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Clay Patton

Library Director

Jesse Butz

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

(219) 462-0524

pcpls.org

BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, April 17, 2024

NOTICE: The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on April 17, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. for its regularly scheduled meeting at 103 Jefferson St., Valparaiso, IN, 46383.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

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:

1. Approval of the Minutes from March 20, 2024
2. Financial Report
 - a. Treasurer's Report
 - b. Approval of the Claims Register
3. Approval of Communications
 - a. Friend's Report
 - b. Director's Report
 - c. Patron Comments

ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:

1. Portage Accident Update
2. Library Garden Update
3. Construction Update
4. RFQ Kouts Library Garden
5. Patron Code of Conduct

Any other items

Adjournment

Signature Session

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

- May 15, 2024 - Portage Public Library
- June 19, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library
- July 17, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library

Porter County Public Library System

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for Apr 17, 2024

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

Members in attendance included Kristy Merritt, President; Roger Rhodes, Vice President; Paul Knauff, Secretary; Stu Summers, Treasurer; Kevin Pazour (remote), Julie Giorgi, and Olga Granat (remote). No board members were absent. Also in attendance: Director Jesse Butz, Library Attorney Clay Patton, and Assistant Directors Inge Kokidko & Hayley Scott. Remote attendance was facilitated via Google Meet.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from Mar 20, 2024

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 Roger Rhodes.

Discussion: Communications reports were summarized. Recycling fees for library-owned parcels were clarified.

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

Rhodes	Knauff	Summers	Pazour	Giorgi	Granat	Merritt
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Portage Accident Update

Porte co-chère repairs and insurance quotes, dumpster pad removal, connection and resurfacing of both lots, vendors who responded or declined to respond were discussed. The director requested for the board to approve the lowest bid in order to take advantage of a competitive quote with the potential for a very quick turnaround timeline.

Motion: Julie Giorgi moved to go forward with Boyd Asphalt, Inc. The motion was seconded by Kevin Pazour.

Discussion: Estimated completion dates and timelines were discussed.

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

Rhodes	Knauff	Summers	Pazour	Giorgi	Granat	Merritt
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Library Garden Update

Landscaping, boulder excavation, and grand-opening details were discussed for the Portage garden. Drainage issues, dry riverbeds, benches, storyboards, emergency crash bars, the addition of native plants, and funding opportunities were discussed for the South Haven garden.

Construction Update

South Haven completion timeline, front-door closure, and asphalt-work timeline were discussed. The director requested that South Haven be closed during that time-period for safety reasons. Specifications for Portage and Kouts are nearing completion.

Motion: Julie Giorgi moved to “approve closing the South Haven library during the days the paving would be ongoing”. The motion was seconded by Roger Rhodes.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

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

Rhodes	Knauff	Summers	Pazour	Giorgi	Granat	Merritt
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

RFQ Kouts Library Garden

Fenced areas, an upcoming variance request, moving of the library sign, tree and bush removal, and RFQs for patio and pathway work were discussed.

Patron Code of Conduct

A revised and simplified public conduct policy was summarized and discussed.

Motion: Roger Rhodes moved to approve the conduct policy. The motion was seconded by Paul Knauff.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

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

Rhodes	Knauff	Summers	Pazour	Giorgi	Granat	Merritt
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Adjournment

Motion: Julie Giorgi moved to adjourn. Paul Knauff seconded the motion.

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

Rhodes	Knauff	Summers	Pazour	Giorgi	Granat	Merritt
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Meeting adjourned at 4:43pm.

Paul Knauff, Secretary

March 2024

Overview

- The warmer weather this winter has allowed our team to continue with many projects throughout the system. The South Haven and Portage Library Gardens are progressing along nicely while we start to pivot to the Kouts Library Garden next. We anticipate having three ribbon cuttings this year and welcoming many new patrons to these engaging outdoor spaces.
- Our new library card renewal system went into effect in March, resulting in nearly 1,000 more interactions with our patrons regarding their library cards and access to materials. It will take some getting used to for our patrons, but these conversations will ensure we are serving our residents first and foremost.
- Electronic materials continue to have strong circulation, with eAudio seeing the largest increase at 41% higher year to date. We continue to switch our materials budget to this new format and grow this popular collection. We were ahead of the curve on this trend, and while some may struggle with the announcements of publishers no longer producing some Audiobooks on CD, our collection has been transitioning for years and the impact will be minimal on our patrons.

