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Kristy Merritt

Vice President

Roger Rhodes

Secretary

Paul Knauff

Treasurer

Stu Summers

Members

Kevin Pazour

Julie Giorgi

Olga Granat

Legal Counsel

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, July 17, 2024

NOTICE: The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on July 17, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. for an Executive Session at the Valparaiso Public Library, 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383 to discuss the job performance of an individual employee IC 5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(9) The regularly scheduled meeting is to follow no earlier than 4:05 p.m.

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 June 19, 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. Election of Board Officers
2. Bank Signatories Resolution
3. Treasurer Bond
4. Job Description Update
5. Wage Matrix and Salary Increases
6. State Library Consortium Resolution
7. Library Gardens Update

Any other items

Adjournment

Signature Session

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

- August 21, 2024 - South Haven Public Library
- September 18, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library
- October 16, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library

Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for July 17, 2024

The regular meeting of the library board of trustees was called to order at 4:25 pm at 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383. Kristy Merritt, and later Olga Granat, presided.

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

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from June 19, 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: Olga Granat moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Paul Knauff.

Discussion: Communications reports were summarized.

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

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

Election of Board Officers

The following slate of officers was proposed: Olga Granat, President; Kevin Pazour, Vice President; Julie Giorgi, Treasurer; Paul Knauff, Secretary.

Motion: Stu Summers moved to “approve that slate of officers”. The motion was seconded by Roger Rhodes.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Bank Signatories Resolution

At this time, Olga Granat took the chair and presided over the meeting. It was proposed to remove Kristy Merritt and Stu Summers, and add Olga Granat and Julie Giorgi as signatories.

Motion: Stu Summers moved to approve the proposed changes. The motion was seconded by Paul Knauff.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Treasurer Bond

A bond in the amount of \$10,000 for Julie Giorgi was proposed.

Motion: Stu Summers moved to “secure a bond for Julie”. The motion was seconded by Kristy Merritt.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Job Descriptions Update

Updates to job descriptions were summarized, including reorganization, consolidation, position updates, removals, and additions; and updates to salary tier structure. Several board members commented that they were pleased with the structure of the job descriptions.

Motion: Kristy Merritt moved to “approve the job description updates”. The motion was seconded by Paul Knauff.

Discussion: The salary grade of the community engagement coordinator was discussed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Wage Matrix and Salary Increases

Updates to the wage matrix were proposed, which used a formula to define grades, with some grades having a temporary deviation to accommodate staff with a current salary that is higher than what the formula prescribes. The starting rate would be increased from \$13.00 to \$13.50, and a 3.2% increase for all staff that are not capped.

Motion: Paul Knauff moved to “approve the wage matrix and salary increase”. The motion was seconded by Kristy Merritt.

Discussion: The increase in percentage was clarified.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

State Library Consortium Resolution

It was proposed that the library continue membership with the Indiana State Library Consortium for Public Library Internet Access, which represents no obligation or cost, but guarantees access to the best rate possible.

Motion: Paul Knauff moved to join the consortium as proposed. The motion was seconded by Kristy Merritt.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Library Gardens Update

Progress summary included a discussion of the Portage garden punch list, weed management, local artist art installation, public musical features, fence installation; South Haven musical features, drainage correction, Poison Ivy; and Kouts lighting features & supplemental conduit.

Motion: Kristy Merritt moved to “approve the purchase of the musical features not to exceed \$55,000.00”. The motion was seconded by Stu Summers.

Discussion: It was clarified that funds would come from Rainy Day.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Motion: Roger Rhodes moved to “approve the \$16,660 from Circle R Electric for Kouts Library Garden”. Paul Knauff seconded the motion.

Discussion: The quote timeline and trenching work were discussed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Portage Accident Insurance Payout

Insurance settlement options were discussed: either an undisputed payout amount of \$140,000, or \$198,000 for repairs. The insurance adjuster has offered either a 10% fee on everything awarded for the cash payout option, OR, a 30% fee on anything above and beyond \$140,000.

Motion: Kristy Merritt moved to approve the 30% contract with the director having the authority to negotiate 35% of everything over \$210,000. Paul Knauff seconded the motion.

