

Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
July 09, 2026

A regular meeting of the Westchester Public Library Board of Trustees was held at the Thomas Branch, located at 200 Indiana Ave. in Chesterton, Indiana on Thursday, July 9, 2026. It was called to order by Justin Martinson, Board President at 7:00 p.m.

Board members present were: Denise Barkow, Kathryn Cochran, Michele Corazzo, Justin Martinson, and Abbe Trent.

Board members absent: Michael Livovich and Chirag Patel

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 Abbe Trent to approve the minutes from the June 11, 2026 regular session. Denise Barkow seconded the motion. All 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 for the month of June. Michele Corazzo seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Claims and Warrants

A motion was made by Michele Corazzo to approve the Register of Claims and Warrants for the time period of June 12, 2026 through July 09, 2026 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.

OFFICE PROJECTS UPDATE – Unfortunately, Thomas Children's Department Office and Hageman Front Desk projects continue to be delayed due to long lead times for materials. Director Chaddock has requested but not yet received an updated timeline for this work.

STATISTICS – In June, 17,357 people visited the Library, and 42 in-person programs were created with 799 attendees. The library answered 81 reference questions and 83 tech help questions; 329 people utilized library meeting rooms, and there were 234 reservations for individual study rooms. The Library registered 143 new library cards. Included in the Board Meeting documents were graphs showing materials circulation statistics from the past month.

STAFF CHANGES – Joined: N/A

Separated: N/A

Other: N/A

OLD BUSINESS

EXTERIOR PROJECTS UPDATE – Installation of the front doors on the Thomas Branch during the Library closure dates of June 22 and 23 was successful, and Director Chaddock stated she was grateful the Library was not closed to the public any longer than the allocated 2 days. Unfortunately, the Thomas Branch book drop was damaged during the window replacement process and will need to be replaced. The Hageman Branch is winding down with finish work being completed this week. Interior and exterior window washing will happen at the Thomas Branch during the week of July 20th, and a final punch list will be prepared. A&C for Payment #9 in the amount of \$113,923.23 was included in the Board documents.

DUNELAND HISTORY CENTER UPDATE – The groundbreaking ceremony for the Duneland History Center will take place on Thursday, July 30th at 6:30 p.m. Director Chaddock stated all are welcome to attend and asked the Board to encourage family, neighbors, and friends to attend as well. She further stated the team is working on final plans for the event and that she included digital copies of the invitation and a site outline for the ceremony in the Board documents. A press release will be sent out by Grossbauer Group on July 13th, and invitations will be sent to surrounding neighbors of the Brown Mansion, in addition to the Duneland School Board, the YMCA Board, and other community stakeholders.

At the ceremony, all WPL Trustees will be seated on the patio next to the entrance to the Brown Mansion, along with DHC staff, and representatives from Berglund Construction and Moake Park Group. The planned docket of speakers includes Director Chaddock, Serena Ard, WPL Board President Justin Martinson, Jeff Berglund and Chris Savoia from Berglund Construction, and Jeff Schroeder from Moake Park Group. Director Chaddock commented that reaching this milestone after years of conversation, collaboration, and effort by the Board and staff feels surreal, but also marks an exciting moment for everyone involved.

NEW BUSINESS

DUNELAND HISTORY CENTER COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY – ACTION ITEM – After consulting with Duneland History Center staff and Library Attorney Lisa Baron, Director Chaddock prepared an updated draft of the former Westchester Township History Museum Collections Management Policy.

She stated the policy is 14 pages long and has not been updated since 2012, resulting in a significant amount of material to review and discuss. She proposed reviewing the Policy point by point and invited the Board to ask questions as they arose.

Discussion ensued regarding the Duneland History Center Collections Management Policy, with Board members suggesting edits throughout.

Director Chaddock stated she would make the suggested updates to the Policy, to be reviewed again next month. The topic was tabled until the August Board meeting.

PLAC REPORT – ACTION ITEM – The quarterly report on PLAC cards sold from WPL was presented to the Board. Director Chaddock shared that no PLAC cards were sold this quarter.

A motion was made by Abbe Trent to approve the PLAC report for the quarter. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

Michele Corazzo asked the group about their familiarity with the artist that the Chesterton Branding and Leadership Corporation had proposed to install a sculpture at the Thomas Branch as part of the Chesterton Railside Arts and Cultural District.

Director Chaddock said she would research the artist further, and provide more information to the Board following her meeting with the Director of the Chesterton Art Center the following week.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Thursday, August 13, at 7:00 p.m. at the Thomas Branch, located at 200 W. Indiana Ave, Chesterton.

Denise Barkow made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kathryn Cochran seconded the motion. Justin Martinson adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

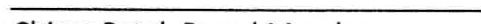

Justin Martinson, President

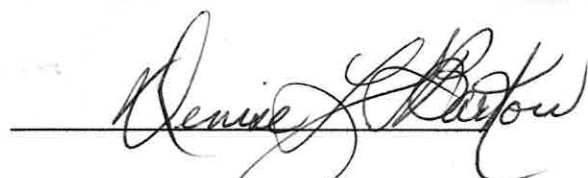

Abbe Trent, Vice President


Kathryn Cochran, Secretary


Michael Livovich, Treasurer


Michele Corazzo, Board Member


Chirag Patel, Board Member



Denise Barkow, Board Member

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Bartz, Minutes Recorder for Kathryn Cochran, Secretary