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Library Director

Jesse Butz

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

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pcpls.org

BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, December 13, 2023

NOTICE: The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on December 13, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. for its regularly scheduled meeting.

Public Comment on Agenda Items: (Roger)

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: (Roger)

1. Approval of the Minutes from November 15, 2023 (Paul)
2. Financial Report
 - a. Treasurer's Report (Hayley)
 - 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. End of Year Staff Recognition (Jesse)
2. Library Gardens Update (Jesse)
3. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Update (Jesse)
4. 2024 Health Insurance Proposal (Jesse)
5. Ebook Transfer (Hayley)
6. Website Proposal (Jesse)
7. End of Year Funds Transfer (Hayley)

Any other items
Adjournment (Kristy)
Signature Session

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

- January 17, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library
- February 21, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library
- March 20, 2023 - Valparaiso Public Library

Porter County Public Library System

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for December 13, 2023

The regular meeting of the library board of trustees was called to order at 4:02 pm at 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383. Kristy Merritt presided.

Members in attendance included Roger Rhodes, Vice President; Paul Knauff, Secretary; Kevin Pazour, and Olga Granat. Kristy Merritt, Stu Summers, and Julie Giorgi were absent. Also in attendance: Director Jesse Butz, Library Attorney Clay Patton, and Assistant Directors Inge Kokidko & Hayley Scott. Remote attendance was facilitated via Zoom.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from November 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: Paul Knauff moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Kevin Pazour.

Discussion: Communications reports were summarized.

Vote: The motion was carried with 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

End of Year Staff Recognition

Fifteen staff members were recognized as top performers, to receive a one-time wage adjustment of \$1,000 before the end of the year.

Library Gardens Update

Updates were given including the Portage site is to be cleaned up; at South Haven, concrete has been poured for musical stepping stones, sidewalk has been replaced, the fence will be installed soon, brush has been cleared out, the canopy and story trails ordered and delivered, and musical instruments have been delivered.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Update

Updates included explosive growth in enrollment, promotional activities, and funding updates. Rules and cost for enrollment were summarized.

2024 Health Insurance Proposal

Health plan changes were summarized. It was recommended to move to Anthem, with a price increase of 1% to 10%. United Healthcare would have been a 36% increase. Plan characteristics were summarized. In the coming year, we will be exploring self-insured options.

Motion: Kevin Pazour moved to “approve the switch to the Anthem carrier”. The motion was seconded by Olga Granat.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

Ebook Transfer

It was recommended that \$90,000 of unexpended funds be transferred to the ebook fund in order to accommodate explosive growth in 2023.

Motion: Kevin Pazour moved to approve the recommended transfer. The motion was seconded by Paul Knauff.

Discussion: Ebook trends were discussed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

Website Proposal

It was recommended to transition to Library Market for our website and calendar solution, which would represent a service improvement and long-term cost savings.

Motion: Olga Granat moved to approve services from Library Market. The motion was seconded by Kevin Pazour.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

End of Year Funds Transfer

A fund transfer from the credit card clearing fund was summarized.

Motion: Paul Knauff moved to approve the funds transfer. The motion was seconded by Olga Granat.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

Legal Services Agreement

Clay Patton's service record was summarized and commended. It was recommended to renew the contract for legal services.

Motion: Kevin Pazour moved to renew a contract for legal services with Clay Patton. The motion was seconded by Paul Knauff.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

Adjournment

Motion: Kevin Pazour moved to adjourn. Olga Granat seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion was carried with 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Paul Knauff, Secretary

November 2023

Overview

- November saw the unofficial launch of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Porter County. This amazing collaboration between PCPLS, the Westchester Public Library System, and the Porter County Community Foundation will help provide titles to children ages 0-5 throughout Porter County. The program had over 800 children sign up before we even announced the program to the public.
- As we enter the final two months of the year, statistics continue to be strong and show our purchasing strategy has been extremely successful. Electronic materials rose by another 40% overall with e-Magazines having a particularly strong showing with an increase of 312%.
- Our programming team did an amazing job as we had an increase in overall attendance of 48%, continuing a positive trend this year. Their effort now switches to the Winter Festivals and Winter Reading Challenge.

