day-to-day since then. Director Chaddock is still gathering information about incident reporting software options. She has also found two local libraries who have security personnel on staff, Hammond and Saint Joseph County. Their directors shared job descriptions for these positions, which will be retained in case this needs to be pursued down the road, but for now, Director Chaddock is pleased with the progress that has been made in curbing bad behavior by connecting with the Duneland School Corporation Resource Officers. Director Chaddock also researched behavior policies from nearly a dozen different local public libraries, and made suggestions to modify WPL’s Unacceptable Behavior Policy to better empower staff in these situations.

MUSEUM PURCHASE/LEASE AGREEMENT - Trustee Will Scharp, WPL Attorney Lisa Baron, and Director Chaddock attended a meeting with representatives from the YMCA, Duneland School Corporation, the Town of Chesterton and the Parks Department, Berglund Construction, and Moake Park to discuss a potential site plan and road cuts for the Healthy Living Campus on April 10. Will sent a brief update email following this meeting. The first draft presented by Moake Park had the parking lot on the east side of the Brown Mansion, which cut into the YMCA’s field hockey and football playing fields, and was ultimately rejected by the group for this reason. The next meeting, to view a reconsidered site map, will be on Tuesday, May 7.

In addition, DSC attorney Chuck Parkinson and WPL attorney Lisa Baron discussed adding an addendum to the Museum lease agreement, to allow WPL to make needed repairs to the Brown

Mansion before the sale is finalized. WPL is currently out of its lease, as the 2023 contract was prepared as a month-to-month agreement for 2023 only. It was assumed that the official sale of the Brown Mansion to WPL would have occurred before the end of 2023, which is why the contract was written that way. However, in the fourth month of 2024, the sale is still pending, and a response to the proposed agreement is needed.

Director Chaddock had a phone conversation with DSC Superintendent Chip Pettit regarding the proposed addendum to the lease agreement, and expressed her surprise that DSC was essentially asking WPL to take over all maintenance of the building and property without actually selling the site to the Library. Superintendent Pettit stated that the intent was to be helpful in allowing WPL to pursue any needed renovations without having to wait for all of the details of the sale to go through. The intent was not to push WPL into an agreement that its board is not comfortable with. Dr. Pettit suggested that WPL could revert back to utilizing last year's lease agreement, updated for 2024. This could be amended by the attorneys, and presented again to the DSC and WPL Boards at their May regular meetings.

Kathryn Cochran expressed some concern with the verbiage of the proposed addendum implying that WPL will have an obligation to complete any repairs, rather than having permission to complete the repairs. Lisa Baron confirmed that her conversation with Chuck Parkinson reflected what Director Chaddock had reported, and that DSC's legal counsel simply wanted to give WPL the option to complete the work. Director Chaddock stated that adding another building project to the current workload would not be feasible within the next year, and she would feel more comfortable reverting back to the previous lease agreement until DSC is prepared to sell the site to WPL.

Kathryn Cochran and Michael Livovich expressed concern about the sale of the Brown Mansion falling through after WPL addresses some of the larger maintenance issues, sinking funds into the building without ownership. Museum Curator Serena Ard commented that changing any language in the lease might muddy the clear responsibilities listed for WPL and DSC in regards to maintenance and repairs for the Brown Mansion, as the current lease has a very clear definition of responsibilities.

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran that the board reject the proposed amendment as presented, and request to instead revert back to the previously existing lease of 2023. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

BAUGHER CENTER BIDS - Bids from local contractors for the Baugher Center roof, HVAC, and lighting renovation were submitted to the Admin office on April 9, and opened at a public

meeting at 3:10 PM on that day. The lowest bid for General Contractor for this project was submitted by Larson-Danielson Construction Company, for \$829,000. WPL's architect Tom Kuhn recommended that the board accept this bid, as it is coming from a large, reputable company based in La Porte, Indiana. Tom also recommended adding on an additional 15% to the Additional Appropriation request for contingencies that will undoubtedly arise in the course of renovating a 50 year old building. That would bring the total additional appropriation request to \$953,350, to be pulled from WPL's Rainy Day fund. WPL currently has \$1,283,253.51 available in the Rainy Day Fund, with an additional \$7,271,597 in investments. With the board's approval, Director Chaddock would like to award this bid to Larson-Danielson, and go on to post notice of a public hearing to attend the May County Council meeting to request an Additional Appropriation to access WPL's Rainy Day funds to pay for this project.

A motion was made by Will Scharp to accept the bid from Larson Danielson with the additional 15% as presented. Michael Livovich seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

New Business

BERGLUND CONSTRUCTION PRESENTATION - Jeff Berglund, the President of the Building Division and Chief Growth Officer from Berglund Construction joined the meeting. Jeff reached out after the last Healthy Living Campus meeting to share his company's interest in assisting WPL with the Brown Mansion renovation. Berglund has past and current experience with historical renovation projects, and Director Chaddock asked him to share some details about how his firm could help the Board in weighing the options of building an entirely new building behind the Mansion, versus renovating and adding on to the existing addition that was made to Mansion in the 60s.

Jeff gave a short presentation about Berglund Construction and its experience with historic restoration construction, as well as its Construction Management options in the beginning stages of renovation.

PATRON CODE OF CONDUCT - Director Chaddock has drafted some proposed edits to WPL's Unacceptable Behavior Policy based on the examples on found from other libraries, commonalities that were missing from WPL's policy, and notably, a change in the title itself, to a Library Code of Conduct. This is more common language for this policy, and frames it in a more positive light, as an agreement for successful behavior between both staff and patrons, rather than leading with what is simply "unacceptable." Changes to the Unacceptable Behavior Policy were denoted with yellow highlights for the Board's review.

than leading with what is simply “unacceptable.” Changes to the Unacceptable Behavior Policy were denoted with yellow highlights for the Board’s review.

After some discussion, a motion was made by Will Scharp to accept the Library Code of Conduct changes as presented. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

PLAC REPORT - A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the PLAC report for the quarter. Will Scharp seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Will Scharp to approve the Librarian’s Report. Michele Corazzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Public Comment

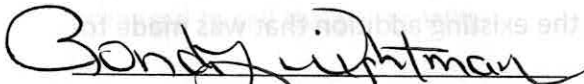
There was no public comment.

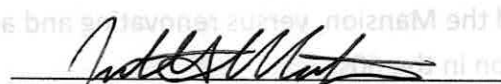
Other Business


There was no other business.

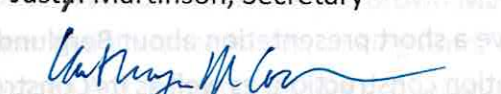
The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be May 9, 2024 at 7:00 PM at the Baugher Center.

Rondi Wightman adjourned the meeting at 8:17 PM.


Rondi Wightman, President


Justin Martinson, Secretary


Michele Corazzo, Vice-President


Kathryn Cochran, Board Member


Abbe Trent, Treasurer


Michael Livovich, Board Member


Will Scharp, Board Member