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Olga Granat

Vice President

Kevin Pazour

Secretary

Paul Knauff

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Julie Giorgi

Members

Kristy Merritt

Roger Rhodes

Stu Summers

Legal Counsel

Clay Patton

Library Director

Jesse Butz

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System
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Valparaiso, IN

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pcpls.org

BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, September 18, 2024

NOTICE: The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on September 18, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. for its regularly scheduled meeting at the Valparaiso Public Library, 103 Jefferson Street, 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 August 21, 2024
2. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes from July 17, 2024
3. Financial Report
 - a. Treasurer's Report
 - b. Approval of the Claims Register
4. Approval of Communications
 - a. Friend's Report
 - b. Director's Report
 - c. Patron Comments

ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:

1. Public Hearing for the 2025 Budget
2. Library Garden Update
3. Portage Canopy Update

Any other items

Adjournment

Signature Session

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

- October 16, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library
- November 20, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library
- December 18, 2024 - Valparaiso Public Library

Porter County Public Library System

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for September 18, 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. Olga Granat presided.

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

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from August 21, 2024

Approval of the Executive Session Minutes from July 17, 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: Kevin Pazour moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Paul Knauff seconded the motion.

Discussion: Communications reports were summarized.

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

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

Public Hearing for the 2025 Budget

The hearing was opened. No comments were given, so the hearing was closed. No discussion followed.

Library Garden Update

Updates for Portage covered property transfer, City of Portage contact information, storywalk trail installation, local artwork, musical instrument shipment, and fencing installation. Updates for Kouts covered light bollards, a camera pull, pathway, concrete work, canopy, musical instruments, pig sculpture, and donor list. Updates for Hebron covered the garden layout, large planter in the front, and baby grand piano. Updates for South Haven covered stepping stone repair options.

Portage Canopy Update

Updates covered initial inspection and damage report, upcoming inspection by Great Lakes Construction, upcoming joint inspection with insurance adjuster, and turnaround time. Clarification on repair options, pricing, and forthcoming renderings was provided.

Renovation Update

Addition of lighting for the newly installed parking at Portage was proposed. Kouts & Portage roofing options were also summarized, and budgetary strategies to cover these projects were discussed. Options for needed HVAC updates due to outdated equipment that is no longer supported were also forecast. A summary of the state of our sprinkler systems, vulnerabilities, and possible upgrade strategies were also given. The need for a long-range facilities plan was discussed. The board president gave direction for the director to pursue bids for the roofing projects this year.

Motion: Roger Rhodes moved to “move forward with the light bollards for \$19,635”. Julie Giorgi seconded the motion.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with 7 in favor and 0 opposed.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

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

August 2024 Director's Report

Overview

- The highlight of August was our South Haven Library Garden ribbon cutting. We were lucky enough to share this special occasion with over 150 patrons, friends, and family. The special day was highlighted by many of our County Commissioners and Council Members speaking about this amazing project that they had such a large hand in making a reality. The space features ADA-accessible pathways and musical features, bigfoot trails, and a bridge spanning a dry riverbed. This engaging space has already become a highlight for our patrons.
- Circulation continued its strong trend on the electronic side with an increase of 12% overall with large increases in digital magazines again this month. On the physical side, we have a proportionate decrease in circulation as more of our patrons adopt electronic materials as their chosen format with only one exception; music had an increase of 47% and has been up for the last few months. We are keeping an eye on this to see if this is a short-term increase or part of a larger trend.

Important Upcoming Dates

- September
 - 18: Library Board of Trustees Meeting
- October
 - 2: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 16: Library Board of Trustees Meeting
- November
 - 20: Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Personnel

- Ending Employment
 - Matt Wheeler - Custodian
 - Lyriel Steinberg - LC1
 - Maggie Collins - LC3
 - Briana Petty - Programming Assistant
- New Employment
 - Corie Rocha - Custodian
- Promotions
 - Courtney Woods, Full-Time Team Lead in Adult and Information Services at the Valparaiso Branch
- Interviews
 - Monique and Kellie interviewed candidates for a full-time Assistant Team Lead position at the Valparaiso branch.
 - Monique, Kellie, and Elizabeth interviewed candidates for a part-time Library Clerk position.

- Sarah and Tifani interviewed for the full-time assistant team lead position and part-time library clerk position for the North County branches.
- Inge and Sarah met to discuss creating and coordinating staff training on the database Novelist. This resource is a major asset to our team and will be extremely helpful in providing readers advisory services to our patrons.
- Ashley introduced core library program offerings to the programming teams which is a strategic plan to offer a more consistent variety of programs across PCPLS.

