

**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
ANNUAL LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, August 25, 2025**

The St. Joseph County Public Library Board of Trustees will hold an executive session on Monday, August 25, 2025 at 4:15PM in SJCPL Community Learning Center, Ballroom B, 305 S. Michigan St., South Bend, IN 46601 The Board of Trustees of St. Joseph County Public Library will meet in Executive Session as per Indiana Code 5-14-1.5-6.1(b) (2) (D) litigation.

The St. Joseph County Public Library Board of Trustees hereby certifies that no matters were discussed in the executive session other than the subject matter specified in the public notice announcing the meeting.

Ruth Warren, President

Nicole Garcia, Vice President

Alan Feldbaum, Secretary

Marvin Curtis, Member

Christine Pochert Ringle, Member

Terry Rensberger, Member

Rhonda Richards, Member

Also present was:

- Ms. Stephanie Murphy, St. Joseph County Public Library Executive Director

The above signatures indicate meeting attendance.

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CALL TO ORDER

The Library Board meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Ruth Warren, Library Board President.

PRESENT

Ruth Warren - President
Nicole Garcia - Vice President
Alan Feldbaum – Secretary
Marvin Curtis – Member
Christine Pochert Ringle – Member
Terry Rensberger – Member
Rhonda Richards – Member

ABSENT

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Stephanie Murphy - Executive Director
Onjanette Dancier - Chief Financial Officer
Karen Mann – Chief Resource Officer
Dawn Matthews – Director of Patron Experience
Lisa O'Brien - Director of Special Projects
Kara Yeomans – Chief People Officer
Heidi Lovett – Youth Services Senior Manager
Myra Reid - Legal Counsel

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the Regular Library Board and the Library Board of Finance minutes of the meeting held on July 28, 2025.
- b. Declare Excess Withdrawn Library Materials & Computers donated to the Friends of the Library
- c. Personnel Changes
- d. Bill List
- e. Gifts and Grants

Ms. Pochert Ringle moved to approve the Consent Agenda with a correction to the bill list. Mr. Rensberger seconded the motion. Dr. Warren polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Curtis – Aye; Dr. Garcia – Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle – Aye; Mr. Feldbaum – Aye; Mr. Rensberger – Aye; Ms. Richards – Aye; Dr. Warren – Aye. The motion carried.

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Stephanie Murphy gave the director's report. Ms. Murphy began her report with updates on the construction projects. She shared that Centre will be open on September 2nd; and will be having the Chamber of Commerce for a ribbon cutting and grand re-opening event on September 9. Ms. Murphy shared that the LaSalle project is making progress and that the furniture is ready to be ordered. She moved on to share that the Western design is complete and will be going out to bid shortly. Ms. Murphy then shared that one of the elevators at Main has had a hydraulic lift go out. This was not a part of the previously approved elevator repairs, and will have the elevator out of service for twelve weeks. In the meantime, the facilities manager is researching solutions. Ms. Murphy then moved on to share that Scott Sandberg, the reference and database librarian, was quoted in a recent article for the NWIndiana Business Magazine. Ms. Murphy closed her report by sharing about the magnets with QR codes that lead to the next week of events that were passed out at ArtBeat.

Mr. Rensberger moved to approve the Director's report. Ms. Richards seconded the motion. Dr. Warren polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Curtis – Aye; Dr. Garcia – Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle – Aye; Mr. Feldbaum – Aye; Mr. Rensberger – Aye; Ms. Richards – Aye; Dr. Warren - Aye. The motion carried.

PATRON ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Ms. Dawn Matthews presented the patron engagement report. Ms. Matthews began her report by sharing about the three-day Girls Rock program that was hosted for 3rd through 8th grade girls. She then moved on to share that there were 61,000 visits, and circulation remained steady with 183,000 checked out materials.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Onjanette Dancier gave the financial report. Ms. Dancier began her report by sharing a brief update on TrustIN. Ms. Dancier then moved on to share that the budget will be presented in the September meeting. There was a brief discussion that followed.

Mr. Feldbaum moved to approve the Patron Engagement and Financial reports. Ms. Richards seconded the motion. Dr. Warren polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Curtis – Aye; Dr. Garcia – Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle – Aye; Mr. Feldbaum – Aye; Mr. Rensberger – Aye; Ms. Richards – Aye; Dr. Warren – Aye. The motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to come before the board.

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NEW BUSINESS

a. Purchasing Policy

Ms. Onjanette Dancler presented the purchasing policy. Ms. Dancler shared that the policy is required, and primarily a restatement of Indiana public purchasing laws as of July 1, 2025.