Important Upcoming Dates

- May
 - 1: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 15 Library Board of Trustees Meeting
- June
 - 5: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 19: Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Personnel

- Ending Employment
 - Madeline Prussman - LC1 3/16
 - Ashley Ray - LC1 3/30
- New Employment
 - Kimberly Davis - LC3 Valparaiso 3/6
 - Mark Thurman - LC3 Portage 3/25
 - Natalie Orsag - LC3 Valparaiso 3/29
- Promotions
 - Mary Koselke to Library Clerk 1
 - Lori Clymer to Library Clerk 1
 - Heather Press to Library Clerk 1
- Interviews
 - Monique and Kellie interviewed candidates for a full-time position at the Valparaiso branch.

- Staff Development
 - Jesse and the Valpo management team met to discuss the library's patron code of conduct and best practices for de-escalating and/or addressing patron problem behaviors. This was a valuable training experience, and the team feels more prepared to handle tough situations when they arise.
 - Sandra Y. and Amy K. attended the Youth Services ILF Conference in Bloomington. Sessions included; *Getting Ready for Kindergarten, How to Keep Them Coming Back, Humor Me: Using Laughter to Promote Literacy with TeachingBooks, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and Ready to Go Program Ideas with TeachingBooks.*

Finance Notes

- The budget benchmark for the end of March is that 25% of the budget should be expended. So far, 20.7% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$41,546.27 from Trust Indiana in March. Included in the total interest earned is the Mills Trust donation, which earned \$3,091.41
- We have been informed that the audit of 2023 is planned to be performed by the same main auditor, which will decrease audit time, and subsequently, audit costs.
- Jesse attended a Trust Indiana and State Board of Accounts training in Cedar Lake. This all-day program highlighted the importance of security, financial diversification, and future planning.

Subscription/Contract Renewals

- Subscriptions
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - None
 - Cancellations
 - None
- Contracts
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - None
 - Cancellations
 - None

Buildings & Grounds

- Maintenance was able to work with a local contractor to provide a sidewalk shed in Portage that allowed us to reopen the branch. While not ideal, this allows us to provide

access to the library with minimal disruption while we wait for the insurance company process.

- Jason and Aidan worked with our landscape team to place 4 exceptionally large stone benches in South Haven.
- Jason and Aidan have begun prepping the ground in South Haven for our story trail and musical features. We expect them to be installed within the next month!
- The Portage Garden had the majority of the large steel structures and canopies installed.
- The South Haven Garden had the shade canopy installed.
- Jason and Aidan built new shelving in the garage, the first step toward moving the basement office to the garage, easing access to supplies and freeing up much-needed space in the basement.
- Spring cleanup has come to all branches as RLM prepares our outdoor spaces for the season.
- Jason was able to find replacement LED bulbs to work in our challenging can light fixtures at a fraction of the cost of the previous setups
- Jesse met with the City of Portage on their Irving Street Road and Diet Trail alterations to the front of the library. They will be changing the entrance to our library while expanding the trail size.
- The Kouts roof was patched to stop a small leak. The design team is looking into specs and we are getting quotes to inform the process.
- Jason and Aidan have been tackling tons of small odds and ends including toilet repairs, moving shelving units, installing whiteboards, etc.
- Jason and Jack are working with the Kouts building inspector regarding the Kouts library garden.
- New and fresh flags have been installed for the season with the introduction of the traditional “Library Guy” on all flag poles to help with awareness of our services.
- Crushed granite and bollards have been completed in South Haven at the Library Garden.

Technology

- The Systems team has been working with our website team to lay the groundwork for our new website. They have made progress on taxonomies, navigation, and other key frameworks.
- Angela completed preparation on an RFQ for an IT-managed service provider to capture all requirements and expectations.
- Nathan has been working on scheduling a visit to another library system to investigate their digital preservation lab. We’re hoping that will give us some insight on how to create our own digital preservation lab.
- We are now restricting off-site email usage for all non-exempt staff so they can only access email while they are on the library network. This change allows us to be compliant with regulations while also promoting a healthy work-life balance with our team.