Finance Notes

- The budget benchmark for the end of August is that 67% of the budget should be expended. So far, 60% has been spent and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$46,278.22 from Trust Indiana in August. Included in the total interest earned is the Mills Trust donation, which earned \$3,132.95.
- August saw the first annual state-wide Library Bookkeepers conference. Hayley was invited to be part of the planning committee and to give a presentation at the event. The conference went well and reviews were glowing.
 - "I learned more at the bookkeeper's workshop at St. Joe than I have at most of the webinars/workshops I attend!"
- Jesse, Hayley, and Stu met with IGS rep Lorrie to go over natural gas pricing options. The library will be able to lock in the best possible prices to ensure we weather any market fluctuations as smoothly as possible.
- Hayley and Jesse continued the zero-based budget training with our teams to ensure each department is being as fiscally responsible as possible. The better understanding is already helping our teams be more efficient with their budgets and strategic with our offerings.

Subscription/Contract Renewals

- Subscriptions
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - EBSCO Novelist - \$6,483.85
 - Prices 4 Antiques - \$299.00
 - Alldata - \$3,000.00
 - Newspaper Archive - \$9760.00
 - Novelist - \$6,483.85
 - Tumblebooks - \$1,875.00
 - World Book Online - \$3,242.99
 - Cancellations
 - Universal Class - \$7,500
 - Consumer Reports - \$7,201.00
 - Weiss Financial Ratings Series - \$3,495.00

- Infobase Learning Cloud - \$5,491.20
 - African American History - \$2,381.77
 - Fold 3 - \$7,232.10
 - Contracts
 - New
 - Stantec Consulting Services Inc.(bioswale maintenance at Valpo and South Haven) - \$6,000
 - Renewals
 - PDQ/Smart Deploy - \$2,677.50
 - Today's Business Solutions (MyPC) - \$670
 - Library Market - \$17,950
 - Cancellations
 - None

Buildings & Grounds

- Construction of the Kouts branch Library Garden started this month. Staff and patrons were very excited to watch the construction on the new outside patio, where many future story times will be held. The yellow sunshade represents both our beloved Kouts schools and a sunflower which will be part of our pollinator theme throughout the garden.
- Construction of South Haven's Garden was completed and the Garden officially opened to the public. We hosted a fun ribbon-cutting ceremony with roughly 150 people in attendance. The opening of the garden occupied much of our maintenance team's time this month as they installed musical features, benches, plants, and a bridge. They did an amazing job!
- A local Girl Scout troop started a regular routine of pulling weeds and helping maintain the native habitat in the South Haven garden.
- The Portage Library Garden stage had some damage from a construction worker accident. This damage was able to be repaired under warranty and did not inconvenience any programs.
- South Haven had a leak in the sprinkler system that required repair. Our sprinkler systems are beginning to show their age and will need regular and proactive repair in the coming years.
- Jesse met with public adjusters to go over the Portage canopy project.
- The Hebron sprinkler compressor was replaced
- Jesse, Jason, and Aiden laid out the path with contractors for the Kouts library garden.

Technology

- This month we were able to upgrade our antivirus solution through the Indiana Office of Technology's cyber security grant. Previously, we had used a standard antivirus program that cost us thousands of dollars each year. Now we have a full-featured program with a human component that will respond as soon as a threat is detected.
- Angela implemented a new cloud backup system to enhance our disaster recovery process.

- Nathan continues researching options for our OPAC(online card catalogs) and additional possible solutions for our technology training plans.
- Inge, Angela, and Nathan have been investigating camera options to replace our outdated system. Whatever option is chosen will allow us to reduce our server dependency, reduce the cost of managing the system, and gain functionality throughout our system.

