

Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes

January 15, 2026

DRAFT

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held at the Thomas Branch, located at 200 W. Indiana Ave, Chesterton, Indiana on Thursday, January 15, 2026. It was called to order by Michele Corazzo, Board President at 7:01 p.m.

Board members present were: Michele Corazzo, Justin Martinson, Abbe Trent, and Michael Livovich. Kathryn Cochran arrived at 7:04 PM.

Board members attending virtually: Rondi Wightman

Board member absent: Will Scharp

Also present at this meeting were: Library Director Heather Chaddock, Library Assistant Director Jessica Bartz, and Hageman Branch Manager Sidney Rinker. Library Attorney Lisa Baron attended via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Michael Livovich to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2025 regular session. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Financial and Statistical Reports Dec 2025

A motion was made by Justin Martinson to approve the Financial and Statistical Reports for the month of December. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Financial and Statistical Reports January 1, 2026 - January 15, 2026

A motion was made by Justin Martinson to approve the Financial and Statistical Reports for January 1, 2026 - January 15, 2026. Michael Livovich seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Claims and Warrants Dec 2025

A motion was made by Michael Livovich to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of December 10, 2025 through December 31, 2025 as presented. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Claims and Warrants January 1, 2026 - January 15, 2026

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of January 1, 2026 through January 15, 2026 as presented. Justin Martinson seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Minor Transfers

A motion was made by Michael Livovich to approve the minor transfers as presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. 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.

WELCOME SIDNEY RINKER, NEW HAGEMAN BRANCH MANAGER – Director Chaddock and Assistant Director Bartz were pleased to have an unexpectedly large and competitive applicant pool to choose from for the hiring of the Hageman Branch Manager position. Top candidate, Sidney Rinker, accepted the position and started working at WPL on Monday, January 5. Introductions between Branch Manager Rinker and Board members followed.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – The ILF Advocacy Committee hosted an update meeting on December 10 to discuss early redistricting, as well as other issues coming down the pipeline in the regular session. The redistricting bill was voted down by the Indiana Senate on December 11. Other topics of interest from the December 10 Advocacy meeting included the reveal of the 2026 ILF Legislative Priorities, and discussion of Senate Bill 8. Director Chaddock will continue to provide updates on this and other matters as they arise.

PATRON BEHAVIOR UPDATE – Director Chaddock reports that the Library has experienced an uptick in vandalism in the Teen Space over the past several weeks, perpetrated by a particular group of teens. Vandalism has included written vulgarities on the Game Room wall in Sharpie, and vinyl finish being peeled away on the air hockey table. Following the Library Code of Conduct Policy, the group was on their third warning on December 23 when they destroyed a ceiling tile in the Men's upstairs restroom at the Thomas Branch, presumably in an attempt to disable the vape alarm located next to it. That evening, Director Chaddock wrote and printed a ban letter for each of the four teens in the group, but the group had departed before the letters could be issued. One of the individuals has returned since and has been given his letter. The rest of the group has not yet returned. Per the Code of Conduct Policy, they will be permitted to return in 30 days, pending a successful meeting with the Director. This procedure was detailed in their ban notifications.

TILE WORK IN BOARD ROOM – Outside contractor Indy Fiber was brought in to remove blue paint stains and rust stains from the floors of the Board Room. The crew spent 8 hours the day before Christmas rehabbing the surface, and the stains are gone, the floor is shiny, and it is now much more presentable for all meetings that will occur in the room.

HR OFFICE – Director Chaddock has spent the past several months soliciting bids to create an additional private office in the Administrative Office, in order to create an appropriate, soundproof workspace for the future HR Manager. This project will consist of replacing the office door, putting up a wall to split the current Director's office into two separate offices, and adding a window to the new office. Director Chaddock solicited bids from Gariup, Berglund, and Kleckner, which came in at \$49,700, \$33,815, \$25,250, respectively. She accepted Kleckner's proposal as the lowest bidder. Director Chaddock ordered a desk, table, and chairs for the new office from Dunes Office Supply. Once the wall and door work is complete, Director Chaddock hopes to be able to post and hire for this new position, with plans for the office window to be installed in the spring.