Discussion: Negotiation options were discussed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Director's Compensation

It was proposed that the director receive the same 3.2% pay increase as other staff, with an added \$10,000 bonus.

Motion: Kristy Merritt moved to “give Jesse a \$10,000 bonus and the 3.2% raise.” Stu Summers seconded the motion.

Discussion: The board conveyed their appreciation.

Vote: The motion was carried with 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Service Discontinuities

It was suggested that the library engage county emergency management to look at our outages, in the light that the library is a cooling and heating center, in order to improve our reliability.

Adjournment

It was noted that the next board meeting would take place at 3:00 pm on August 21st, at the South Haven Public Library.

The meeting adjourned at 5:28 pm.

Paul Knauff, Secretary, Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees

June 2024 Director's Report

Overview

- June is the month we've all been waiting for as hundreds of families make us their first stop as they explore during summer reading. We held over 133 programs in June, an increase of 3% over the prior year, and had an increase in attendance of 30%!
- Our Community Engagement team has been working on being more efficient with our efforts, and despite attending 43% fewer events and an increase in engagement of 4%!
- The Library Garden construction efforts are still going strong with finishing touches going on in Portage and South Haven and beginning efforts in Kouts. By the end of 2024, four of five branches will have their spaces completed or under construction. These engaging spaces are already transforming our programming potential as we no longer need to limit attendance when we have outdoor spaces that will accommodate hundreds of our patrons!

Important Upcoming Dates

- August
 - 7: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 21: Library Board of Trustees Meeting - South Haven
 - 21: South Haven Garden Grand Opening
- September
 - 4: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 18: Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Personnel

- Ending Employment
 - Julie Bray, LC1
 - Isabella Santana, LC1
 - Lindsey Davis, LC1
- New Employment
 - Sheri Miller, LC3 North County
 - Alexandria Suarez, LC3 Hebron
 - Jacks Shreve, LC3 Hebron
 - Shayla Boothe, LC3 Valparaiso
 - Shawnte Belpulsi, LA4 Systems Programming Assistant
- Promotions
 - Cari Postma, LA2 Team Lead, Valparaiso
- Interviews
 - Monique and Kellie interviewed candidates for a full-time Library Clerk position.
 - Monique and Kellie interviewed candidates for a part-time LC3 position.
 - Jack and Sarah M. interviewed candidates for part-time LC3 positions in South County.

- Sarah G. and Tifani M interviewed candidates for a part-time LC3 position in North County.
- Inge and Jesse have been working on updating Job descriptions and the wage matrix, taking staff feedback, and making updates to make the documents more user-friendly and succinct.

Finance Notes

- The budget benchmark for the end of June is that 50% of the budget should be expended. So far, 42% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$ 32,050.75 from Trust Indiana in June. Included in the total interest earned is the Mills Trust donation, which earned \$3,005.44.
- June marks the beginning of the budget season and the Admin team has been busy guiding the different departments on the budget process so they have more control over their departments and can make better strategic decisions.
- Jesse met with the City of Portage team to review payments for the Portage Library Garden. Following this meeting, all ARP funds have been expended in accordance with the outlined requirements.
- Jesse met with Mary Jane Thomas to discuss possible grant opportunities through the State of Indiana including OCRA grants for creating spaces and inclusions of seniors.

Subscription/Contract Renewals

- Subscriptions
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - Tumblebooks - \$1,875.00
 - Newspaper Archives - \$9,760.00
 - Weiss Financial Ratings - \$3,495.00
 - Cancellations
 - None
- Contracts
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - None
 - Cancellations
 - None

Buildings & Grounds

- A condensing unit in South Haven needed to be replaced but is under warranty. Work towards that fix was ongoing and will be completed in July.

- Jesse and Makenna met with Simko Signs about refreshing our exterior branch signage. Expect a fresh new look this fall!
- Jason had brick repair and maintenance conducted on our exterior signage in preparation for the refresh.
- Jack and Dawn attended the Kouts zoning meeting to ask for a variance for the new library garden fence. Their request was approved!
- Jason has secured permits to begin construction of the Kouts Library Garden. First up is the delivery of our new canopy and installation of the concrete patio.
- Jesse, Hayley, and Jason have been selecting features for the Library Gardens. With a collection of art and instruments, our spaces will be truly unique!
- Jesse met with local artist Rocco to design an Instagram wall. Work has been approved and we expect the art installations to be sometime in September.
- Jesse met with True Line Fencing to finalize the dumpster fence and get initial quotes for a fence around the Portage Library Garden.
- Jason and Aiden have been installing Garden Features such as stepping stones, musical instruments, landscaping, benches, and story trails at Portage and South Haven.
- Jesse met with invasive species specialist Jim Haniford of Shirley Heinze Land Trust to design a volunteer program to assist at our South Haven Branch.

