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*Jesse Butz*

Porter County Public Library  
System  
103 Jefferson St.  
Valparaiso, IN

(219) 462-0524

pcpls.org

**BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, April 19, 2023**

**NOTICE:** The Porter County Public Library System Board of April 19, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. at the Valparaiso Public Library, 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN, 46368.

**Public Comment on Agenda Items:** (Olga)

The Public comment session is provided as an opportunity for patrons to address the Board of Trustees on matters related to agenda items.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** (Olga)

1. Approval of the Minutes from March 15, 2023 (Roger)
2. Financial Report
  - a. Treasurer's Report (Stu)
  - b. Approval of the Claims Register (Hayley)
3. Approval of Communications (Jesse)
  - a. Friend's Report
  - b. Director's Report
  - c. Patron Comments

**ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:**

1. Renovation Update (Jesse)
2. Library Gardens Update (Jesse)
3. Meeting Policy Discussion (Jesse)
4. Wall Street Journal Article (Jesse)

Any other items

Adjournment (Olga)

Signature Session

**Future Meetings: (Dates subject to change) 4:00 P.M.**

- May 17, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library
- June 21, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library
- July 19, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library

# Porter County Public Library System

## Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for Apr 19, 2023

The regular meeting of the library board of trustees was called to order at 4:01 pm at 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383. Olga Granat presided.

Members in attendance included Olga Granat, President; Kristy Merritt, Vice President; Roger Rhodes, Secretary; Stu Summers, Treasurer; Paul Knauff, Kevin Pazour. Stacey Whitten was absent. Library staff in attendance: Director Jesse Butz, Library Attorney Clay Patton, and Associate Directors Inge Kokidko & Hayley Scott. Public attendees included Alice Harrington.

### Public Comment

No public comment was given.

### Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from Mar 15, 2023

Financial Report

    Treasurer's Report

    Approval of the Claims Register

Approval of Communications

    Friends of the Library Report

    Director's Report

    Patron Comments

**Motion:** Stu Summers moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Paul Knauff.

**Discussion:** Financial and communications reports were summarized.

**Vote:** The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Merritt	Rhodes	Summers	Knauff	Pazour	Whitten	Granat
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	absent	Y

## Renovation Update

Updates on Valpo leaks, Hebron sump pump, Valpo eastern facade, Hebron HVAC project, and installation of 5- and 25-ton units, and patron concerns over the handicapped entrance at Portage were given. It was noted that some of the work done in Hebron may be very noisy and could disrupt our services. Staff will be exploring how to mitigate this. Community contacts that may be able to assist with certain projects were suggested.

## Library Gardens Update

The Portage Mayor will be opening bids on May 11 and awarding the bid on the 25th of May. The development of plans for the South Haven garden were summarized. It was clarified that instead of having a general contractor handling all the work, that staff and board members are seeking subcontractors themselves directly. It was acknowledged that this may involve more risk, but has the potential to save a significant amount of money.

## Meeting Policy Discussion

Updates on the progress of the meeting room policy rewrite were given, including the variability of library meeting room policies and the complexity of legal concerns.

## Wall Street Journal Article

A recent article was discussed that detailed the value of library cards and all the services that are offered by libraries. Upon examination, PCPLS offers, or has offered, all the types of services listed in the article, with the exception of “book a human” types of services.

## Adjournment

**Motion:** Kevin Pazour moved to adjourn. Kristy Merritt seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The motion was carried with the following roll-call vote:

Merritt	Rhodes	Summers	Knauff	Pazour	Whitten	Granat
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	absent	Y

Meeting adjourned at 4:29 pm.

Roger Rhodes, Secretary

# March 2023

## Overview

- March was an outstanding month for our branches. Staff continuously mentioned how busy it was and the numbers really support that as circulation was up 26% overall. And year-to-date we are having a strong showing at 18% in overall material usage!
  - Staying on trend, electronic materials continued to be popular and increased by 36%. As we focus on staff training and collection development, we expect this trend to continue as more patrons discover the amazing collection and ease of using Libby and Hoopla!
  - Physical materials jumped dramatically with a 20% increase over the prior year.
- Our door count was up 15% in March. A huge reason for this increase was our outstanding programming and community engagement teams that brought in over 2500 attendees! Patrons love the variety and unique offerings!