Mr. Feldbaum moved to approve the purchasing policy. Dr. Garcia seconded the motion. Dr. Warren polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Curtis – Aye; Dr. Garcia – Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle – Aye; Mr. Feldbaum – Aye; Mr. Rensberger – Aye; Ms. Richards – Aye; Dr. Warren – Aye. The motion carried.

b. Resolution to Transfer Funds

Ms. Onjanette Dancler presented the two resolutions to transfer funds.

**Resolution to Transfer Funds
Within the Library Operating Fund Major Category**

WHEREAS, it has been shown that certain existing appropriations in the Library Operating Fund now need to be transferred from one line to another,

We the library board of St. Joseph County Public Library do resolve that the following transfers be made within the Library Operating Fund:

Transfer from Personal Services

121 Leadership Salary \$ **125,000**

Transfer to Personal Services

121.010 Professionals Salary \$**125,000**

Transfer from Services and Charges

317 Other Services and Charges: Miscellaneous Services \$ **115,000**

Transfer to Services and Charges

320 Other Services and Charges: Administrative Software Services \$ **115,000**

Transfer from Services and Charges

322 Other Services and Charges: Postage \$ **3,150**

Transfer to Services and Charges

325 Other Services and Charges: Freight & Express \$ **3,000**

325.100 other Services and Charges: Tariffs **\$150.00**

Transfer from Services and Charges

324 Other Services and Charges: Professional Meetings \$ **10,000**

Transfer to Services and Charges

323 Other Services and Charges: Travel Expenses \$ **10,000**

Transfer from Services and Charges

361 Other Services and Charges: Bldg & Structural Repairs \$ **30,000**

Transfer to Services and Charges

351 Other Services and Charges: Gas Services \$ **25,000**

354 Other Services and Charges: Waste Disposal Services **\$5,000**

Transfer from Services and Charges

371 Other Services and Charges: Rental of Real Estate **\$5,000**

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Transfer to Services and Charges

353. Other Services and Charges: Water & Sewer Services **\$5,000**

Transfer from Services and Charges

430 Capital Outlays: Improvements other than Bldgs \$ **12,000**

Transfer to Services and Charges

371 Other Services and Charges: Rental of Real Estate **\$12,000**

Transfer from Capital Outlays

420 Capital Outlays: Buildings \$ **300,000**

Transfer To Capital Outlays

440 Capital Outlays: Furniture & Equipment \$ **300,000**

Transfer From Capital Outlays

420 Capital Outlays: Buildings \$ **75,000**

Transfer to Services and Charges

315 Other Services and Charges: Grounds & Building Services \$ **75,000**

Transfer from Services and Charges

313 Other Services and Charges: Legal Services \$ **1,500**

Transfer to Services and Charges

318 Other Services and Charges: Security Services \$ **1,500**

Transfer from Services and Charges

391 Other Services and Charges: Dues \$ **750**

Transfer to Services and Charges

393 Other Services and Charges: Taxes & Assessments \$ **750**

ADOPTED THIS 25 DAY OF August, 2025

**Resolution to Transfer Funds
Within the Library Rainy Day and LIRF Fund Category**

WHEREAS, it has been shown that certain existing appropriations in the Rainy Day Fund and in the Library Improvement Reserve Fund (LIRF) now need to be transferred from one line to another,

We the library board of St. Joseph County Public Library do resolve that the following transfers be made within the Library **Rainy Day Fund**:

Transfer from Capital Outlays

430 Capital Outlays: Rainy Day Improvements Other than Buildings \$ **3,000**

Transfer to Supplies

216 Other Supplies Rainy Day - Other Supplies **\$3,000**

Transfer from Capital Outlays

430 Capital Outlays: Rainy Day Improvements Other than Buildings \$ **30,000**

Transfer to Services

312 Services: Rainy Day - Rainy Day Engineering/Architect **\$30,000**

Transfer from Capital Outlays

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430 Capital Outlays: Rainy Day Improvements Other than Buildings \$ 100,000
Transfer to Capital Outlays
420 Capital Outlays: Rainy Day - Buildings \$ 100,000

And we the library board of St. Joseph County Public Library do resolve that the following transfers be made within the **Library Improvement Reserve Fund**:

Transfer from Capital Outlays
430 Capital Outlays: Improvements Other than Buildings \$ 44,448.27
Transfer to Capital Outlays
420 Capital Outlays: Buildings \$ 44,448.27

ADOPTED THIS 25 DAY OF August, 2025

Mr. Rensberger moved to approve the resolutions to transfer funds. Ms. Richards seconded the motion. Dr. Warren polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Curtis – Aye; Dr. Garcia – Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle – Aye; Mr. Feldbaum – Aye; Mr. Rensberger – Aye; Ms. Richards – Aye; Dr. Warren – Aye. The motion carried

c. LAS Furniture Package

Ms. Stephanie Murphy presented the LaSalle furniture package. Ms. Murphy shared that this package will be with Office Interiors though funding using the bond proceeds and is remaining within the budget.