Technology

- This month Angela has been onboarding our new managed service provider, Cardinal Point Technologies.
- Angela has also been working on setting up a chatbot for the patron help desk so we can answer some of our patron's questions even during our closed hours. Work also continues on configuring widgets for the new website.
- Nathan has made several significant improvements to the effectiveness of our security camera system by simply analyzing viewing angles and optimizing placement.
- IT also continues to work on resolving an issue with our credit card readers for our copiers that have been frustrating for staff and patrons.
- The IT and Community Engagement teams had administrative training on the new website which will be released in September!

Public Relations and Marketing

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during June was 101,656.
- Facebook:
 - 6,941 followers with a reach of 18,548.
- Twitter:
 - 584 total followers.
- Instagram:
 - 1,499 followers; 3 posts and a total of 840 impressions.
- YouTube:
 - 149 total subscribers; PCPLS videos had 1,144 views this month.

- Pinterest:
 - 83 followers with a reach of 13.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 78,387 times.
- TikTok: Our TikTok now has 898 subscribers with 3564 total views.
- PCPLS' Virtual Customer Service Team interacted with 43 patrons.
- Google: 8 new five-star reviews
 - "The Portage Post Office sent me to the library to print a return label that a company had emailed me as a PDF to return an item, assuming I had a working printer. Well, I don't! Amy and Ryanna (4:30 pm on Tuesday) helped me through the confusing process on how to transfer it from my phone to their printer. With their patient help, we got the job done, and I got it back to the Post Office before closing. This was something I'd been trying to get done with the company since January! So it was a big deal to me! And, they again taught me that I can still learn something new every day!"
 - "Very nice and helpful"
 - "I love our little library. Such a gift to the community. The youth programs are incredible."
 - "Went to visit the Library Garden for the first time with my daughter, and loved it!!! So beautiful and relaxing."
- Our team brought the excitement of the library to 1,126 attendees at community events in June, promoting our Summer Reading Challenge and fun summer events.
 - Valparaiso Events' Summer Outdoor Movies
 - Portage Parks' Market on the Square
 - South Haven Fairytale Festival
 - Porter County Parks' Camp FUNset
- Jesse met with the Abonmarche design team for a potential award for the Portage Library Learning Garden, providing details on the construction and usage of the space in the community.
- Jesse also met with Mary Jane Thomas, our grant administrator, to talk about being included in a national brochure for the Rotary Library Garden as a project relating to OCRA and federal rural improvement programs.

Youth and Teen Services

- This month 1,983 participants are enrolled in the Summer Reading Program and are enjoying the theme Adventure Begins at the Library. Each week patrons have been entering countless raffle tickets for a chance to win the weekly raffle drawings!
- PCPLS held the Storytime in the Park program at Founder Square and had a great turnout with 42 attendees!
- Our first annual Summer Reading Kick-Off took place at the Portage branch. A total of 372 attendees enjoyed a musical performance, and crafts, and learned more about the Summer Reading Program!
- The System Programming Team installed the new StoryWalk at Sunset Hill Farm County Park featuring *A Good Place* and at the Valparaiso Rotary Garden with *Maisy Goes Camping* both written by Lucy Cousins. A new StoryWalk was delivered to the

Valparaiso Parks Department with their chosen local author book, *A New Leaf* by Jose G. Rios Jr.