## Important Upcoming Dates

- April
  - 5th: Friends of the Library Board Meeting
  - 19th: Library Board of Trustees Meeting-Valparaiso
- May
  - 3rd: Friends of the Library Board Meeting
  - 17th: Library Board of Trustees Meeting- Valparaiso

## Personnel

- Ending Employment
  - Melinda Block
  - Samantha Mann
- New Employment
  - None
- Staff Development
  - The training team identified Libby as a focal point for staff training and development this month. Libby offers so much more than just ebooks and we want to make sure our staff are knowledgeable about the audio and video materials, and classes Libby has to offer so they can be confident in their recommendations and ability to help patrons.
  - The north county management team trained on how to teach shelving workflows and effective coaching communication.
  - The south county management team worked on standardizing the workflow for checking in materials so staff in either branch had clear direction on expectations
- Amy conducted phone interviews for part-time LC3 positions in South County and Valpo.

### **Finance Notes**

- The budget benchmark for the end of March is that 25% of the budget should be spent. So far, 21% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$26,236.60 from Trust Indiana in March.
  - Included in the total interest earned is the Valpo Garden Donations, which earned \$737.07 in March.
- In March, the library applied for grants from the Portage and Valparaiso Tri Kappa organizations to provide tablets for youth services.

### **Subscription/Contract Renewals**

- Subscriptions
  - New
    - None
  - Renewals
    - Access Newspaper Archive - \$7,967.00
    - World Trade Press - \$672.53
  - Cancellations
    - None
- Contracts
  - New
    - ArchiveSocial - \$2,792
  - Renewals
    - Johnson Controls - \$8,340
    - Communico - \$26,450
  - Cancellations
    - None

### **Buildings, Grounds, and Technology**

- Hebron had additional water issues in the Youth Service Department at the beginning of the month when the drain outside of the emergency door overflowed. It took a bit longer to clean up this time around, but staff worked hard and got everything dried up quickly. The repair has been completed and while we expect no more issues, we plan on addressing the gutter situation when we build the Hebron Library Garden.
- The Valpo branch has made significant progress in its collection-shifting projects. The audiovisual section has now been relocated to the Adult Services side of the library. Accomplishing this has been a team effort from start to finish, and the staff have been quick to adapt to the changes. This move has given us the opportunity to start creating the highly anticipated space for our young adult section!
- The Valpo Youth Services department received fun, bright blue chairs as well as a bench to enhance the space near the toys. This has been an extremely popular area with our patrons, as it houses our play kitchen, the train table, and our snake seat. We have

noticed people are beginning to stay for longer periods of time because it is such a fun place to be!

- Portage received new chairs for the Indiana Room. It brought a nice update to that space and created more comfortable seating for our patrons.
- Olga, Stu, Jesse, and Hayley met with some landscape specialists to help assist with the Library Garden project. They had some valuable insight that will inform our process.
- Jesse met with Mayor Lynch and her team in Portage regarding the Portage Library Garden. The project is back on track and bids will be coming in shortly.
- Jesse and Stu toured the South Haven branch to look for opportunities for the Library Garden. A plan to address drainage issues and begin work was formed. Since that meeting, we have cleaned and mapped the drains, re-hooked downspouts, and begun the quoting process for the construction of the garden.
- This month we have been testing our new remote print portal to make sure there aren't any issues before switching over. This portal allows for customization, viewing of statistics, and reports. It also has our hours and locations built-in and allows the patron to see the file size of the documents that they print.
- We are working with ProvenIT to decommission our last few Meraki switches so we won't have to pay the Cisco licensing for another year and we will be able to fully take advantage of our Ubiquiti environment.
- Nathan has been working on updating the auto attendant message so our patrons will be able to easily connect with the correct department.