Public Relations and Marketing

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during March was 118,067.
- Facebook:
 - Our Facebook reach was 21,932.
 - Our account has 6,756 followers.
- Twitter:
 - The System has 578 total followers. We made 4 tweets with 282 impressions this month.
- Instagram:
 - The System has 1,460 Instagram followers.
 - We shared 10 posts on Instagram with 1,422 impressions.
- YouTube:
 - The System has 144 total subscribers. Our videos had 76 views this month.
- Pinterest:
 - The System has 83 followers. Our Pinterest account's reach was 35 people for the month.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 92,077 times this month.
- TikTok: Our TikTok now has 879 subscribers. We had 2243 total views this month.
- Virtual Customer Service: Interacted with 61 patrons.
- Google: 9 new five-star review
 - "Everyone there is kind and helpful."
 - "Love the library! Staff is very helpful and I always walk away with a new discovery."
 - "Clean building, well organized with very good selection, friendly & helpful staff."
 - "The staff is so helpful, friendly and understanding. Great, comfortable atmosphere."
- Dolly Parton's Imagination Library: 2,710 active children. 151 children have graduated.
- Julie, Roger, and Jesse attended the NILBA dinner and training event in Westville.
- Jesse attended the Purdue Extension Advisory Committee meeting. The meeting focused on collaboration opportunities.
- Jesse and Willow had a photo opportunity with the Mayor of Valpo and his community engagement team for the Parent Child Book Club partnership with NIPSCO.
- As a representative of not only PCPLS but as part of the Hebron Park Board and Hebron Chamber of Commerce, Jack attended the ribbon cutting at Park Ridge, the new subdivision being built in the town of Hebron. They were able to make connections with several of the realtors who expressed their enthusiasm for getting PCPLS welcome brochures to give to every new family that moves into Park Ridge.
- The partnership between PCPLS and the Hebron Chamber of Commerce for the Penguinaut Downtown Scavenger Hunt was a great success. Twenty-four businesses were excited to participate along with the Hebron School System, Parks Department, Fire Department, Post Office, and Town Hall. Several of the participating businesses and groups donated raffle and participation prizes for those who took part. Many parents/guardians thanked the library and wanted to know when the next one would be.

Everyone enjoyed learning more about the town and the businesses in it. Several business owners have also thanked the library for doing something to help connect the town.

Youth and Teen Services

- Hebron and South Haven held their 1st Books Balls and Blocks event in partnership with the Porter County Community Foundation with assistance from the system programming team and had a great turnout!
- Emily at the Valpo branch led her first baking program, in which kids made their own blueberry and chocolate chip muffins. It was a lot of fun, kids learned new culinary skills and got to let their creativity shine with a craft while the muffins were baking.
- The System Programming Team installed the new StoryWalk at Sunset Hill titled Total Solar Eclipse by Jamye Sandberg to help tie in with our Space theme for March leading up to the Solar Eclipse on April 8th.
- Ashley and Monique met to discuss the agenda for our next programming meeting. The topics that are planned for discussion will be a huge help to the programmers at our branch, new and more seasoned staff alike. We plan to cover how to introduce a program when an outside organization is presenting, the role of an assistant in a program, standards for library tours, and more!
- PCPLS had received 7 Book-a-Librarian requests for March all over the county. Requests were made by Victory Christian Academy, Presbyterian Weekday Nursery & Preschool, Bright Minds Preschool, Local Girl Scouts Group, Little Hawks Academy, Tree of Learning Child Academy, and Thomas Jefferson Middle School. Programs offered ranged from Library Tours & Storytimes to a Garden Party and Lego Club.
- Sandra and Amanda Koeppen did the monthly Storytime in the Park Session at Woodland Park. The books were garden-themed to promote the gardening kits.
- Willow held the *Tenacious* Book Club for Disability Month. The book was written by Patty Cisneros Prevo and highlights 15 remarkable disabled athletes and their adventures. NIPSCO and the City of Valparaiso generously donated copies of the book so each registered family could arrange to pick up their copy of the book.
- PCPLS held a reservation for free Solar Eclipse glasses for all of Porter County. The glasses were funded through a grant from StarNet.
- Portage School Visits began on March 6th! Sandra, Amy Keleman, Anna, and Amanda Koeppen visited 9 Portage School 1st grade classes in March. They talked about PCPLS, had a Q&A session, read JUMBO books, sang a song, and handed the teachers swag bags for the students to take home. (Photos in March Snaps folder)
- The Community Engagement team assisted Sarah Geer in prepping for the upcoming Sensory Hours at South Haven that will take place every Monday in April. This was a Porter Township Autism Action Coalition partnership initiative.
- Willow and Ashley presented at Parkview Elementary for a *Teacher Meeting* to highlight the library resources for educators including the Book a Librarian. They encouraged them to attend the *Meet Me @ the Library* event partnered with the Parkview Elementary event taking place at the Valparaiso Branch on April 1st.

