

**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Library Board meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Dr. Marvin Curtis, Library Board President.

**PRESENT**

Marvin Curtis - President (via Zoom)  
Alan Feldbaum - Secretary  
Nicole Garcia - Member  
Christine Pochert Ringle - Member  
Terry Rensberger - Member (via Zoom)  
Ann Rosen - Member

**ABSENT**

Dr. Ruth Warren - Vice President

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Stephanie Murphy - Executive Director  
Onjanette Dancler - Chief Financial Officer  
Jennifer Henecke - Chief Engagement Officer  
Karen Mann - Chief Resource Officer  
Rona Plummer - Chief Public Service Officer  
Lisa O'Brien - Director of Development  
Kara Yeomans - Director of Human Resources  
Charles Burnside - Public Safety Manager  
Melody Lutz - Education & Programming Manager  
James Masters - Legal Counsel

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approval of the Library Board minutes of the meeting held on December 19, 2022
- b. Declare Excess Withdrawn Library Materials & Computers donated to the Friends of the Library
- c. Personnel Changes
- d. Bill List
- e. Grants

Ms. Pochert Ringle moved and Ms. Rosen seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. Dr. Curtis polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Garcia - Aye; Mr. Feldbaum - Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle - Aye; Mr. Rensberger - Aye; Ms. Rosen - Aye; and Dr. Curtis - Aye. The motion carried.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

About 1,200 kindergarteners visited Main Library recently as a part of the SB READY program. Their visits include signing each student up for a library card and checking out a book, exploring the children's area of Main, and a storytime.

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Candacy Taylor, author of *The Overground Railroad*, was the Library's Black History Month author for 2023 and gave a presentation on the history of Green Books. The Library also recently hosted the Jewish Federation's event with the Anti-Defamation League to discuss the rise of antisemitism.

Earlier in February, about 2,000 people enjoyed the events of Science Alive, held in the Community Learning Center.

The Library continues to work with Navarre Middle School, and a "Welcome Back" party is planned for Western Branch on Monday, March 6, when the four weeks are up and students are welcomed back to the branch after school.

Mr. Feldbaum motioned and Ms. Rosen seconded to approve the Director's Report as presented. Dr. Curtis polled the Board: Dr. Garcia - Aye; Mr. Feldbaum - Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle - Aye; Mr. Rensberger - Aye; Ms. Rosen - Aye; and Dr. Curtis - Aye. The motion carried.

#### **PATRON ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

Gate count increased 24% compared to the previous year, though the number is still at about 50% of what it was in 2019 before the renovation of Main Library and the COVID-19 pandemic. There was also an increase in signups of new cardholders and an increase in the circulation of physical materials during January 2023.

Ms. Pochert Ringle moved that the Board approve the Patron Engagement Report as presented, and Mr. Rensberger seconded. Dr. Curtis polled the Board: Dr. Garcia - Aye; Mr. Feldbaum - Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle - Aye; Mr. Rensberger - Aye; Ms. Rosen - Aye; and Dr. Curtis - Aye. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Capital Assets report was recently completed, and the report says the Library has about \$95 million in assets currently.

Ms. Rosen moved and Ms. Pochert Ringle seconded to approve the Financial Report. Dr. Curtis polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Garcia - Aye; Mr. Feldbaum - Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle - Aye; Mr. Rensberger - Aye; Ms. Rosen - Aye; and Dr. Curtis - Aye. The motion carried.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business to come before the Board.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **a. Internal Controls Certification**

To comply with the State Board of Accounts, the Library now requires all staff to participate in training in Internal Controls. The Board is asked to certify that this training is being provided for the Library staff.

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Ms. Pochert Ringle motioned and Ms. Rosen seconded to certify that Library staff are receiving Internal Controls training as outlined by the Indiana State Board of Accounts. Dr. Curtis polled the Board: Dr. Garcia - Aye; Mr. Feldbaum - Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle - Aye; Mr. Rensberger - Aye; Ms. Rosen - Aye; and Dr. Curtis - Aye. The motion carried unanimously.

*We the duly appointed Board of Trustees for the St. Joseph County Public Library certify that training concerning internal controls standards and procedures as required by IC 5-11-1-27(g)(2) is in place as of this date for all current employees and that procedures are in place within the Human Resources Department for all new employees to receive this required training as part of their new hire orientation process.*

**b. Affirm ULC Declaration of Democracy**

Mr. Feldbaum moved to affirm the Urban Libraries Council's Declaration of Democracy, and Dr. Garcia seconded the motion. Dr. Curtis polled the Board: Dr. Garcia - Aye; Mr. Feldbaum - Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle - Aye; Mr. Rensberger - Aye; Ms. Rosen - Aye; and Dr. Curtis - Aye. The motion carried unanimously.