### **Public Relations and Marketing**

- The reach for social media and newsletters during March was 85,252.
- Facebook:
  - Our Facebook reach was 22,360.
  - Our account has 6,029 followers.
- Twitter:
  - The System has 564 total followers. We made 5 tweets with 626 impressions this month.
- Instagram:
  - The System has 1,303 Instagram followers.
  - We shared 36 posts on Instagram with 3,499 impressions.
- YouTube:
  - The System has 134 total subscribers. Our videos had 93 views this month.
- Pinterest:
  - The System has 83 followers. Our Pinterest account's reach was 106 people for the month.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 56,946 times this month.
- TikTok: Our TikTok channel now has 691 subscribers. We posted 2 new videos and had 1,622 total views this month.
- Virtual Customer Service: Interacted with 58 patrons.
  - Google - 9 new five-star reviews

- “I like this library. The staff is helpful and friendly. If you need to use a computer but don't have a Porter County Library card, they don't turn you away or make it hard for you. They give you a piece of paper with a temporary username and password on it so you can have access. This comes in handy if you don't want to use up all your ink at home and need to print out a number of pages. The patrons inside always seem to be nice and respectful to the library staff as well. The bathroom inside the library is nice and clean as well. And it's located right by the exit, in case you need to use it before leaving.”
  - “Very professional, knowledgeable, helpful and courteous.”
  - “Great selection available locally, and from other libraries in Indiana. Knowledgeable & Friendly staff.”
  - “Awesome movie selections and great reading materials and friendly staff and service and it's freeeee unless you owe fines for tardiness returns.”
  - “Comfortable place to relax and read.”
- Our community engagement team's connection with the City of Valparaiso allowed PCPLS to highlight a few of our existing resources through our Disability Awareness & Inclusion partnership with the city during the month of March.
  - Caleb the Comfort Dog monthly visits at Valpo (expanding to Hebron in April, and hopefully one of our North county branches by summer)
  - Book club recommendations and events
  - Parent/child book discussion event
- We're seeing increased use of our online Book a Librarian Tool, with a reach of nearly 750 in March!
  - 1 middle school visit (Lego Club)
  - 1 elementary school visit (K-5 Book Tasting at Kouts Elementary)
  - 2 preschool field trips to library branches
  - 19 preschool visits
  - Total reach = 746

Our community engagement team has already processed 10 new Book a Librarian requests for April and May. This online tool is increasingly popular with our educational partners, and we're excited to utilize it in an effort to increase our Summer Reading engagement reach with students of all ages.

- Our community engagement team coordinated Seed Library displays at all five branches, and the community response is even higher than anticipated. We're actively cultivating (pun intended!) partnerships with Purdue Extension and Porter County Master Gardener volunteers to bring tie-in gardening programs to our branches. We plan to market PCPLS gardening resources at these events: digital and print resources, seed libraries, and gardening kits!
- Our Marketing Team sent out an updated style and brand guide to all staff. This highlighted our refreshed brand colors and fonts. We also updated our branding on Canva so that all projects and posters made by staff through that program will match our new branding.
- PCPLS's community engagement team is working hard to effectively plan and promote our 2023 Summer Reading Program and presenters to our PCPLS teams and our community,

with specific efforts to connect with our educational partners. The team is actively engaging branch teams and our educational partners to proactively push out Summer Reading training, display and program coordination, and branded marketing materials.

- During the month of March, we kicked off several community partnership events!
  - WorkOne Workshops at branches increase the accessibility of job skills training.
  - Storytimes at the Park with Portage Parks offers monthly outdoor storytimes at Portage Parks and extends our early literacy reach.
  - Porter County Arts Commission presents Creative Writing workshops at branches, promoting lifelong learning and creativity.
- Jesse and Willow attended additional meetings with the Porter County Government's Health and Fitness Taskforce. This great partnership is allowing us to support our County partners with health-oriented collections and programming.
- Jesse met with the Chief of Police to go over collaboration opportunities. Topics of discussion included wellness checks, regular rounds, community engagement, garden safety patrols, and traffic monitoring.
- Jesse and Inge met with Lucinda Nord of the Indiana Bar Foundation regarding legal internet stations at Valpo and Portage for patrons needing legal assistance.

