

LaGrange County Public Library
Board of Directors Meeting Thursday, January 19, 2023; 5:30 pm
Held at LaGrange County Public Library, Main Branch 203 W. Spring Street, LaGrange,
IN 46761

Meeting convened by Sam Plew, Board President at 5:35 pm.

Board members present: Rita Lehner, Maranda Randol, Jerry White, Jody Blake, Michelle Chrisman, Sam Plew, Martin Franke (arrived late)

Others Present: Richard Kuster, Anna Mendoza, Sarah Walker (Board Treasurer)

The first order of business was to elect a new slate of officers for the Board for the 2023 calendar year. After an opportunity for public comment was given (none offered), Rita Lehner moved a slate of Sam Plew as President (Bylaw limiting two consecutive terms was waived for the present year only at the December 2022 Board meeting); Michelle Chrisman, Vice President; Martin Franke, Board Secretary. Jody Blake seconded the motion. With no other nominations offered, Sam closed nominations and the slate was approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board.

Election of officers session was closed by Sam Plew, Board President

The Public Board Meeting for the LaGrange County Public Library was called to order by Sam Plew, Board President. Those present as listed above for the previous session.

The agenda was adjusted to allow financial reporting first to expedite Sarah Walker's participation in relevant agenda items. Anna commented on the written Treasurer's report. Anna presented the Claims. After brief discussion, Jerry moved to authorize payment of the Claims as presented. Michelle seconded this motion, which was approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board.

Sarah Walker pointed out additional details concerning the Treasurer's Report. Line item adjustments need to be made to avoid having negative balances for the end of the fiscal year 2022. Sarah and Richard will analyze the budget and bring transfer recommendations to the February board meeting. This is at the advise of George Helton of the Department of Local Government and Finance (DLGF). Mr. Helton has recommended that the balance of the Library Improvement Reserve Fund be transferred to the Rainy Day Fund to allow for greater flexibility in use of the funds. Jerry White moved that this be done. Jody seconded the motion. Following some further discussion, this motion passed by majority voice vote of the board (6 in favor, 1 opposed).

Another discussion was held with regard to moving money from the Rainy Day fund into the Trust Indiana investment, which is currently earning 4.4 percent interest. Jerry moved to transfer \$200,000 dollars into the Trust Indiana Fund. Jody seconded this motion. Following further discussion as to the security of this investment, the board moved to do this by unanimous voice vote. Sarah and Richard announced their

intention to add to this transfer to increase the investment to near the maximum allowed by Board action of \$750,000.

Jerry moved to accept the Treasurer's report at this time. Motion seconded by Rita. Report accepted by unanimous voice vote of the Board.

Richard then presented the 2023 Budget Order and explained it. He discussed the recent bond payment of \$282,630. Richard presented the Chester invoices (Invoice for services rendered \$760.00 and renewal of contract, \$4742) and requested that the Board approve a renewal of Chester's contract with the LaGrange County Public Library to provide IT services again in 2023. Michelle moved to approve this request, and Maranda seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board without further discussion. Richard reported on the IOI bankruptcy settlement, which has recently provided the Board with an additional payment of \$744.63, which means that more than 50% of the loss incurred to the Library system by fraudulent action by IOI has been recuperated.

Richard, assisted by Anna, reported on the final determination of raises recommended to the staff for 2023. Most full time staff have been given an 8% raise, most part-time staff have been given between \$1.00 and \$1.50 an hour raise, depending upon performance evaluations.

The Library Assistant Director's and Director's salaries and raises were discussed. Richard presented a comparative sheet listing many similarly sized library institutions in the northern Indiana at this time. LaGrange ranked second to lowest on the sheet. Richard and Anna were asked to leave the room while the situation was discussed in detail. It was decided to grant the Assistant Director a bi-weekly salary of \$2000, with \$10,000 reimbursement for the past two years tuition reimbursement as Anna pursues her Masters of Library Sciences (MLS) degree. It was offered that the Director's salary be raised to \$3000 biweekly. Richard expressed some reservations as this, and requested that this issue be tabled till February following further consideration. Jerry moved to approved the Memorandum of Agreement concerning the Assistant Director's salary, seconded by Michelle. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote of the Board. Jerry moved to table the consideration of the Memorandum of Agreement concerning the Director's Salary till the February meeting, seconded by Michelle. This passed by majority voice vote of the Board. (6 in favor, 1 opposed).

Covid-19 status was unchanged.

Richard reported that the Library intended to make the following changes to operating hours to comply with our recent upgrade to a Class A Library due to the 2020 Census rating the LaGrange County population at over 40,000 persons. Hours starting March 1, 2023 will be M-Thursday 9 am-8 pm; Friday 9 am -5 pm; Saturday 9 am-1 pm. Branch Hours (Topeka and Shipshewana) will be M-F 11 am to 6 pm; Saturday 9 am to 1 pm. This will meet state requirements for a Class A Library in the state of Indiana.

Richard reviewed the Statistical Report. Circulation had been steady and growing until the onset of Covid 19, which drastically reduced numbers. Numbers are recovering steadily since that time, but have not yet reached pre-Covid levels.

The state of the Collection (total of 140,661 items available for circulation) was reported by Richard.

Richard also reported the potential transfer of the LaGrange County Chamber of Commerce Literature and Information rack to the LaGrange County Public Library. Space will be found to house this resource.

Richard reported that personal property left on library premises by homeless persons was becoming a problem. Jody Blake suggested that the LaGrange County Sheriff's Department be employed to penalize any persons found to be loitering on library property in violation of LaGrange Town Curfew. Richard offered to write a policy to address the situation for the next Board meeting.

\Richard distributed copies of the Library's Bylaws for review by Board members. This will be discussed in detail at the February Board meeting.

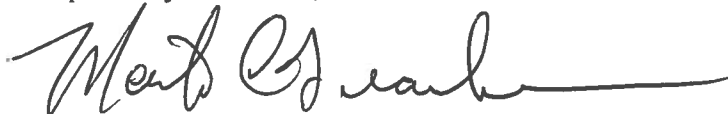
There were no reports presented to the Board by the Personnel Committee, the Facilities Committee, or the Policy Committee. There was no reported Correspondence to the Board, per Anna Mendoza.

Old Business: the company engaged to install a sprinkler system to augment landscaping on the library grounds will need to meet with Havel to arrive at a method of connecting the new system to the existing plumbing in a satisfactory way. Martin Franke asked how a potential conflict of interest situation will be avoided, since the most recent appointment to the Board, Maranda Randol, is married to Tyler Randol, who owns the landscaping company with which the Library holds the agreement. Richard remarked that the landscaping plan has been mostly implemented, Tyler intends to finish with the agreed upon tree planting, and then intends to retire from the landscaping business. This is a satisfactory answer to this situation.

New Business: Jody Blake requested that the Library move ahead in adopting a staff wide policy concerning continuing education tuition reimbursement.

With no other business before the Board, Sam asked for a motion for adjournment. Jody moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Rita. Meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote of the Board. Meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin A. Franke", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martin A. Franke
Board Secretary