CD MATURITIES – In December, three \$250,000 Rainy Day CDs matured and were reinvested by Horizon Trust and Investment Management at the following rates: BMW Bank North America, 3.7%; InBank Raton, New Mexico, 3.45%; Customers Bank, Phoenixville PA, 3.6%

STATISTICS – In December, 13,789 people visited the Library, and 21 in-person programs were created with 424 attendees. The library answered 73 reference questions and 97 tech help questions; 362 people utilized library meeting rooms, and there were 134 reservations for individual study rooms. The Library registered 81 new library cards. Included in the Board Meeting documents were graphs showing materials circulation statistics from the past month.

STAFF CHANGES – Joined: Sidney Rinker, Hageman Branch Manager
Separated: Jammie Scott, P/T Cleaner, Suzanne Chomel, Hageman Branch Manager, Ron Horton, Maintenance Manager
Other: N/A

OLD BUSINESS

EXTERIOR PROJECTS UPDATE – Berglund Construction hired subcontractors to demolish the paver landings at the top of two exterior stairways at the Baugher Center and pour new concrete landings. The crews put down a “cold blanket” which resulted in smears, bubbles, and “wrinkles” in the dried cement. The finished landings were deemed unacceptable by Director Chaddock and Berglund’s supervisors during a walkthrough on December 16. The landing cement was completely demolished, and repoured, the week before Christmas. The second attempt to have the landings done on December 22 was successful, and all that remains is some minor clean-up work. The tuckpointing cranes have been removed from the Library’s parking lots. The exterior renovations to the Baugher

Center, Thomas, and Hageman are officially paused until warmer weather in the spring allows renovations to resume. WPL received the third A & C for payment for this project on December 31, in the amount of \$71,546.40, to be paid from the Library Improvement Reserve Fund.

MUSEUM RENOVATION UPDATE – Following the tabled discussion at the December Board meeting, Trustees Michele Corazzo, Kathryn Cochran, Abbe Trent, and Director Chaddock and Museum staff members met on December 17 to make a final determination for the two trees and the row of shrubs for the Museum property. Additionally, Grossbauer Group shared their discovery workshop summary with the Museum Committee on December 23. The insights shared will serve as guardrails for the naming options Grossbauer will present to the Board later in the month.

NEW BUSINESS

LIBRARY OF THINGS – ACTION ITEM – Director Chaddock reported that WPL would like to continue to pursue growing its relevance and popularity in terms of its physical collections, noting that some of the budget lines allocated to certain physical collections could be reallocated for other collection needs. Director Chaddock included a proposed, updated draft of the collection budget for 2026 in the Board documents, to include an additional \$90,000 to be allocated to Overdrive for the purchasing of ebook and eaudiobook titles. Additionally, Director Chaddock recommended expanding WPL's offerings by creating a new collection: the Library of Things. Currently, WPL has a large and popular board game and toy collection, and offers musical instruments as well, but there is room for growth. As examples, WPL could offer things like fishing rods, folding tables, or even a metal detector. To make the Library of Things a reality, WPL will gather input from the community, and research the many examples of successful Library of Things collections in other public libraries to determine its own best practices. A re-configuration of WPL's shelving, and the development of an addition to WPL's Collection Development Policy will also be in order. WPL staff was genuinely excited about this possibility when they were surveyed, and they thought patrons would be excited too. Director Chaddock recommended that the Board consider transferring funds to expand ebook and eaudiobook offerings, to increase digital access to periodicals, and to facilitate a path forward for the new Library of Things collection, laid out in the Board meeting documents as a Major Transfers Resolution. Trustees Michael Livovich and Abbe Trent expressed positivity for the transfers and the new collection ideas. Trustee Justin Martinson asked if any databases would be cut as a result of the transfers. Director Chaddock explained that no databases would be cut as a result of the transfers, and that some of the proposed transfers will increase digital access to newspapers, and increase the amount of e-materials that can be borrowed by WPL patrons. Abbe Trent inquired about how WPL will determine what will be in the new Library of Things collection. Director Chaddock responded that additions to that collection will be decided upon by committee, and that the logistics of circulating and maintenance of those materials will be thoroughly considered. The Library will focus on things that are easy to take care of, and will not adversely affect insurance premiums for the Library. A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the budget transfers as presented. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