Important Upcoming Dates

- December
 - 6: Friends of the Library Board Meeting
 - 13: Library Board of Trustees Meeting
 - 24: Library Closed
 - 25: Library Closed
 - 31: Library Early Close 5:00 PM
- January
 - 1: Library Closed
 - 17: Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Personnel

- Ending Employment
 - Jacqueline Randazzo - Collections Team Lead
- New Employment
 - Megan Van Prooyen - Library Clerk, Valparaiso Branch
- Staff Development
 - Inge and Monique attended the Indiana Library Federation Annual Conference in Indianapolis, where Inge presented a session on Notify Me tags in Overdrive.
 - Kelleen, Monique, and Jesse collaborated on a plan to re-imagine the PCPLS volunteer program. The new plan is inspired by a session about volunteer coordination that Monique attended at ILF. Kelleen is also looking into scheduling software that we could implement for our volunteers.
 - Steven Mathew completed the Valparaiso Chamber Leadership Academy, where he made valuable connections with local leaders and received an inside look at the Valpo community.

Finance Notes

- The budget benchmark for the end of November is that 91% of the budget should be spent. So far, 83% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$35,602.07 from Trust Indiana in November, making our year-to-date total \$321,594.22!
 - Included in the total interest earned is the Valpo Garden Donations, which earned \$856.79.

Subscription/Contract Renewals

- Subscriptions
 - New
 - Value Line Library Elite (online) - \$3,495
 - Renewals
 - A to Z the World - \$765
 - Fold3 - \$4,556.22
 - American Ancestors - \$270
 - Cancellations
 - Morningstar - \$3,179
- Contracts
 - New
 - ByWater Solutions, LiDA - \$500
 - Renewals
 - None
 - Cancellations
 - Advantage Archives - \$6,140

Buildings & Grounds

- Portage had outside areas of the building power washed, cleaning where trees left dirt and debris. Portage served as the test case to be certain the chemicals would not damage the facility. With this success, all branches will be cleaned next year.
- Portage had a pneumatic control line, outside air damper linkage, and actuators recalibrated/repared.
- Given the late fall season and leaves on the trees until the end of the month, cleanup is still in progress at most branches.
- The maintenance department has been hard at work preparing for the holiday season with lights and decorations being installed at our branches and in our gardens.
- Maintenance has been updating the lighting outside of the branches and ensuring that the timers are properly adjusted to ensure a safe experience for our patrons.
- The team completed the installation of additional shelving at the Valpo branch. With multiple new units installed, the Valpo team was able to move Large print closer to the door and move the teen to its new area.

- Jason has been working with Gaitlin to identify some irregularities on the cooling side in Valpo. Together they were able to narrow the issue down to a transducer needing to be replaced and calibrated along with an outside air damper issue. We also had Johnson Control's air compressor serviced and repaired along with the air drier.
- Valpo had can lights installed over the expanded fiction section. With so many new shelves added the normal lights were being blocked by units. This relatively simple fix really brightened the area up!
- Kouts had its two boiler pumps replaced by Gatlin.
- The Hebron wet/dry sprinkler valve was replaced following a small leak detected.
- South Haven had a water heater replaced that caused a leak in the staff restroom.
- South Haven had concrete poured to replace the sidewalk damaged during the excavation of drainage for the new Library Garden and to create the new music walk.

Technology

- Angela is updating our roadmap based on our strategic goals and will be creating a yearly budget based on what we have planned in our roadmap.
- Staff had a training session for our new incident reporting system with the branch managers so they are prepared to train their staff. We believe this will be a significant improvement in sharing important safety information with our staff.
- Nathan has been working with the programming team to get a Tech 101 program started for our patrons.
- Angela has been working on upgrading our Google Domain to a Google Enterprise account to have added security, retention, and storage features. In order to prepare for this, we are performing some housekeeping and consolidating some of our Google Workspace accounts

Public Relations and Marketing

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during November was 77,615.
- Facebook:
 - Our Facebook reach was 9,897.
 - Our account has 6,425 followers.
- Twitter:
 - The System has 564 total followers. We made 5 tweets with 715 impressions this month.
- Instagram:
 - The System has 1,424 Instagram followers.
 - We shared 3 posts on Instagram with 717 impressions.
- YouTube:
 - The System has 142 total subscribers. Our videos had 730 views this month.
- Pinterest:
 - The System has 83 followers. Our Pinterest account's reach was 54 people for the month.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 64,678 times this month.

