

Minutes LaGrange County Library Board of Trustees Public Meeting April 20, 2023

Board members present: Sam Plew, Martin Franke, Maranda Randol, Jody Blake

Board members absent: Jerry White, Michelle Chrisman, Rita Lehner

Others Present: Richard Kuster, Library Director; Bryce Randol, concerned citizen.

Sam Plew convened the meeting at 5:32 pm.

Sam invited comment regarding the minutes of the previous meeting. Jody moved to accept the minutes without any changes. Maranda seconded the motion, **which was passed by unanimous voice vote of the Board with no further discussion.**

Richard presented the treasurer's report with the following comments:

- The library expects proceeds from property tax assessments in June.
- A CD matured recently and was transferred to the Trust Indiana investment. There is now almost \$750,000 invested there currently; interest is earning 4.91% at the present time. Expenditures are where they should be for this time of the year regarding the budget.

Jody moved to accept the treasurer's report. Maranda seconded the motion, **which passed unanimously by voice vote with no further discussion.**

Richard presented the claims, no. 29321 sequentially to no. 29371 with several electronic transfers in the total amount of \$102,049.35. **Maranda moved to accept the claims as presented, seconded by Jody. Motion passed with no further discussion by unanimous voice vote of the Board.**

Other items discussed under the Director's Report included discussion of installation for an electronic or other type of sign at the northeast corner of the library property. Some concern was raised that such a sign should be designed to avoid flashing light pollution being generated during the night, as the library is in primarily a residential section of town. Others stated that a sign was needed to promote activities and programs at the library. No action was taken on this topic at this time.

Richard mentioned several needed remodeling projects at the main branch and both other branched (Topeka and Shipshewana). These included:

- Furniture, carpet, and rearrangement in the main branch to make the fireplace area in the adult book section at the main branch more inviting.
- New blinds at LaGrange, and at the branches as well.
- The installation of a fish tank in the lobby of the main branch.
- The replacement of the wooded porch floor needed at the Shipshewana branch.
- The installation of LED lighting at both branch libraries.
- New floor covering needed at Topeka Library. Despite the newness of the building, the material chosen at the time of construction has not held up well.
- Richard concluded that a walk-thru inspection by interested board members was needed at all three library locations.

Richard presented the possibility of going fine free in the LaGrange system regarding overdue charges. Over half the libraries in Indiana have taken this step currently. This entailed some discussion. Jody moved to table board action on this topic until more of the members are present. This action was adopted without a formal vote of the board members present.

Richard presented the Staffing Report. With this, he presented the current Personnel Policy manual. It was mentioned that the way staffing in the LaGrange system is set up is that the Director is the employee of the Board, and the other staff are employees of the Director. This makes the Director responsible for the supervision of the staff. **Jody moved to**

adopt the Personnel Policy as presented, Maranda seconded this motion, which was adopted by unanimous voice vote of the Board with no further discussion.

Richard presented the Statistical Report. 40,846 items were circulated from the library system in the month of March 2023. Richard distributed a document reporting upon circulation numbers for 2021 (the most recent available) for twenty-four other Indiana libraries of comparable size to LaGrange. LaGrange circulation ranks number 3 of this group of twenty-four institutions. Richard recommends increasing the size of our collection, particularly books, since this is strongly supported by our patronage, especially by our Old Order Amish demographic. Jody suggested that patrons be surveyed to determine which books to add to the collection. No further Board action was taken regarding this discussion topic at this time.

Richard mentioned that the Indiana State Library has a series of four presentations available for library board members which would be helpful in informing board members of their rights, duties, and responsibilities. Richard asked whether these presentations would be welcomed by board members. Upon general affirmation, Richard asked whether board members would prefer to take all training session at one time or spread them out over several session. Sam asked that this question be considered later, again, because several board members were absent from this meeting.

There was no report from the Personnel, Policy, or Facility Committees. Since these committees have been virtually dissolved by the adoption of the "Committee as A Whole" principal, it was suggested that these committee reports no longer be included on the monthly meeting agenda. No decision was made with regard to this topic at this time.

There was no Correspondence to the Board.

Old Business: Sam asked about the installation of the landscaping sprinkler system. Richard reported that the Havel plumber has recently resigned, leaving progress on this project at a standstill.

New Business: The library has had sporadic problems with homeless persons residing on Library property and leaving private property and refuse around. There were further concerns communicated regarding panhandling (now illegal in the State of Indiana); harassment of staff and patrons, sex crimes registry status of such homeless persons to which Richard replied that the Town Marshall and the Town Detective is aware of the situation and are patrolling and monitoring the situation closely.

With no other business before the Board, **President Plew invited a motion to adjourn, which was made by Jody at 6:50 pm. It was seconded by Maranda and passed unanimously by voice vote of the Board** with no further discussion.

Minutes recorded and typed by Martin A. Franke, LaGrange County Library Board Secretary