- Kouts branch did a different spin on their storytimes this month to prepare for the Solar Eclipse even in April. Solar System Storytime was a blast! Those who attended got to learn about everything in space. Kids had a great time with several hands-on space-themed science experiments such as making vinegar and baking soda 'rockets'.
- The Kouts branch hosted another amazing Kouts Elementary School Art Show. The second-grade class showed off their weaving skills with art inspired by the book *Woven Of The World* by Dinara Mirtalipova and Katey Howes. The KES principal, Mrs. Teri Detering, attended and thanked the library for continuing to partner with their art department to hold events like this.
- Spring break was a busy week in South County, as the library provided fun and educational activities for kids and families who needed things to do while school was out. The Kouts branch had their program series Solar Stay-cation where participants got to explore space and learn about Earth's neighbors. Kids got to flex their art skills at the Crafty Kids Art program by making their own picture of a solar eclipse and teens got to learn how to make a tasty snack at the Out of This World Snacks program.
- At the Hebron branch, families got to solve puzzles together at Mr. Lemoncello's Great Library Escape Room program and everyone had a blast attending the Interactive Movie Quest program, featuring the movie *Home*.
- A big thank you to the Porter County Parks Department for visiting the Hebron branch this month. The Porter County Parks Presents: Springtime on the Farm program was a lot of fun especially since they brought several feathered friends and a very cute bunny. Kids got to learn about each animal, as well as interact with each of them. They even got to paint with chickens.
- The Hebron branch had another successful teen art program this month. To keep with the space theme in preparation for the solar eclipse in April, teens got to learn a bit about stars and constellations. They then got to make their own constellation wall art. All the teens had a lot of fun and expressed that they would like to keep having this sort of program.

Adult Services

- Ashley presented at OE Respite located at Camp Lakeside for the monthly library visit and the clients painted a Zodiac Cosmic Painting program created by Sandra in promotion of the upcoming Solar Eclipse. .
- The AARP Tax appointments continue to go well at Kouts, South Haven, and Valpo. Staff have been working closely with the AARP tax volunteers to help direct patrons and answer questions that they might have as they wait for their appointments.
- Dawn and John at the Valpo branch have continued to make steady progress on the CD relabeling project. The only genres remaining now are soundtracks, classical, and instrumental. Once everything is relabeled, we will be able to shift the collection so that it is shelved properly by genre.
- South County had its very popular adult painting programs at both branches this month. Participants followed along with Sarah M. as she showed them how to create their own solar eclipse.

- South County is continuing to work on their shifting project at both branches as well as extensive cleaning and reorganizing of staff and storage spaces.

Collections

- On March 26th, the collections department hosted a visit from the St. Joe County Public Library's collection development manager David Heidt, and his team. We discussed our collection development strategies, and our use of Baker & Taylor's ESP and CollectionHQ tools, and gave their team a tour of the Valpo branch and library garden. This was a great opportunity for us to share our knowledge as well as learn from their perspective on collection development.
- Inge attended a Lions Club meeting to discuss options for implementing a Brailiant electronic braille display and a Victor Reader Stream audio player. These projects are still ongoing.

Genealogy

- We are excited to have a returning volunteer, Chad, who is working on indexing the Indiana Steel Products and the Indiana General newsletters.
- Angie M. trained Chris H. on discards in Evergreen. We removed a few duplicate books and outdated editions of books that will help us keep our database fresh and relevant.
- We watched a few Roots Tech presentations and printed handouts that will be a huge help to our department. Roots Tech is an international genealogy group, so many different areas of research were covered.
- Chris H. was contacted by Nancy Simpson of the Portage Chamber of Commerce for their chamber history. She was able to pull together a good collection of articles from the beginning of 1959 to events that occurred in 2022.
- The team researched a house at 53 Willow in Valparaiso, It had been moved from the Southwest corner of Washington and Jefferson and is considered one of the oldest houses still standing from 1836.
- We sent obituaries out of state and Underground Railroad information to a Ball State student!
- Kathy and Chris H. visited Calumet Regional Archives at IUN to see their scanner. It is too small for the board minutes project but a fantastic resource we may utilize in the future. We will look into using a digital camera to make the images of our first board minutes like when we went to the courthouse to record marriage applications.
- Chris M. is making good progress on the fire department books. Only about one more shelf to finish!
- Kathy continues to work on family histories. The Post-Tribune has changed its obituary postings and merged with the Chicago Tribune, so sorting out the Indiana deaths is a bit more involved.
- Most of March had more patrons than in January and February combined.
- We unexpectedly took on the role of Adult Services during a first-floor IT outage. The team adapted well and ensured our patrons had as minimal impact as possible.

Hebron



- 1 The Porter County Parks Department brought out some of their feathered friends! We got to learn that chickens can make art too.
- 2 Everyone had a super time at Mr. Lemoncello's Library Escape Room this month. There were some tasty treats to be found.
- 3 Let's do science! There are all sorts of things to do and learn at storytimes at the Hebron Branch.
- 4 At this storytime, everyone got learn what paleontologists do. There was a lot to discover!
- 5 Teens learned about the constellations at our Paint and Pour program. Everyone loved getting to make their own.