### **Youth and Teen Services**

- Utilizing the fantastic partnership that PCPLS has with the Porter County Parks Department, Hebron was able to have the wonderful folk from PCoP come and put on two amazing programs, Animals in Winter and Tremendous Trees, over two weeks. The kids had a great time learning about what different animals in our area do during winter and they loved getting to know the different parts of trees.
- Hebron put on another escape room this month, Escape Room: Art Heist. The program was completely booked all three days that they had it. Groups of families and friends had an exciting time as they tried to solve the case and return the 'stolen' painting.
- For Spring Break, Kouts had a week-long library Staycation. Each day was a new adventure. The library became an actual zoo on Monday. We brought the beach to us on Tuesday. Wednesday we went to the race track and learned more about the Indy 500. Thursday we learned about the world's biggest ball of paint in Alexandria, Indiana, and got to make our own paint masterpieces. Friday we had a carnival and had a great time playing all the games.
- Hebron's Bake Me a Story program was so much fun. We got to make Lucky Charms "puppy chow". Everyone loved getting all messy.
- For Hebron's Cookies & Canvas this month, the Artist Spotlight was Eric Carle. The kids learned about his paper collage technique and made their own to take home.
- The Valpo branch has a new mobile display in the Youth Services department, which is being used to showcase a passive program in which kids use pom poms to vote for their favorite item or character. In March, two displays were showcased: Dogs VS Cats and Piggy VS Elephant. The dogs came out as the victors in the first match, but the race between Piggy VS Elephant is still underway!
- The Valpo branch is focusing on expanding its program offerings for children. Our team member Kristin introduced a new program, the Show and Tell Club, which was a lot of



fun. Kids got a chance to bring in something cool to share with everyone as well as the opportunity to get a bit of practice in public speaking.

- Mario was the theme in Portage this month! Our Mario trivia night was extremely popular. Families enjoyed the night competing for fun prizes.
- South Haven hosted an all-ages Yarn Art program with wonderful feedback. One patron left feedback stating she really enjoyed the yarn painting class we did. She even started doing it on her own. We love inspiring our patrons!
- South County is planning and preparing some really awesome displays for Summer Reading this year. Staff is super excited! There are rumors of a giant beanstalk already starting to grow in the new teen area of Hebron. There have also been some directional signs popping up in both branches that lead to various fictional lands.

### **Adult Services**

- The Kouts Page Turner book club is going strong. We have a dedicated group of patrons that are excited to read the next book each month and have a lively discussion on what they think of it.
- New furniture has been popping up throughout Valpo, with some new displays in Adult Services and new tables in Genealogy. There are also some new chairs in our Boardroom!
- With the major AV shift complete at the Valpo branch, the AS team has been adapting well to the new setup. Staff have been flexible and helpful when assisting patrons through the new changes. We're still in a state of flux in AS, but everyone on staff is currently getting a refresher/training check-in on the department-- and it's looking good! Bethany, Liz, and Nikki have really stood out over here this past month; their customer service skills are outstanding, and their ability to take initiative on whatever problem is set before them really makes this area run smoothly.
- The Valpo branch Book Clubs read *Sitting Pretty: The View From My Ordinary Resilient Disabled Body* by Rebekah Taussig in observance of Disability Awareness Month. This was an important program to offer our community, as we strive to be more inclusive, and the discussion among attendees was quite meaningful.
- WorkOne hosted its first job skills workshop at the Valpo branch on March 23rd, which focused on resumes. This was the first of a series of monthly programs that will highlight different topics in professional development.
- South Haven's book club is picking up! We had a full house for our March meeting; it was our best attendance since 2019.
- With Tax season winding down, our team has been meeting to discuss improvements and efficiencies to the system. It is one of our most popular services and we look forward to providing it again next year.

