

Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes

June 11, 2026

DRAFT

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held at the Hageman Branch, located at 100 Francis St. in Porter, Indiana on Thursday, June 11, 2026. It was called to order by Justin Martinson, Board President at 7:00 p.m.

Board members present were: Denise Barkow, Michele Corazzo, Michael Livovich, Justin Martinson, Chirag Patel, and Abbe Trent.

Board members absent: Kathryn Cochran

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

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to approve the minutes from the May 14, 2026 regular session. Michael Livovich 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 for the month of May. Chirag Patel 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 May 15, 2026 through June 11, 2026 as presented. Denise Barkow 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.

HR POSITION – Director Chaddock reported continued recruitment efforts for the new part-time HR position. After an initial round of interviews produced limited results, the starting wage was increased from \$17/hour to \$21/hour and the position was reposted. A second round of interviews yielded stronger candidates, and an offer was extended to the top applicant, who unfortunately took another position. Director Chaddock stated she will post the position to the SHRM job board and hopes for another good candidate and to be done with hiring and onboarding for a while.

OFFICE PROJECTS UPDATE – The Library received disappointing news that the renovation projects for the Thomas Children’s Department Office and the Hageman Front Desk will both be postponed by approximately one month, due to long lead times for materials. The Thomas project is now expected to begin the week of June 15th, and mobilization for the Hageman Desk will not begin until mid-July.

ARTS + CULTURE TRAIL – Director Chaddock was happy to report that the Duneland History Center has been selected as one of 12 featured locations for the new Arts + Culture Trail initiative led by Indiana Dunes Tourism. The Trail will launch alongside the 2026 Sand + Steel Arts Festival and will be incorporated into the Indiana Dunes Tourism mobile app, creating a digital check-in experience. Project coordinators have confirmed that the Duneland History Center's information, including operating hours, can be updated within the app as needed to reflect the anticipated changes over the coming year. Director Chaddock also provided a link to an [NWI Times article](#) containing more information.

STATISTICS – In May, 15,794 people visited the Library, and 23 in-person programs were created with 333 attendees. The library answered 96 reference questions and 78 tech help questions; 208 people utilized library meeting rooms, and there were 318 reservations for individual study rooms. The Library registered 105 new library cards. Included in the Board Meeting documents were graphs showing materials circulation statistics from the past month.

STAFF CHANGES – Joined: Gregory Engels, P/T Clerk, Austin Satava, P/T Clerk
Separated: Matt McCarel, P/T Clerk
Other: N/A

OLD BUSINESS

EXTERIOR PROJECTS UPDATE – Director Chaddock reported that the window and door replacement project continues to progress slowly but is nearing completion, with an anticipated completion date by the end of June. Work at the Hageman Branch and Baugher Center is substantially complete. Remaining work at the Thomas Branch includes installation of several smaller windows and the front doors. Applications and Certificates for Payments 6 and 7 are included in the Board folder for review in the amounts of \$93,004.40 and \$177,457.47, respectively.

DUNELAND HISTORY CENTER UPDATE – Director Chaddock reported that the Library successfully obtained approval from the Porter County Council for a \$6.6 million Additional Appropriation from the Library Improvement Reserve and Rainy Day funds to support the Duneland History Center construction and restoration project. The Library also launched the History Center’s new website, name, and logo, and distributed press materials to local media outlets, as well as a PR packet for staff.

Director Chaddock stated she would work with Berglund and Moake Park to determine a date for a groundbreaking ceremony. The Board discussed possible dates, with most members opting for a week day or evening.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

A motion was made by Abbe Trent 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. Director Chaddock invited all in attendance to view the old Hageman Branch circulation desk and hear plans for its reconstruction after the meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Thursday, July 9, at 7:00 p.m. at the Thomas Branch, located at 200 W. Indiana Ave, Chesterton.

Michael Livovich made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Denise Barkow seconded the motion. Justin Martinson adjourned the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Justin Martinson, President

Abbe Trent, Vice President

Kathryn Cochran, Secretary

Michael Livovich, Treasurer

Michele Corazzo, Board Member

Chirag Patel, Board Member

Denise Barkow, Board Member

Respectfully submitted,
Carissa Domonkos, Minutes Recorder for Kathryn Cochran, Secretary