Public Relations and Marketing

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during August was 97,599.
- Facebook:
 - 7,003 followers with a reach of 14,169.
- Twitter:
 - 611 total followers.
- Instagram:
 - 1,538 followers; 5 posts and a total of 691 impressions.
- YouTube:
 - 156 total subscribers; PCPLS videos had 665 views this month.
- Pinterest:
 - 84 followers with a reach of 28.
- Newsletters: Our e-blasts were opened approximately 78,769 times.
- TikTok: Our TikTok now has 922 subscribers with 3,277 total views this month.
- PCPLS' Virtual Customer Service Team interacted with 42 patrons.
- Google: 2 new five-star reviews
 - "Everyone there is kind and helpful."
- PCPLS was invited to community events across Porter County this month focused on back to school. Staff were able to talk to families about all the amazing things available at the library as they got their littles ready for a new school year! We visited with over 944 patrons at this month's events:
 - Kouts PTO Back to School Night
 - Hebron Elementary Back to School Carnival
 - Kouts Pork Fest
 - Opportunity Enterprise's Aktion Club and Kiwanis Meeting
 - First Things First's Camp Collaboration
- The branches attended training for the new website and calendar software, LibraryMarket. The team was busy this month entering programs and public meeting information from the old calendar system into the new one. Staff did a great job communicating and staying positive throughout this transition.
- Jesse met Comcast representatives regarding the new BEAD opportunities in the area and then he met with Commissioner Blaney to go over the funding and plan options as part of the Porter County broadband task force.
- Jesse met with officials from Portage regarding an incoming Maker Lab that is going into a facility there. This new program opens up plenty of opportunities for collaboration.
- The Library was able to help reschedule a musical program by offering up the new Portage Library Garden space as their location was rained out during the storms of early

August. Jesse met with Former Mayor Sue Lynch and the head of the Portage LIVE! group to ensure that the musical group Wolfgang from Hobart High School was able to perform in our lovely new space.

- Jesse and Makenna have been meeting with a local design company on our new banners for the Valpo branch. They have been in the works for a long time and we are excited to see how they come out. These banners will look much like the City of Valpo and be swapped out seasonally. The City has already given their blessing to the project and the banners should really help spruce up the exterior of our facility.

Youth and Teen Services

- The 2024 Summer Reading Challenge was a big success with our community! The Weekly Raffles were on fire, with over 6,875 entries during the summer. We had a total of 1,595 completions this year, a 15% jump from last year.
- The End of Summer Bash in Hebron at Louis Alyea Memorial Park included foam cannons, music, bubbles, crafts, and fun. Thanks to the Hebron Parks Department and the Town of Hebron for providing water for the event!
- Humane Indiana Wildlife visited both of the South County branches this month. Patrons got to meet some very cute animal ambassadors, which included Godzilla the box turtle, and Oscar the skunk.
- Ashley, Lanette, and Willow set up the StoryWalk in the South Haven Branch's newest garden, showcasing *The Leaf Thief* by Alice Hemming.
- Liz Cain and Kim Lohn led a Book-a-Librarian event for Compass International Family Center on August 8th. They welcomed families to the library, led tours, and registered them for library cards.
- PCPLS partnered with the Porter County Parks Department to present an exciting dinosaur storytime at the Hebron branch. Kids got to see some amazing fossil replicas and even got to be paleontologists, uncovering their own dinosaurs.
- Sandra, Amy, and Amanda paid a couple of visits to the Learning Tree Academy in South Haven, introducing the students to all that the library has to offer.
- South Haven Elementary School walked a group of students over to the new Library Garden during the school day to see the new space as a reward for one of their reading challenges.
- Allison at the Valpo branch is doing a wonderful job coordinating activities in the Youth Services department. The team has been hard at work creating new displays, cleaning toys, and shifting collections. They plan to focus on interfiling special collections next month.

Adult Services

- PCPLS partnered with The Art Barn to offer a series of painting classes to area seniors at the Portage branch. We have gotten really good feedback on the program and have enjoyed getting to know the folks at The Art Barn.
- The Portage branch, in partnership with the Senior Advisory Committee, started taking art submissions for their annual Senior Art Fair.

- Steven at the Valparaiso branch has been a big help this month in training our new team members, Nina and Nicole. He has embraced the opportunity to coach new staff and review Circulation department information with them.
- Courtney at the Valparaiso branch has been making impressive progress in organizing the Adult Services department. Specifically, she has revamped our promotional materials stand, created a supplies workstation for patrons, and thoroughly cleaned the workroom. The space looks more inviting every day, and we're excited to see her take the lead in this department.
- In South County, Alia D. led her first adult painting programs this month. Patrons at both branches got to learn different ways of blending, shading, and mixing colors as they painted their own medieval-style cat and banana using acrylic paint.

Collections

- The collections team continues to research new, face-out picture book shelving. Estimating the correct style and number of shelves can be challenging as the new shelves hold a different number of books. Elizabeth made a branch visit to take measurements and mock-up floor plans to assist with visualizing the space.
- The team has been preparing for a transition away from SRCS, a key component of our interlibrary loan services, to the Share program, which replaces it. We do not anticipate that our patrons will experience any disruption in ILL services.
- Jesse met with State Librarian Jacob Speer to chat about the IDL consortium for ebooks. As the group continues to grow and thrive, we are committed to helping evolve the consortium to be as sustainable and successful as possible.