- The Valparaiso, Kouts, and Hebron branches held their Paws to Read programs with a visit from Caleb the Comfort Dog.
- The Kouts Elementary Explorers program has been a big hit this month. Attendees made art with items found in nature and learned measurement skills to make some tasty snacks.
- PCPLS booked all of Dave's Traveling World of Reptiles shows! Everyone got to learn more about our new scaly and slithery friends.
- At the Hebron branch, the Time Travelers: Ancient Egypt program was so popular that there needed to be a second time slot added in. Attendees learned how to write in hieroglyphics, got to design their own pyramids, and had some fun wrapping their friends and siblings up like mummies.
- The Hebron branch had a very special visitor this month, Bluey! Attendees had a blast doing several crafts and reading a book with Bluey.
- The Valpo branch held its popular Nerf Night and Anime Club with the edition of a Dungeon and Dragons after-hours event for teens!
- Allison and the YS team at the Valpo branch have received a lot of compliments on how the branch has been decorated for Summer Reading this year. Families are commenting that it feels the most magical it has in years, and they enjoy the color and interactive aspects of the YS department.
- Valpo held a Camp Night Program that included a firefly craft, a camping scavenger hunt, and a trail mix necklace activity. The kids loved being able to visit the pretend campsite under the pretend stars and expressed how neat it was to feel like they were camping.
- The North County team organized a Camp Night at the South Haven branch where patrons of all ages enjoyed camping-themed stories, crafts, and activities and got a sneak peek of the South Haven garden. The musical pads were a big hit, we can't wait to show them what we have in store when the garden is complete!
- Valpo team member, Emily, has a knack for creating programs that are successful and engaging across age groups. This month she led two Glow in the Dark Painting programs, one for teens and one for K-5.
- North County team member Anna Reeder led a Travel the Trails program at Woodland Park where she organized a scavenger hunt and provided fun activities for a short hike on the Woodland Park walking trail.
- Summer Reading performer, Scribble Monster, had a fantastic performance at the Portage, Kouts, and Valparaiso branches in June! Parents and kids alike had a great time and expressed that they are excited to see more programs offered in the Portage Garden.
- The System Programming Team participated in OE Camp Lakeside during their Summer Day Camp Finale for their Welcome to the Jungle theme! During the event they promoted the Summer Reading Program, explored several Jungle-themed books, and animal noise-making activities.

- Books Balls and Blocks was held at the South Haven and Valparaiso Branch with a total of 42 attendees. This event is in partnership with Porter County Community Foundation.
- System Programming visited the Learning Tree in South Haven for a Book a Librarian program which promoted Summer Reading and brought a read-aloud storybook to fit in with their space theme.

Adult Services

- The Valparaiso branch welcomed a new Team Lead on board. They have been quick to understand the routines of the branch and the Adult Services department in particular. They have taken the initiative to coordinate projects around the department, like shifting audiobooks and nonfiction shelf labeling. They have also reorganized the public notices and community resources to make them more accessible to patrons.
- All branches continued to see an increase in exam proctoring requests throughout the month. Staff proctored 15 exams for Valparaiso University students in June in Valpo alone. We are pleased to be able to offer this important service to our community.
- Monique and Courtney at the Valpo branch worked with Jennifer, an Employment Specialist with Goodwill, as well as her client, Aiden, throughout the month. As a part of Aiden's job exploration project with Goodwill, he toured the Valpo branch, job shadowed, and even tried out the role of Library Clerk himself for a few days. This was a positive experience for everyone involved, and we are hoping to onboard Aiden as one of our regular volunteers in July.
- Monique is working with Courtney on volunteer coordination at the Valparaiso branch. We are starting by considering the needs at our branch, which should help us identify potential volunteer tasks. Courtney is also creating an adopt-a-shelf program to be maintained primarily by our volunteer base.
- South County was very excited to get some proctoring requests this month. The team is excited and hopes that they can continue to spread the word about this very important community service.
- The POCO Museum held events at PCPLS and shared a few pieces of their collection that helped explain the history of Porter County.
- South Haven's adult craft programs saw an increase in attendance. The diamond art program, where patrons decorated rocks with small rhinestones, was very successful and drew a full house.
- The South Shore Brass Band performed at the Salute to Veterans Concert held at the Rotary Library Library Garden. The event was co-sponsored by the Friends of the Library and paid tribute to veterans.

Collections

- Periodical renewals - In June Elizabeth completed the yearly periodical renewal procedure. She compared several quotes from multiple vendors and found that our current vendor (Ebsco) was still providing the best service for the lowest cost. She also pruned some magazines with very low use from the renewal.