### **Technical Services**

- Our newest technical services team member, Alia, is now trained on and completing patron requests. This service is one of the key ways that we ensure that our collection is responsive to patron needs. Inge has also been reinforcing the importance of staff

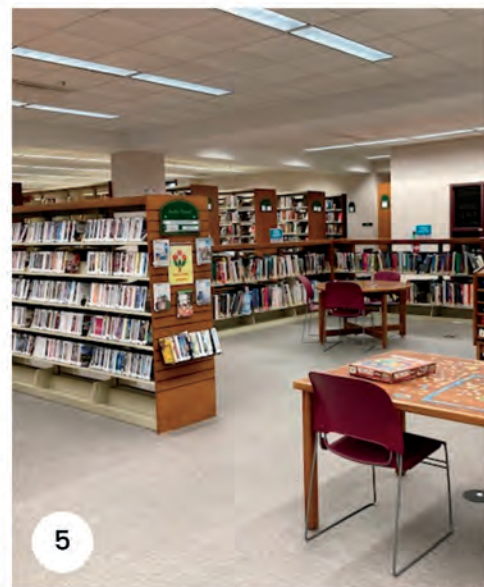
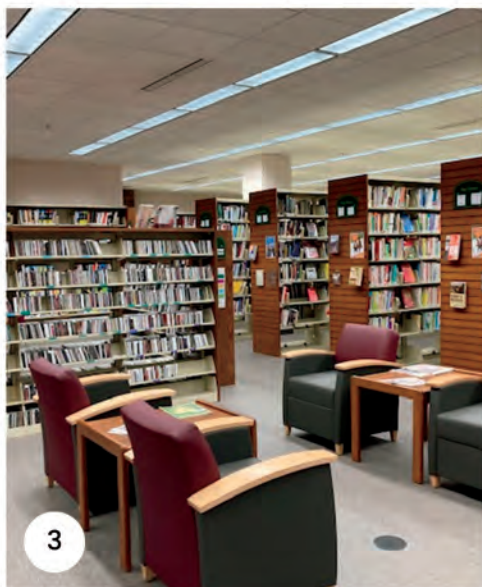
passing up patron suggestions through this workflow, and we have recently refreshed children's materials on "tough topics" and Christian and Bible studies as a result.

- Technical services managers are working on designing a staffing plan to show which work is performed in the department and the staffing needs associated. This will not only aid in cross-training and staff allocation, but we hope that it can serve as a model framework for the rest of the system.
- Jackie and Inge have met with reps from Bibliotheca, Envisionware, and FE Technologies regarding information gathering for PCPLS's RFID project.
- Elizabeth and Jackie coordinated, through detailed planning and well-prepared communication, a system-wide offline checkout process that was necessary during Evergreen's planned outage due to server maintenance. Although Evergreen's offline module did not work as expected, they anticipated this and had a backup plan in place that made sure staff disruptions were minimal. All branches had completed processing offline checkouts by noon the next day.
- Jesse and Inge attended the Indiana Digital Library Advisory Meeting where Inge presented collection management plans and documentation.

### **Genealogy**

- Sent into the Valparaiso Magazine an article about Chester's with clippings.
- Chris Martel and Melinda redid the display case to highlight Irish resources for March.
- Chris Hough talked to Valpo managers about Genealogy databases and the process of finding obituaries. Training on how to use a film scanner on a one-on-one basis is in progress.
- Local yearbooks for 2022 were received during March along with older yearbooks for various schools in the area.
- Met with Ashley to discuss dates for additional genealogy workshops. A discussion on additional dates for genealogy workshops was had with our System Program Coordinator, and a date for a beginner's workshop on May 6 was decided along with a Using Newspapers workshop for August.
- An obituary for Zada Carr Williams, former librarian, was sent to the Alexandria Monroe Library. Zada had been a librarian there when she was young.
- A donation of materials and a disc of scanned materials were received from the former Valparaiso Technical Institute.
- Chris Hough met with Patricia Wong about setting up a scanning project with materials from Valparaiso Community Schools.