Genealogy

- Chris Martel is finished indexing the Valparaiso Fire Department books. Her current project is finishing up the Michigan City obituary index cards, and her next project will be typing an index to early deeds that were done by a volunteer.
- Chris Hough sent an article to the newsletter editor of the Northwest Indiana Genealogical Society on what is available here in the department. We will be participating in their fall genealogy workshop day on November 16.
- Staff collected several advertisements and articles about the history of Lowenstines Department Store for the Chamber of Commerce article. The store made it to 100 years but closed shortly afterward. Another company bought them out, but they were much less successful, closing after only about six years. Then a fire brought the entire building down in 1996. Today a rebuilt building with several offices and a restaurant occupies the space.
- Chris Hough attended a meeting with other local history groups and discussed ongoing events. She also met again with Barbara Brandt, who is working on the historical marker for Dr. Almira Fifield. Staff are still checking 1860-1863 newspapers for a mention of her practice, or leaving for service.
- Staff aided patrons with several requests for obituaries as well as marriage and house history requests.

Hebron



- 1 Thank you to the PoCo Park's Department for coming out and teaching us all about dinosaur fossils.
- 2 Humane Indiana Wildlife came out and introduced us to a feathery friend!
- 3 A robot themed Storytime motivated us to learn how to be one with new sounds and movement!
- 4 Patrons learned about shading their art during our cat-themed painting lesson.
- 5 Digging for dinos was a blast after we learned about fossils! How many can we find?

Kouts



- 1 Humane Wildlife Indiana taught us all about unique friends!
- 2 These little piggies taught us how fun it can be to get muddy during Storytime!
- 3 Say cheese! One of our furry friends from Humane Wildlife Indiana is ready for his close up.
- 4 Storytime got messy with a soapy slime.
- 5 Caleb is the perfect listener for our young patrons to practice with during Paws to Read!

Portage



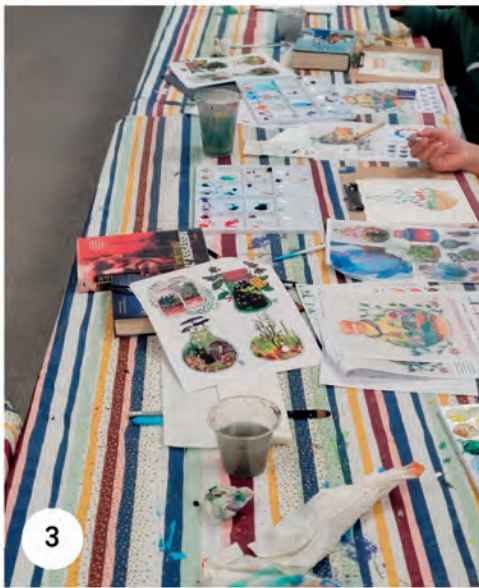
- 1 We hopped and played in a water tray after learning about frogs in Storytime.
- 2 ARRGGH! Our staff helped Talk Like a Pirate Day set sail with a creative craft!
- 3 Our patrons spent quality time with their families learning how to craft out in the Garden during Family Camp Night.
- 4 Art Barn taught new drawing techniques during the Senior Art Series.
- 5 Food Craft Friday got colorful while we learned about making food into yummy art.

South Haven



- 1 STEM Saturday allowed our patrons to become scientists and conduct their own experiments.
- 2 Preschoolers and Playdough got creative while learning all about shapes!
- 3 South Haven's annual Tie Dye program always creates works of art!
- 4 South Haven's Library Garden got a visit from quality assurance. These little testers enjoyed playing in the Garden!
- 5 Storytime taught us all about dinosaur fossils and how they work!

Valparaiso



- 1 Our STEAM program brought young patrons together to design their own cardboard creations.
- 2 Valpo's first Big Blue Blocks program was an exciting success!
- 3 Patrons collaborated to make something unique together through a watercolor program.
- 4 We celebrated the end of summer by exploring other ways to make art - this time with yarn!
- 5 An acrylic painting program helped patrons explore nature and flex their creative muscles.

in Our Community



1 The South Haven Library Garden is open and ready! Thank you to everyone who helped create such an exciting new space for the community.

2 Let's get lost in the foam to celebrate the end of summer!

3 We jumped and jammed with ScribbleMonster at the End of Summer Bash.

4 The musical stepping stones at the South Haven Library Garden are a hit! We had plenty of eager patrons ready to test them out.

5 One last craft to say goodbye to summer at the End of Summer Bash!