Mr. Rensberger moved to approve the LaSalle furniture package. Dr. Garcia seconded the motion. Dr. Warren polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Curtis – Aye; Dr. Garcia – Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle – Aye; Mr. Feldbaum – Aye; Mr. Rensberger – Aye; Ms. Richards – Aye; Dr. Warren – Aye. The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to come before the board.

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATES

Heidi Lovett presented on the Discovery Centers for the Strategic Plan Updates.

Composition of the Board

Mr. Alan Feldbaum, Library Board Secretary, presented the Resolution of the St. Joseph County Public Library Board Regarding Composition of the Board of Directors.

**RESOLUTION OF THE ST. JOSEPH COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
REGARDING COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

RECITALS

- A. The St. Joseph County Public Library is an Indiana Municipal Corporation, and is operated subject to Indiana Law (IC 36-12-2-2) (“Library”) including but not limited to the selection and number of Directors on a Board of Directors (IC 36-12-2-9) (“Library Board”)

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- B. The South Bend Community School Corporation is an Indiana Municipal Corporation, and is operated subject to Indiana Law (IC 20-26-1 et seq) ("School Corp"), including but not limited to the election of a Board of Trustees by the residents who reside in the School Corp District. ("Trustees")
- C. Indiana Law permits both the Library Board and Trustees to adopt By-Law or Policies and Procedures. The By-laws adopted by the Library Board and the Policies adopted by the Board of Trustees can not conflict with State Law and in such case State Law controls.
- D. The Policies of the School Corp only bind the School Corp and not the Library as State law has granted specific powers to the Library and not the School Corp (IC 20-26-3-4 (2)).
- E. The Board of Trustees can appoint 2 members to the Library Board (IC 36-12-2-9 (A))
- F. The Board of Trustees by its own internal Policies has delegated the appointment of its 2 members of the Library Board to the President, but under IC 36-12-2-9 (A) those appointments are considered to be made by the Board of Trustees, and not the President.
- G. Currently there are 2 members appointed by the Board of Trustees serving on the Library Board, and therefore the Board of Trustees is not entitled to any further appointments.
- H. In a communication from Counsel for the School Corp dated August 8, 2025 to the Executive Director of the Library Board containing a notarized form signed by the President of the School Corp and dated August 8, 2025 appointing William Sniadecki ("Sniadecki") to the Library Board to serve a 4 year term beginning on January 1, 2025. ("Attempted Appointment")
- I. On the same page as the Attempted Appointment a notarized form of Oath signed by Sniadecki, and dated August 8, 2025.
- J. On its face this Appointment violated State Law, IC 5-4-1-1.2 (c) which requires an individual who is appointed to an office must take the oath within thirty (30) days AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE TERM OF OFFICE (emphasis supplied)
- K. Even if the oath of office by Sniadecki had been timely taken and filed, there are other reasons the appointment of Sniadecki is void and of no legal effect:
 - (i) The School Board at its June 23, 2025 meeting considered a Resolution to remove Library Board Member Ruth Warren which Resolution was not approved due to the fact not enough members of the Board of Trustees voted in favor of the Resolution, thereby permitting the appointment of Ruth Warren by the President of the School Corp in November 2024 effective January 1, 2025 to remain in full force and effect.
 - (ii) At the same public hearing on June 23, 2025 the Board of Trustees failed to find a cause required by State Law for removal of a library board member specifically listed in IC 36-12-2-20 (a)(1)-(2).