- TikTok: Our TikTok now has 866 subscribers. We had 824 total views this month.
- Virtual Customer Service: Interacted with 49 patrons.
- Google: 4 new five-star reviews
 - “Clean building, well organized with very good selection, friendly & helpful staff.”
 - “Slay after slay. I loved it as a kid and I love this library now, too. Great atmosphere and a lovely place to be.”
 - “Reference desk wonderful.”
- Makenna and Willow decorated the PCPLS tree for the Winter Lights display at Sunset Hill. The tree will be lit with the rest of the light display every night through January 1st.
- As part of our partnership with the Portage Township Schools, our team delivered four different temporary StoryWalks to be displayed and rotated between different schools. We are testing this project with hopes to expand to more school districts in the future.
- Makenna worked with Jesse and Willow to coordinate the announcement of Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. This exciting news was shared with our patrons and the public via our e-newsletter, social media, and a press release to local news organizations. We had a lot of great feedback and the Facebook post alone is our highest-performing post this year:
 - “Yay!!! We had this for my oldest in the Quad Cities! Their program was run by the local United way. I tried to go to our United way years ago to start this program here, but they claimed they couldn’t sustain the program due to cost. Looks like Porter County Public Library System is championing it here! Our library system is amazing!! Thank you PCPLS!!”
 - “This is so exciting I just tried to do this a couple months ago in Porter county wasn’t eligible at the time”
 - “Good to know it’s open to Valparaiso now!! Will forward to my daughter now!!”
- Our Marketing Team also prepared the Winter Flurries Reading Challenge 2023 to start in December. Makenna created a new paper log, updated the Beanstack site, and pushed out marketing via the newsletter, social media, print materials, and displays at the branches.
- The Marketing Team worked with The System Programming Team to design all marketing and print materials for the Winter WonderFests.
- PCPLS Community Engagement Team partnered with several local organizations and service providers during November:
 - Willow and Ashley met with Sara and Becky, the new Assistant Director of the Porter County Juvenile Detention Center, to revise our partnership and brainstorm new opportunities.
 - Willow, Ashley, Jack, Monique, Sarah, and Emily met with Mary Jane and Laura from First Things First to discuss the Books, Balls, and Blocks event at the Porter County Public Library.
- This month, the System Programming team prepped and installed storywalks for both Sunset Hill and the Valpo Rotary Library Garden. Sunset Hill’s Book is *Stranger in the Woods* by Michael Finkel and the Rotary Garden is featuring *The Joyful Book* by Todd Parr. When the team was installing at Sunset Hills a woman walking told us how much

she enjoys seeing the story on her walks and how she sees many children and families enjoying the Storywalk.

- The System Programming received donations from Family Express including 20 packs of water and several dozens of cookies for the upcoming Valparaiso WinterFest.
- Fall Reads Winners were announced during the first week of November. We had 5 winners total, 3 from the Valpo branch, 1 from Kouts, and 1 from Hebron. The prize bundles were funded through the Friends of the Library.
- Preregistrations for the Winter Flurries Reading Challenge opened up to the public in mid-November.
- Sarah Geer and Tifani Meadows attended the Portage Economic Development Corp. Annual Meeting. They connected with area businesses and met Austin Bonta, the new Portage mayor.
- Sarah Geer met Joyce Russell, with Portage Township Autism Action Coalition, to discuss how the library can help meet the needs of patrons with autism.
- Jesse met with the Executive Director of the Porter County Community Foundation and the Director of the Westchester Public Library System to create a partnership for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.
- Jesse met with the Purdue Extension's Gina to work towards a broadband-ready task force. This partnership will work with the Porter County Commissioners to help expand broadband access in Porter County.
- Jesse met with Melissa Washburn on designs for the new garden donation plaques.

Youth and Teen Services

- Valparaiso Branch programmers held a Lego Club at Thomas Jefferson Middle School at the beginning and end of the month. "Extremely happy kids, some great creations to show at their library for a week!" - Steven
- Sandra York and Amy Keleman hosted *Storytime in the Park* at Woodland Park. The theme was Night Animals! This is an ongoing event in partnership with the Portage Parks Department.
- Portage Youth Services celebrated Dinovember! The youth services department was decorated in dinosaurs and patrons of all ages participated in dinosaur-themed scavenger hunts and storytime activities.
- South Haven kids of all ages enjoyed learning about turkeys at this month's Twilight Tales.
- The Larger Than Life Teen Game Night was a complete success. We had a whole Girl Scout Troop register for this program, using it as a team-building activity. Everyone had a lot of fun and the Hebron branch was able to try out the new Blue Blocks that were bought for the system. They were a total hit and there are plans to have more programs utilizing them.
- In Hebron, Family Game Night continues to grow. Attendance has exceeded our expectations, as more families keep discovering this amazing program. We plan on having it be a regular program for the new year.
- Kouts had two of their most popular youth programs this month: Art Adventures: Teen Painting Class and Crafty Kids Painting Class. For these two programs, Sarah M. taught

how to paint a beautiful monochrome Christmas tree. Both programs were so popular that we ended up having more attendees than expected. Everyone had a lot of fun and made some really spectacular art.