Kouts



1 We are off to discover more about the planet we live on as well as our library. Fun was had by all at the Kouts Branch Solar-Staycation.

2 Mrs. Detering, the Kouts Elementary School principal, and Mrs. White, the KES art teacher, partnered with us to host their art show this month.

3 We had some fantastic artists at the Crafty Kids program this month. Everyone got to make their very own eclipse.

4 We had a lot of fun at the Kouts Emerging Readers Book Club this month. These club members even got to plant their own 'bad seed'.

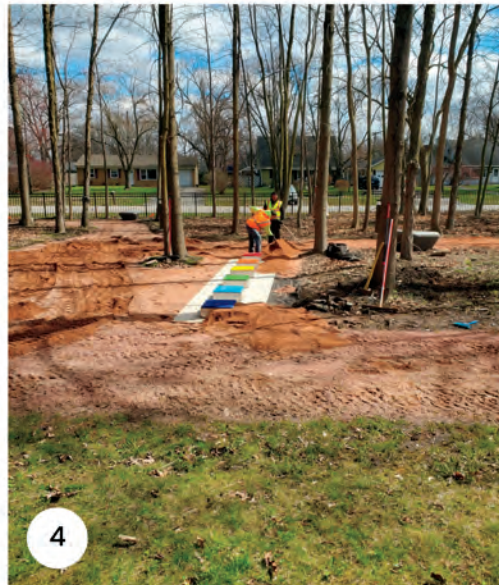
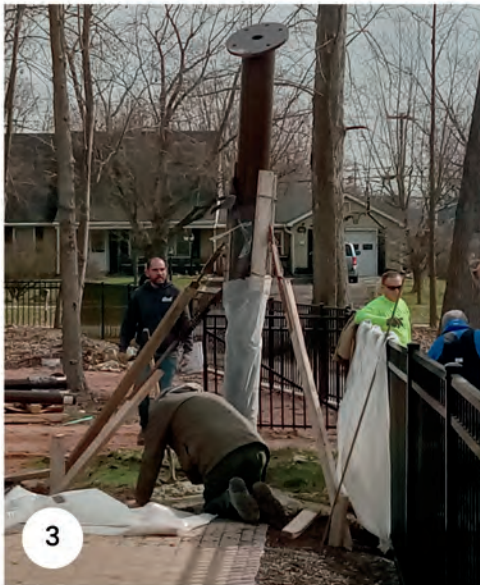
5 During the Kouts Elementary School Art Show, some very happy patrons wanted to show a little love to their library and favorite librarian.

Portage



- 1 The Portage Garden is coming together. We are so excited to take Storytime outside.
- 2 Kids taking a closer look at one of our Storytime programs.
- 3 Homeschool students practice reading maps during Homeschool Hour.
- 4 Amy Keleman reading a book in Storytime.
- 5 Babies having fun playing with bubbles at our Babies and Bubbles program.

South Haven



- 1 We had a full house for the Paint Your Pet program with Sandra.
- 2 The patrons had so much fun capturing their pet's likeness.
- 3 Installing the canopy for the South Haven Library Garden.
- 4 Progress on the garden. We are getting excited to see it complete!
- 5 Lights, benches and filled in pathway. The garden is coming along!

Valparaiso



- 1 Creativity soared at our kids' painting program, Cookies and Canvas! They painted cool constellations in spirit of the upcoming eclipse!
- 2 Tiffani A. and Ashley led a Book a Librarian library tour. This group was from Victory Christian Academy preschool group.
- 3 Kids learning new culinary skills at our March Muffin Madness program!
- 4 Miss Emily hosted a Plant Party for a local Girl Scout Troop!
- 5 Learning STEM skills at our Science Kids program!

in Our Community



- 1 Hebron staff visited a couple preschools in March where kids were thrilled to meet Penguinaut from the book by Marcie Colleen.
- 2 The grand finale of Books Balls Blocks... pulling out the parachute! It was a great turn out in South Haven.
- 3 Miss Anna reading during a school visit. This is part of an ongoing series of visits that we are coordinating with Portage Schools.
- 4 Miss Amanda & Miss Sandra at Myers Elementary school, promoting PCPLS with stories and letting the first graders know all about the library.
- 5 Amy Keleman and Sandra York attended ILF in Bloomington. They shared notes on all the sessions, including Dolly Parton's Imagination Library!