

LaGrange County Public Library Board Meeting  
Thursday, September 21, 2023  
**LaGrange County Public Library Community Room, Main Branch  
LaGrange, IN**

Others Present: Richard Kuster, Anna Mendoza

**Public Hearing Concerning LaGrange County Library Budget convened by President Sam Plew at 5:33 pm**

Board members present: Sam Plew, Rita Lehner, Maranda Randol, Jody Blake, Jerry White, Michelle Chrisman and Martin Franke

Board members absent: None

Others present: Richard Kuster, Anna Mendoza

Richard presented the completed budget proposal as Resolution 2023-9-1, making a few general observations and comparisons with last year's budget. **Jerry moved and Maranda seconded adoption of the budget proposal as submitted. The 2024 budget was adopted by unanimous consent of the Board with no further discussion.**

The Budget Hearing was adjourned by Sam Plew, **moved by Jody Blake, seconded by Rita Lehner, and accepted by unanimous voice vote of the Board at 5:40 pm.**

**President Sam Plew convened the monthly public meeting of the Board of Directors for the LaGrange County Public Library System Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 5:41 pm.**

Sam directed Board members to the submitted minutes of the August 2023 meeting. After review, the minutes were adopted as presented. **Jerry moved approval of the minutes, Jody seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote of the Board.**

**Sam invited public comment.** As no members of the public were present, nothing was offered.

**Treasurer's Report:**

- Richard reviewed the Treasurer's Report, noting that Library assets exceed the bond still to be paid on the library building that was built in 2011. Our income stream is healthy and adequate to meet the needs of the organization. LaGrange County Public Library. The Trust Indiana investment is currently paying 5.3% return. Rainy Day Fund balance stands at \$679,098.
- **Rita moved and Maranda seconded the motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for September. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously by voice vote of the Board of Directors.**
- Reports & Claims was presented by Anna Mendoza. Checks to be paid #29581-29635 in the amount of \$119,519.47. No questions or discussion by the Board upon review. **Jerry moved to pay the claims as presented, seconded by Rita; motion approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board.**

**Director's Report:**

- Budget: Richard reported that all necessary action concerning the adoption of the 2024 Budget had been accomplished in the Budget Hearing which immediately preceded the Board meeting. The Budget will now be submitted to the Department of Local Government and Finance for approval.
- 2024 Insurance Package for the LCPL has been concluded with Hostetler & Young with a policy from Farmer's Mutual Insurance Co. The cost for the coming year is \$13,331.00. Michelle Chrisman asked if this was paid in an annual lump sum payment. Richard answered that the payment could be made

biannually, but the last year or two the insurance payment has been made in a lump sum. **Jerry moved that the Board authorize the payment of the insurance package at \$13,331.00, motion seconded by Rita and approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board.**

- Wi-Fi service for the Library system is subsidized heavily by the state program entitled E-Rate, reported by Richard. Richard recommended upgrading this service, which will provide faster internet service. The total cost of the service for next year will be \$19,768, all of this to be provided by E-Rate except for \$2425.00. **Rita moved to authorize this payment, seconded by Jody and approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board with no further discussion.**
- Richard reported that the architect that has been engaged to develop and expansion plan for the Shipshewana Branch met with Anna and himself the week before the September Library Board meeting. He is planning to meet with the Board at the October meeting. No action taken concerning this issue.
- The Collection stands at 143,710 items and growing.
- Statistical Report: 41,181 items circulated in August. Tubs are once again being delivered to Amish Schools. Circulation doubled since July. Richard noted that total circulation is 69% children's related collection items. The goal for circulation is to check out 10 items per month per county resident.
- Staffing Report: The Library system currently employs 32 staff, both full and part time. With current levels of operation as a Class A Indiana Library System, we need to move toward 38 staff in the next year. As part of the staff report, Richard presented a Resolution to establish a standardized scale of compensation and classification for staff. This will also include a system for awarding bonuses at year's end. There was considerable discussion concerning the Staffing Resolution. Jerry moved to approve the Salary portion of the Resolution, seconded by Jody. There was further discussion concerning staff bonuses. Jody asked if this Resolution covered every year or just the current one. The Resolution affects 2023 only. Sam questioned the amount the bonuses would equal, and if bonuses would be standard across the board. Richard answered Sam's concerns. With a motion on the table, and a considerable time elapsed since the motion and second had been made, Martin called for the motion to acted upon. Sam called the motion, which was approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board.
- HVAC system: New control unit installed at a cost exceeding \$17,000. Richard called the Board's attention to utility bills of the last month, which were in excess of \$12,000. Jerry commented that under normal operating conditions, the upgraded control unit for the HVAC system would pay for itself in about 4 month's time. No board action was necessary, as this expenditure was approved at the August meeting.
- Richard asked to reschedule the Board Special Planning Retreat, as the date chosen did not suit everyone. It was decided to hold the meeting at the LaGrange County Library, main branch, on the evening of Thursday, October 12, 2023, beginning at 5:30 pm. The meeting is anticipated to last around 3 hours, and will focus on the continuing long-term plan for the Library system.

**There were no Committee Reports.** The standing Board committees have been dissolved.

Michelle Chrisman reported that she would need to resign from the Board as of October 1 due to work/board scheduling conflicts. Her resignation was accepted with regret by Sam Plew, president. A replacement for Michelle's vacant seat on the Board will be solicited from the Lakeland School Corporation School Board.

Michelle mentioned that she was concerned about the condition of a large soft maple tree on the north side of the Library in LaGrange. Martin agreed to look at the tree after the meeting.

Sam would like to see the Library's logo on the back side of the new sign located on the north-east corner of the library lawn. He also asked about the use of the new Oculus system, and suggested we promote that collection item more aggressively to stimulate more consistent use. The installation of an irrigation system for landscaping on the property of the Main Branch is still delayed.

There was no Correspondence to the Board.

There was no new business to discuss.

Sam entertained a motion to adjourn. **Jody moved to adjourn the meeting, Rita seconded, approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board. Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Martin A. Franke

Martin Franke, Board Secretary

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