PLAC – ACTION ITEM – Signature for quarterly Public Library Access Card (PLAC) statement. A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the signature of the PLAC statement. Justin Martinson seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

INTERNAL CONTROLS CERTIFICATION – ACTION ITEM - The Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBOA) mandates that public library Boards must annually certify that all Library employees have read the Library's Internal Controls Policy, watched the Internal Controls video created by the State, and have signed the Library's Internal Controls signature page. WPL is currently following these steps and has been for years. Trustee Michael Livovich asked if this is a requirement for all new hires. Director Chaddock confirmed. A motion was made by Michael Livovich to approve the internal controls certification. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

RAINY DAY TRANSFER – ACTION ITEM – Indiana public libraries are permitted by law to annually transfer up to 10% of the prior year's total budget amount into the Rainy Day Fund at the beginning of a new year, if there are funds remaining to do so at the close of the prior year. Such was the case, and Director Chaddock recommended that WPL transfer the full 10% remaining from last year, for a total of \$374,598.42, into the Rainy Day Fund. A motion was made by Kathryn Cochran to approve the transfer to the Rainy Day Fund. Board President Michele Corazzo asked if there was any discussion. Michael Livovich asked if WPL could only use the Rainy Day Fund for certain things. Director Chaddock confirmed that there are only certain things that it can be used for, including major, oftentimes unexpected things like a roof leak, for example. Abbe Trent seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

Michele Corazzo asked how the Duneland School Corporation Board meeting went that Director Chaddock and some Board members attended on Monday evening. Director Chaddock confirmed that the presentation regarding the upcoming Brown Mansion renovation and construction project went well.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Thursday, February 12, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Thomas Branch, located at 200 W. Indiana Ave, Chesterton.

Kathryn Cochran made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Justin Martinson seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and Michele Corazzo adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

Michele Corazzo, President

Abbe Trent, Secretary

Justin Martinson, Vice-President

Kathryn Cochran, Board Member

Michael Livovich, Treasurer

Rondi Wightman, Board Member

Will Scharp, Board Member

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Bartz, Minutes Recorder for Abbe Trent, Secretary

Reconvene as Board of Finance

This meeting was called to order by Board President Michele Corazzo at 7:47 PM.

INVESTMENT SUMMARY – Horizon Trust Investment Management provided a 2025 investment summary for review. As previously noted, the reason for any discrepancies that may occur year-to-year between the Investment Summary ending balance and the balance listed on WPL's own Bank Balances Report is that the Investment Summary reflects the daily fluctuations of money market balances and pending accrued interest. Director Chaddock offered to answer any questions that the Board may have, or forward them on to representatives at Horizon Bank for further clarification, if needed. No questions were raised. Michael Livovich asked if the investment summary was included in the financial reports.

Director Chaddock said it was included in the regular January Board meeting folder.

REVIEW AND READOPT INVESTMENT POLICY – ACTION ITEM – Director Chaddock did not see the need for changes to be made to the Investment Policy and recommended that the policy remain as-is. A motion was made by Justin Martinson to re-adopt the current Investment Policy. Michele Corazzo asked if there was any discussion. No discussion was needed. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

Justin Martinson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Michael Livovich seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. All voted in favor. Michele Corazzo adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

Michele Corazzo, President

Abbe Trent, Secretary

Justin Martinson, Vice-President

Kathryn Cochran, Board Member

Michael Livovich, Treasurer

Rondi Wightman, Board Member

Will Scharp, Board Member

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Bartz, Minutes Recorder for Abbe Trent, Secretary