- Kouts was super excited to restart their partnership with Natalie White (KES visual arts teacher) and the Kouts Elementary School Art Department. This month, kids from KES created some amazing masks based on the artwork from the picture book *Día de los Muertos* by Hannah Eliot (Author), and Jorge Gutierrez (Illustrator). We look forward to next month and can't wait to see what the kids make next. "I love the partnership between the school and the library! This is such a fantastic idea!" - Happy Parent; "I look forward to this every time!" - Teri Detering (KES Principal)
- South County has completed the children's series labeling project. We are excited to see how much this will help improve patron item searching.
- Liz, Corine, Emily, and Steven have been working hard to expand the Book Babies program at the Valpo branch. In November, we offered two back-to-back sessions of Book Babies. This allowed the team to respond to the demand for this program while keeping individual program sizes manageable.
- Valpo team member, Emily, held a Toddler Play Group, which allowed kids to explore different play stations (a puppet theater, musical instruments, building blocks, among others).
- Nikki held the first Anime Club meeting for Teens at the Valpo branch. The attendees had lots of fun making buttons and watching Anime together! This program had glowing patron evaluations, and we hope that it will continue to be popular with teens and young adults.
- Courtney and Nikki knocked out a cute gingerbread house at the entrance of YS! Allison tackled the stairwell with dancing penguins and snowflakes. We got everything in place ahead of the Winter Wonderfest and have received a TON of compliments!
- The attendees at Lego Club, both at the Valparaiso branch and at TJ Middle School, provided some amazing finished projects to see and display. With TJ Middle School Lego club back, and a few other successful tween/teen programs, we have seen a spike in our teen attendance!

Adult Services

- The Valpo team started relabeling and categorizing their entire CD collection. They are dividing the vocals section into 3 genres: Hip Hop, Pop, and Rap. This is to increase the ease of browsability for patrons. John & Dawn have been tending to the project over the last couple of weeks, and are making good progress in the retroactive labeling! Also a huge thanks to the TS team for getting labels in a speedy manner!
- The Valpo branch has a small partnership display in the Adult Services department with the ProPel team which highlights their new "Universe of Alternatives" Report. This describes the types of solutions under consideration for the US30 and US31 corridors, and the team asks for public feedback with their provided comment forms.
- The Valpo team has moved the Large print collection to new shelving units near the Circulation desk. They have also completed the Mystery shifting project. At this point, the Adult Fiction and Graphic Novel collections are the final components of what has been a

very ambitious but rewarding branch-wide collection-shifting project. We are feeling proud of the results! It is easier for patrons to browse and for staff to shelve in every area now.

- South County has completed its Music CD genre relabel project. Staff in Kouts will now work on shifting the shelving around to make browsing the genres easier. Hebron already had sections for genres and is finished with this project.
- In South County, the Christmas lights are up, decorations are out, and both buildings are ready for the holiday season. Staff enjoyed decorating both branches during Thanksgiving week and have gotten a lot of compliments from patrons.
- South Haven patrons enjoyed painting a Thankful Wreath at this month's Coffee and Canvas.

Collections

- We have finished a year-long project of updating the cataloging of our Graphic Novel and Manga collections. This project involved splitting the individual volumes of each graphic novel into their own record, as they were previously combined together. This method will improve discoverability and make the holds process much smoother as well as bring us in line with standard cataloging practices.
- The collections services department took advantage of a cataloging refresher training that is now available to us as members of the Indiana Evergreen Consortium.
- We are continuing to make adjustments to the Roku devices thanks to helpful input from the staff and as we work out the last of the kinks. Several more accounts have been acquired and we are preparing to begin marketing for them over the holiday season.
- In the last year, some of our more seasoned cataloging staff have moved on. We are taking this opportunity to explore some outsourcing options in order to “untether” our staff from this task, enabling them to be more agile and work on local projects.