# Valparaiso



- 1 We held Spring Break Book Bingo for Pre-K, K-5, teens, and adults. Everyone was a winner and got to take home lots of books!
- 2 This new display has been a hit! We are using it as an interactive passive program so kids can vote for their favorite character, Elephant or Piggy.
- 3 We've been shifting our collection locations - our CDs now reside alongside our comfy seating area in adult services.
- 4 Everyone was eager to spend time with Caleb the Comfort Dog at the Valpo branch's Paws to Read program.
- 5 Our CDs aren't all that has moved - here you can see our collections progress with our new DVD and oversized book sections.

# Hebron



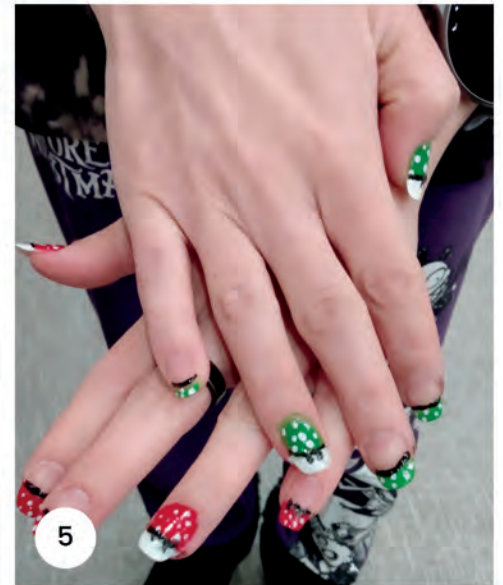
- 1 Artist Spotlight was Eric Carle at this month's Cookies & Canvas. The kids learned about his paper collage technique and made their own, as well.
- 2 To celebrate St.Patrick's Day, we learned to make Lucky Charms "puppy chow" at this month's Bake Me a Story!
- 3 It was great to have Learning Tree PS come for a visit to learn about the library.
- 4 Our lego builders are serious at their creating, and this month they put a Seussical twist on things!
- 5 The Porter County Parks' "Animals in Winter" and "Tree-mendous Trees" programs helped our kids learn about nature and have a great time in the process.

# Kouts



- 1 Having some fun with a Mine Craft challenge for the Kouts Lego Club! Our lego builders are professionals here at the Kouts branch.
- 2 Kouts had fun for their Library Staycation. Today our library became a zoo.
- 3 For the Kouts Library Staycation, we even got to have our own Indy 500 race. Everyone had a blast racing!
- 4 Kouts' Staycation had a different theme each day of the week - on this one, it was time for some beach fun.
- 5 We made sure to cover all our bases on our beach day... Yes, we even got to play in the sand!

# Portage



- 1 Mario Trivia Night was a hit, and these families had a blast competing for prizes!
- 2 We love when our patrons come in character for our programs - Luigi made an appearance at Mario Trivia Night, and it was awesome.
- 3 Our two winners of Portage's Mario Trivia Night swept the game and won a GameStop gift card!
- 4 Patrons of all ages enjoy picking out colors and designs at our nail art program in Portage.
- 5 It was a fun night of learning nail art techniques at Portage Library - can you tell our patrons love Mario?

# South Haven



1 Families celebrated Barbie's birthday in South Haven with Barbie themed games and cupcakes!

2 Nothing says spring more than gardens! This fun garden play set is quite popular with the littles in South Haven.

3 Sandra helps a partygoer play Pin the Bow on Barbie at our Barbie Birthday Party.

4 South Haven's seeds are going fast at our new seed libraries!

5 This Barbie enthusiast had a blast at Barbie's birthday party in South Haven!

# in Our Community



- 1 Kate and Kayla from Hebron had a fantastic time at Building Blocks daycare this month for Story Time!
- 2 Librarian Jen Hurley at Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Valpo used our Book a Librarian system to request a Lego Club as an after school program.
- 3 As you can see, this Lego master was hard at work on his creation.
- 4 Even our staff members partook in this Book a Librarian Lego Challenge, and were putting some elbow-grease into their Lego creations alongside the kiddos!
- 5 These boys are determined to show their stuff. We can't wait to see what they do at our next Lego Club!