

Board of Trustees
Minutes
November 14, 2024

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held at the Baugher Center, located at 100 W. Indiana Avenue, Chesterton, Indiana on Thursday, November 14th, 2024. It was called to order by Rondi Wightman, Board President at 7:00 pm.

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

Board members absent: Will Scharp

Also present at this meeting were: Library Director Heather Chaddock, Library Assistant Director Jessica Bartz, and Library Attorney Lisa Baron attended virtually via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Michael Livovich to approve the minutes from the October 10th, 2024 regular session. Justin Martinson seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed. Rondi Wightman abstained due to absence.

Financial and Statistical Reports

A motion was made by Michelle Corazzo to approve the Financial and Statistical Reports as presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Claims and Warrants

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of October 14th, 2024 through November 14th, 2024, as presented. Michelle Corazzo 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.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOK SALE - The Friends of the Library Book Sale was held October 18–20, 2024. It was a success thanks to the collaboration of Assistant Director Bartz, the Maintenance team, and Friends of the Library volunteers. Despite the challenges of coordinating with ongoing Baugher Center renovations, the event raised \$4,545.00. The Friends of the Library donated \$5,000 from the proceeds to the WPL Gift Fund to support program refreshments, staff recognition events, and summer reading prizes. Director Chaddock expressed appreciation to the Friends for their dedicated efforts year-round.

LES PRATT DONATION - In late October, WPL received an unexpected donation of \$105,261.05 from the Les Pratt Trust, following the passing of one of the remaining heirs. WPL is designated as a 1/3 remainder beneficiary, with another similar disbursement expected upon the passing of the final heir. The donation letter states that “this money is to be used by the Westchester Public Library wherever needed for the benefit of said Library and its patrons,” thus the funds were deposited into the Unrestricted Gift Fund. A portion of this donation will be used to replace the carpeting at the Thomas and Hageman Branches, which is sorely needed, preserving LIRF funds for the upcoming Museum renovation.

BAMBOO HR/AVC UPDATE - The transition to remote bookkeeping and payroll services through AVC and Bamboo has been challenging, requiring significant effort to coordinate banking services and access permissions. Despite these hurdles, WPL’s new administrative assistant has demonstrated exceptional organization and diligence. Staff have responded positively to Bamboo's user-friendly interface, though customer service post-onboarding has been less satisfactory. Once remaining issues are resolved, the system is expected to function smoothly, offering increased convenience.

VANDALISM AT HAGEMAN BRANCH - The Hageman Branch has experienced ongoing vandalism over the last couple of months, attributed to CMS students waiting at the bus stop outside the branch. Incidents included damage to a staff member’s car, a broken floodlight, and graffitiing the parking lot using construction debris. Students also verbally harassed a staff member. After Director Chaddock reported these issues to the Porter Police Department, the Duneland School Corporation relocated the bus stop. Since the relocation, no further issues have occurred. Plans are underway to install exterior security cameras at the Branch in early 2025.

RAILING FOR SECOND FLOOR OF THOMAS BRANCH - Following an incident during a children’s storytime at the Thomas Branch, in which two children attempted to climb the short balcony wall overlooking the first floor entrance, bids were solicited to install a higher safety railing to address this concern. Midwest Welding and Fabrication submitted the lowest bid of \$5,045.00 to install an 18-inch railing around the balcony perimeter. Installation will occur soon to enhance safety for all visitors.

STATISTICS - In October, 15,059 people visited the Library; WPL created 42 in-person programs with 768 attendees; WPL answered 87 reference questions and 109 tech help questions; 165 people utilized library meeting rooms and 139 people reserved individual study rooms. WPL registered 102 new library cards.

Staff Changes

Joined: Zoey Egolf - page

Separated: Shauna Wire - page

Other: N/A

Old Business

MUSEUM PURCHASE/RENOVATION – Architects from Moake Park were on site at the History Museum on Tuesday, November 11th to complete their field work, which included measuring and evaluating the structure to create a set of blueprints, from which they will produce bid documents in the coming months. They will schedule a kick-off design meeting with the Board and WPL staff once their initial fieldwork is complete.

Michele Corazzo asked what was happening as far as choosing a contractor for the renovations. Director Chaddock explained that Berglund had provided the Board with an approximation of what the total cost would be for the renovations that the library is wanting to do, and but the architects at Moake Park will now need to create the official plans to present to contracting companies, who will then express interest and interview for the position of Contractor as Construction Manager for the project.

HEALTHY LIVING CAMPUS PARTNERS MEETING - Director Chaddock provided an update about the recent Healthy Living Campus Partners meeting she attended. The Duneland YMCA has moved some services into the old middle school building officially; Jacobs Ladder has also moved in, using the pool for aqua therapy and swim lessons. The art center Make Make is also open, and a classroom has been renovated for it.

BAUGHER CENTER RENOVATION - The Baugher Center renovation is nearing completion. Ceiling grid installation is finished, and roofing work is nearly done, with minor finishing tasks remaining. Painters and carpet crews are completing work on the main level. Dimmer switches for office lighting, omitted from the original bid, are being added due to brightness concerns with new LED fixtures; bids are being solicited.

October Change Orders:

#4: Installation of a rooftop water hydrant for easier RTU maintenance (\$4,928.00).

#5: Credit for unused ductwork allocation (-\$15,027.00).

#6: Credit for adjustments to roof metal decking repair (-\$351.00).

Additionally, the Adult Learning Center (ALC), temporarily relocated to the Thomas Branch during renovations, will remain there permanently, benefitting both ALC and WPL. The move enhances exposure to library amenities for ALC students, increases engagement, and optimizes use of the computer classroom. The vacated ALC space at the Baugher Center has been remodeled for WPL staff offices and Friends of the Library storage.

Note: Director Chaddock asked CSK Architects for clarification regarding Change Order #3. They confirmed there was no change order #3, it was simply skipped in error.

New Business

STAFF HOLIDAY PARTY - ACTION ITEM

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve closing all WPL locations to accommodate the staff holiday party schedule of 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Friday, December 6th, 2024. Member Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

SALARY SCHEDULE - ACTION ITEM

Director Chaddock stated that it was time for the Board's bi-annual review of WPL's salary schedule. She presented an updated range for all full-time positions, with the baseline set at \$58,656. This is the minimum salary for exempt workers set to take effect on January 1, 2025 by the Department of Labor.

Vice President Michele Corazzo questioned how the salary figures were calculated. Director Chaddock explained that the new federal minimum was set as the baseline, and the range increased incrementally from there, based on education level and additional responsibilities, or specialized knowledge, required for each position. The incremental increases between each position remained similar to previous salary schedules.

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the salary schedule. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the Librarian's Report. Member Justin Martinson seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

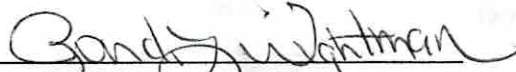
There was no public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

Board Treasurer Abbe Trent asked if the Indiana Library Federation had presented any concerns about upcoming legislative changes which might affect libraries following the 2024 election. She asked if Director Heather Chaddock would present relevant political updates as part of her Librarian's Report at future Board meetings. Heather agreed.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Thursday, December 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM at the Westchester Township History Museum, located at 700 W. Porter Avenue in Chesterton.

Kathryn Cochran made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Michael Livovich seconded the motion. Rondi Wightman adjourned the meeting at 7:50 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

Respectfully submitted,
Carissa Domonkos, Minutes Recorder for Justin Martinson, Secretary