- CLS- Elizabeth and Inge have been working with Baker & Taylor to set up their Customized Library Services packaging, which will remove the need to complete several redundant and routine tasks. We expect that this will enable the collections team to devote more resources to some much-needed enhancements to our local collections.
- Progress on updating our library account policy is slow, however, much progress is being made in the background. The policy review process uncovers many kinks that need to be unraveled before policy can be set. For example, we are better understanding how different age groups and patron types are using accounts, and also taking time to resolve some technical issues with how our accounts interact with electronic services.

Genealogy

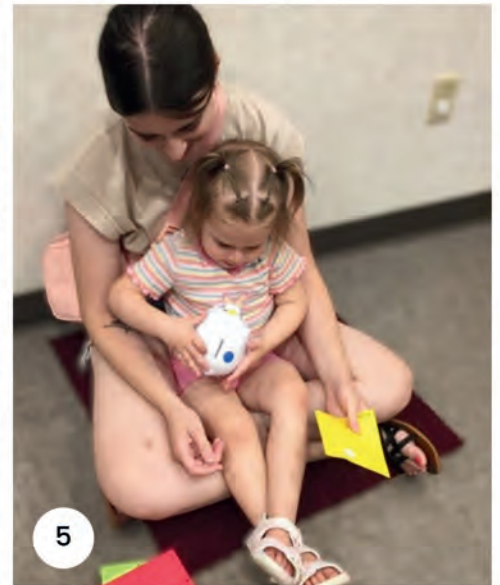
- The Genealogy team attempted to date the water tower at the Anderson Co./Journeyman Brewery complex. Using Sanborn maps and newspaper articles, staff were able to find a general date. Further information might be needed from the City Building Department, however.
- The team sent articles from their vertical files to a family historian who had found out an ancestor had lived in Valparaiso. The files were very helpful and allowed the historian to gain insight into additional generations.
- Kathy Lund has finished scanning two boxes of Library Board minutes.
- She has also been preparing a family history book that she has typed in from a family's donation.
- The Genealogy team assisted patrons with a variety of information requests such as the history of the current First Source bank building as well as a visit here by Frederick Douglass.
- Chris M. is nearing the end of the fire book indexing and expects to be completed with the project in July.

Hebron



- 1 Brunch with Bluey was fun for everyone! Families took part in our storytime, crafts, snack and photo-ops with Bluey.
- 2 Today in storytime, we learned about the kite festivals in China and decided to try to fly one of our own!
- 3 Dave DiNaso's World of Reptiles team brought us new reptile friends! It was a lot of fun learning about all their different creatures.
- 4 We got 'wrapped up' in our special program Time Travelers: Ancient Egypt.
- 5 This big guy was happy to be held! He was the patron favorite at the Dave DiNaso's World of Reptiles Presentation.

Kouts



1 Jim from ScribbleMonster led a musical parade around the library!

2 Scribble Jim got these patrons up on their feet with fun music & exciting stories!

3 The Teen Adventures program got messy with our s'mores snacks.

4 This brave patron tried on some scaly accessories with Dave DiNaso's team.

5 After some storytime fun about piglets, our patrons got to make their own!

Portage



- 1 Science Night kicked off with storytime.
- 2 Jim from ScribbleMonster took the stage & got everyone dancing!
- 3 The guided Woodland Park scavenger hunt hike begins!
- 4 Donuts with Dad had games, prizes, and donut-themed activities!
- 5 What happens when you drop Mentos into Diet Coke? These patrons found out during one of our science experiments!

South Haven



1 The great outdoors came inside for Camp Night.

2 Everyone enjoyed a creative Adult Crafternoon.

3 Food crafts were exciting and delicious!

4 Our patron's skills really shone through in their diamond art.

5 Dave DiNaso's Traveling World of Reptiles introduced us to some exciting & unique friends!

Valparaiso



1 Nerf Night was a blast!

2 Patron imaginations were put to work during our Cardboard Creations workshop.

3 Outdoor fun came indoors for a camp-themed storytime.

4 Dave DiNaso's Traveling World of Reptiles was educational and fun!

5 Our staff was ready to help young adventurers during Teen Dungeons & Dragons Scavenger Hunt!