Genealogy

- The team helped look up a former Valpo high teacher who also did artwork. Hazel was a math teacher, died young of pneumonia, and had a scholarship awarded in her name.
- We pulled some books from storage for a patron who found what was needed in the books. Our extensive collection of materials is always greatly appreciated by our patrons.
- Our 2023 yearbooks have been trickling into the department. They are currently on the new Bookshelf for quick access.
- Kelleen Cullison wrote an amazing article from research done by Chris Hough on barbers and beauty shops in the Valparaiso area. Check it out in the Winter issue of the Valparaiso magazine.
- The team looked up newspaper articles about prohibition arrests in Porter County. A couple of people listed in jail during the 1930 census were there for bootlegging. This topic comes up periodically and it will be good to have a file ready.

Hebron



- 1 It's "Game On!" at the Hebron library's Family Game Night!
- 2 Strike! Everyone had a great time playing giant bowling at the Larger Than Life Game Night.
- 3 These teens had a lot of fun at the Hebron Branch's Larger Than Life Game Night. Building with the Blue Blocks is fun no matter your age.
- 4 The Hebron Branch Youth Service reading area is the perfect place to relax and read a book.
- 5 Gobble gobble! Family Storytimes had us flapping our "wings" with the "Turkey Hokey Pokey".

Kouts



- 1 Everyone had a great time at the Crafty Kids Painting Class in Kouts.
- 2 We had a great time at the KES Art Show. We are so glad that we were able to continue this partnership.
- 3 The KES Art Show brought in many fantastic artist and their families. Thanks again to the KES art department for continuing this partnership with the library.
- 4 Showing off some fantastic art at the Art Adventures: Teen Painting Class.
- 5 Storytime is a lot of fun. We get to listen to awesome stories, make super fun crafts, and get to play with bubbles.

Portage



- 1 We had a full house for our dinosaur themed story and breakfast.
- 2 Amy Kelemen walks kids through how to paint a fall scene in this month's Cookies and Canvas.
- 3 Dinosaur sensory play during Dino-vember.
- 4 Kids enjoyed an afternoon of Trolls theme crafts and fun!
- 5 Tifani Meadows representing PCPLS at the Portage Economic Development Corp. annual meeting.

South Haven



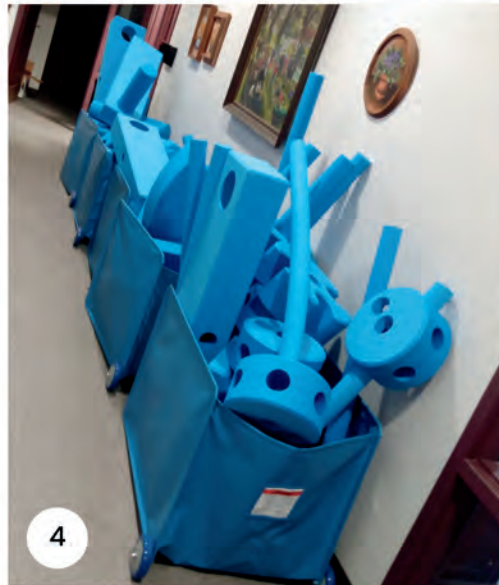
- 1 Native American Heritage month display hosted by a Cherokee Nation citizen.
- 2 This littlest patron is dropping off her favorite toy for our Stuffed Animal Sleepover.
- 3 Kids of all ages enjoyed sharing their stuffed animals with the library this month.
- 4 Stuffed animals took over the South Haven branch!
- 5 Our popular South Haven bear read 5 Minute Princess Stories this month.

Valparaiso



- 1 Staff worked hard to get the branch decorated in time for the holidays. Our book tree continues to be a showstopper.
- 2 Allison worked on this cute stairwell display for the Winter WonderFest!
- 3 Kids having a blast at the first meeting of the toddler play group!
- 4 The large print collection has been moved to its new location at the Valpo branch. We're really proud of how it turned out!
- 5 A Paint and Pour attendee showing off their amazing artwork!

in Our Community



- 1 Programming Team (Ashley, Tiffani, and Sandra) installed a new story at our Sunset Hill StoryWalk.
- 2 Ashley and Sandra switching out the Sunset Hill Storywalk for a winter time story, Stranger in the Woods.
- 3 Participants enjoy pumpkin decorating at our monthly Opportunity Enterprise Respite House visit.
- 4 Programmers can now request these giant blue blocks for programs! Hebron was first to use them for their Larger Than Life Game Night.
- 5 Winter Reading Prizes! The team spent much of November preparing for the Winter Reading Challenge. Our closet is full of prizes for lucky readers!