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- (iii) This action by the appointing authority (Board of Trustees) blocked the ability of President McCullough of the Board of Trustees to unilaterally make the appointment of William Sniadecki to the Library Board.
 - (iv) Since the removal of Ruth Warren failed there was no vacancy in the office of Library Board member, and the Library Board has never informed the appointing authority of any vacancy in the membership of the Library Board due to a failure of the member (Ruth Warren) to attend 6 consecutive Library Board regular meetings since Ms Warren has been an active member of the Library Board as its President. IC 36-12-20 (b)
 - (v) The common law case, *McGuirk v. State*, 201 Ind. 650, 169 N.E.521 (In S. Ct, 1930) cited by counsel for the Board of Trustees at its June 23, 2025 in support of the Board of Trustees passing the Resolution to remove Ruth Warren because at the time of her appointment there was no vacancy on the Library Board ignores the fact the appointment of Ruth Warren was not effective until January 1, 2025 when there was a vacancy
 - (vi) Rather, *McGuirk*, supports the conclusion the appointment of William Sniadecki to be a member of the Library Board does not pass muster under State Law since at the time of the Sniadecki appointment there was no vacancy on the Library Board.
 - (vii) The By-laws of the Library Board in Article V Section 1 provides the Library will not employ the spouse, child, parent or sibling of Director or any member of the Board. Since the sibling of William Sniadecki is an employee of the Library Board William Sniadecki may not serve as a Director.
- L. The Library Board has consulted with outside counsel, Richard A. Nussbaum, II and Sylvia Watson, General Counsel for the Indiana State Library, a municipal corporation created by the Indiana Legislature and operated pursuant to IC 36-12-11 et seq., and both share the opinion:
- (i) Ruth Warren was validly appointed pursuant to State Law to the Library Board for the term beginning on January 1, 2025, and is currently a member and Officer of the Library Board in good standing under State Law.
 - (ii) The appointment by Jeanette McCullough of William Sniadecki does not comply with State Law and is therefore void and of no legal effect.
- M. Mr. William Sniadecki sent a certified letter to the Library Board making a demand upon the Library Board to seat him as a member of the Library Board within 5 business days of receipt of the letter which was received August 19, 2025.
- N. The purpose of this Resolution is to formally deny the request of William Sniadecki to become a member of the Library Board based on the facts and law asserted in this Resolution.
- O. Mr. Sniadecki has threatened to file a lawsuit based on certain grounds described in the certified letter. Outside Counsel for the Library Board and the General Counsel of the

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State Library Board do not find any legal basis for him to be seated as a Library Board member.

- P. Mr. Sniadecki has made an accusation IC 34-17-1 which provides for an information to be filed by the Prosecuting Attorney or a private person if there has been activity which is described in IC 34-17-1-1. Outside Counsel has made the St. Joseph County Prosecutor, Ken Cotter of Mr. Sniadecki's allegations and encouraged Prosecutor Cotter to review the facts and circumstances described in this Resolution as the Library Board expectation will be the Prosecuting Attorney will find no basis for filing an Information.

On Motion duly made and seconded the Library Board approves the following:

BE IT RESOLVED, the Recitals are incorporated into the operative provisions of the Resolutions as if fully set out herein;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the demand of William Sniadecki to be seated as a member of the Library Board is **DENIED**;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Library Board expresses its intentions to vigorously defend any cause of action which attempts to seat William Sniadecki as Library Board member, and to seek to recover all costs of defense from anyone who seeks through legal action to seat William Sniadecki as a Library Board member consistent with Indiana Law and in particular IC 34-17-3-7.

Dated as of August 25, 2025

Dr. Curtis moved to approve the Resolution of the St. Joseph County Public Library Board Regarding Composition of the Board of Directors. Ms. Richards seconded the motion. Dr. Ruth Warren recused herself from voting. Mr. Feldbaum polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Curtis – Aye; Dr. Garcia – Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle – Aye; Mr. Rensberger – Aye; Ms. Richards – Aye; Mr. Feldbaum – Aye. The motion carried.

HEARING OF VISITORS

There were six visitors who addressed the Board.

NEXT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING DATES:

- Library Board Meeting, Monday September 29, 2025, 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.

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ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the Board. Dr. Curtis moved and Mr. Rensberger seconded to adjourn the Library Board meeting. Dr. Warren polled the Board for the vote: Dr. Curtis – Aye; Dr. Garcia – Aye; Ms. Pochert Ringle – Aye; Mr. Feldbaum – Aye; Mr. Rensberger – Aye; Ms. Richards – Aye; Dr. Warren – Aye. The motion carried.

The St. Joseph County Public Library Board meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Ruth Warren, President

Nicole Garcia, Vice President

Alan Feldbaum, Secretary

Marvin Curtis, Member

Christine Pochert Ringle, Member

Terry Rensberger, Member

Rhonda Richards, Member