*Democracy is under siege throughout the world and close to home. Daily, we witness assaults on basic freedoms and human rights we've long cherished as books are banned, programs and events are canceled, disinformation and misinformation spread unchecked and racism is institutionalized. Democracy's future is diminished when people's access to power, information, a diversity of voices and the ability to influence policy are restricted. As cornerstones of democracy, it is incumbent upon libraries to stand up against all efforts to impede the democratic process and limit the full participation in civic life.*

*Banning books through policy and legislation is one such example of the challenges facing us. These efforts have unfortunately met with success in some parts of the United States as lawmakers codify restrictions on reading material – and we strongly stand against the furtherance of such restrictive policymaking.*

*As leaders of North America's public libraries, we are committed to preserving, protecting and advancing the highest hopes and ideals of democracy so all members of our communities may fully participate in the democratic process. To meaningfully participate in society, people need access to a broad range of information and ideas, as well as opportunities for open, uncensored discourse to hear, read, debate and learn from each other's perspectives.*

*It is for this reason that libraries as trusted institutions in their communities join to advance this Declaration and commit to the following:*

- *Educating and informing the public about the rights afforded to them in the United States Constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, among them the freedom of religion, thought, speech, expression, belief, the press, peaceful assembly and association.*
- *Encouraging an active citizenry where all are engaged in creating an equitable and just society where everyone may realize their potential as individuals within the community.*

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- *Serving as a convener for and facilitator of civic engagement and civil discourse, where all voices may be heard and respect is displayed for community members' diverse opinions, thoughts, histories and cultural heritage.*
- *Increasing efforts to fight misinformation and disinformation, providing reliable resources and seeking new ways to help patrons find verifiable and accurate information.*
- *Leveraging programming, collections and other resources to promote human dignity, open dialogue and respect for diverse viewpoints, civil rights, and all other protections and freedoms fundamental to democracies, and based on the conviction that "laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind", holding fast to the expectation that "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice", and that "the Just Society will be one in which the rights of minorities will be safe from the whims of intolerant majorities."*

*We resolve to continue to create spaces where entering our doors is an act of participating in democracy, where people can read and learn freely from all points of view, make up their own minds and engage in their communities. We stand as proud leaders of libraries, and as such, we will continue to guard democracy's great promise and ensure all those we serve are included in its fulfillment.*

#### **c. Fee Change**

The Library proposes updating the damaged materials billing procedures. The proposal eliminates the current \$5.00 processing fee charged to patrons for damaged materials, as well as allowing patrons to pay what they can.

Mr. Rensberger moved and Ms. Rosen seconded to approve the proposed Fee Change. Dr. Curtis polled the Board on the motion: Dr. Garcia - Aye; Mr. Feldbaum - Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle - Aye; Mr. Rensberger - Aye; Ms. Rosen - Aye; and Dr. Curtis - Aye. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to come before the Board.

#### **HEARING OF VISITORS**

There were no visitors present at the Board meeting who wished to address the Board.

#### **NEWS AND EDUCATION ITEMS**

Melody Lutz, Manager of the Library's Education & Programming department, spoke to the Board about the Library's newer model of programming. With the Education & Programming department, the Library moved to a system of centralized programming. The department leads the Library's major four yearly programs, develops core programs like storytimes and STEAM labs, and builds seasonal menu programs for branches to choose from, according to what works well for that branch's community. Education & Programming also handles the Library's outreach within the community.

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**NEXT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING DATES:**

- Library Board Meeting, Monday March 27, 2023, 4:15 p.m. River Park Branch, 2022 East Mishawaka Avenue, South Bend IN 46615.
- Library Board Meeting, Monday April 24, 2023, 4:15 p.m. St. Joseph County Public Library Community Learning Center, 2nd floor, Beutter-Kernan Hall, 305 S. Michigan Street, South Bend IN 46601.
- Library Board Meeting, Monday May 22, 2023, 4:15 p.m. St. Joseph County Public Library Community Learning Center, 2nd floor, Beutter-Kernan Hall, 305 S. Michigan Street, South Bend IN 46601.
- Library Board Meeting, Monday June 26, 2023, 4:15 p.m. St. Joseph County Public Library Community Learning Center, 2nd floor, Beutter-Kernan Hall, 305 S. Michigan Street, South Bend IN 46601.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no more business to come before the Board, Dr. Curtis asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Pochert Ringle moved and Ms. Rosen seconded to adjourn the Board meeting. Dr. Curtis polled the Board: Dr. Garcia - Aye; Mr. Feldbaum - Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle - Aye; Mr. Rensberger - Aye; Ms. Rosen - Aye; and Dr. Curtis - Aye. The motion carried. The St. Joseph County Public Library Board meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

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**Marvin Curtis, President**

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**Ruth Warren, Vice President**

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**Alan Feldbaum, Secretary**

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**Nicole Garcia, Member**

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**Christine Pochert Ringle, Member**

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**Terry Rensberger, Member**

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**Ann Rosen, Member**