

LA PORTE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MINUTES JULY 15, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Ellison called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present**

Karen Ellison – President  
Michelle Shirk – Vice President  
Dave Decker  
Dara Jeffries

**Absent**

Corey Campbell – Secretary  
Marie Gilliland  
Scott Siefker

A quorum was present to conduct the business of the Library.

**Also in Attendance**

Fonda Owens – Director  
Anthony Novak - Legal Counsel  
Cindy Lane –Treasurer

**CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA**

No additions or amendments to the agenda were presented.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

President Ellison called for questions or comments from the public. There were none.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

President Ellison called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Minutes of the June 17, 2021 Board of Trustees Workshop Meeting  
Minutes of the June 17, 2021 Board of Trustees Meeting  
Manager Reports  
Financial Report  
Approval and Payment of Claims ---per APV Batch July 15, 2021

Dave Decker moved and Michelle Shirk seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.  
The vote was taken and the motion carried.

**REPORTS**

**Director**

Director Fonda Owens reported that the LPCPL Exchange Building officially opened on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Owens is still working to complete a few outstanding items such as the locking mechanism with the assist door, and other punch list items. The door count for the first three days totaled 268 visits by community members.

Staff are assisting visitors with creating accounts for the Makerspace and helping customers sign up for various classes. Staff held their first pen turning class which was quite successful. Ms. Owens will be meeting with Exchange staff to work out the class scheduling plans.

LA PORTE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MINUTES JULY 15, 2021

Director Owens met with Chris Chockley from JPR and the La Porte City engineer regarding the three capital projects slated to start this year. Based upon recommendations from the City engineer, JPR will be revising the plans for the parking lot. The City had particular comments regarding storm water run-off. The City suggested constructing a bio swale which would also help to tie the two block properties together.

Ms. Owens also met with a homeowner that lives on Maple Avenue directly across from the proposed parking lot location. They requested that the Library include some type of fencing or tree planting on the South side of the lot near the alley to block the view of the homes that face Harrison St. Ms. Owens did explain that there are height limits on plantings as regulated by City code.

Director Owens received a second draft of the Strategic Plan for her review and will work with MCLS to make updates to the draft.

Ms. Owens gave a tour to Tony Rodriguez, La Porte County Economic Development Director, of the LPCPL Exchange. She also gave a tour to Unity Foundation Board members. Attendees were very excited about the new facility and working with the Library.

Ms. Owens is working on the budget process for 2022. She plans to have a draft of the budget for board review at the August 19<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting. She reported that the growth quotient allowed for the 2022 budget is 4.3%.

Ms. Owens met with representatives of the La Porte Noguchi Group. The group is planning details for the ribbon-cutting for the Noguchi mural. Ideas for the event include a discussion panel that includes members of the Asian Cultural Center at the Art Institute, a birthday cake shaped like a Noguchi table, an art contest for students and a "Noguchi November" series at the Library.

### **Legal Counsel**

Attorney Anthony Novak reported a quiet month from a legal perspective. He reported that the back taxes owed on the recent properties purchased by the Library have been paid in full by the previous owners.

Mr. Novak spoke with Ms. Owens and Mrs. Lane regarding proposed updates to the PTO Policy to be presented later in the meeting.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **Strategic Planning Update**

Director Owens reported that she hopes to have a final draft of the plan ready for the August Board meeting. As previously reported, Ms. Owens will meet with MCLS the week of July 19<sup>th</sup> to work through the latest draft. Their goal will be to narrow down the items in the plan so as not to over extend Library staff time and efforts over the 3 year period.

#### **Design Firm – Bidding of Projects**

Ms. Owens requested permission from the Board to send out bids for the replacement of the Indiana Avenue step which will be under the \$150,000 public works threshold and the parking lot project which meets the requirements for a public works project. The timeline is to send bid documents out on August 13, 2021. Bids will be due on September 3, 2021 with a public meeting to open bids on the same day.

LA PORTE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MINUTES JULY 15, 2021

Michelle Shirk moved and Dara Jeffries seconded to authorize Director Owens to proceed with sending out bids for the parking lot and step replacements. The vote was taken and the motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Recommendation Regarding Compensation of Staff**

Michelle Shirk moved and Dave Decker seconded to approve the recommendation to implement longevity pay increases for Library staff as follows:

Initial Adjustment effective with the first pay in August of 2021: 2% increase for each 3 years of service in an employee's career with the Library up to a maximum of 21 years. Going forward, employees receive a 2% increase at each 3 year milestone of employment up to a maximum of 21 years, payable on the first pay following their employment anniversary. Employees whose adjustments or increases put them at the top end of the current wage range for the milestone year, receive a lump sum adjustment for the amount of the increase.

The vote was taken and the motion carried.

**Recommendation for Revisions to the Paid Time Off Policy**

Michelle Shirk moved and Dara Jeffries seconded to approve the revised PTO Policy as presented, excluding the word "always" in the third paragraph:

**Paid Time Off (PTO) Policy**

The following Paid Time Off (PTO) policy applies to Library employees based on hours worked per week.

Paid Time Off (PTO) provides employees with the ability to use PTO to meet personal needs, while recognizing individual responsibilities to manage paid time off. PTO may be used for vacation, illness, caring for children, school activities, medical/dental appointments, leave, personal business or emergencies, etc. This means developing a plan for taking vacation, as well as doctor's appointments and personal business. It also means holding some time in "reserve" for the unexpected, such as emergencies and illnesses.

Using PTO for unscheduled absences or for being tardy or leaving early can result in an employee's inability to meet their work schedule, which then becomes a performance issue. Please refer to the Library's policy regarding Excessive Absences/Tardiness/Early Quits.

Employees who exhaust all of their PTO prior to the end of the calendar year will be subject to the Library's Attendance policy and points accrual for any further absences, unless covered by other applicable leave policies. See Library policies on Family and Medical Leave, Personal Leave, and Attendance for more information.

It is not good management of PTO to come to work ill in order to save PTO for future time off. Employees who come to work with a communicable disease that poses a credible threat of transmission in the workplace, or are too ill otherwise to effectively perform their job duties for the day, will be sent home by their supervisor or HR, and the time off will be charged to the employee's PTO balance.

LA PORTE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MINUTES JULY 15, 2021

Procedures and Guidelines

PTO accrues on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year.

PTO may not be used in increments of less than thirty (30) minutes.

All PTO requires prior approval by the employee’s supervisor or Human Resources, except where prior approval is impossible due to serious illness or injury.

Employees who want to schedule PTO in the last half of the calendar year must request such time off by the end of August of that year. The purpose of this is to coordinate staffing due to the volume of requests for time off in November and December.

New employees who successfully complete a 3 month probationary period receive a pro-rated amount of PTO based on the employee’s regular work schedule and the amount of time worked from the first of the month following the end of the probationary period through December 31.

On January 1<sup>st</sup> following the new employee’s year of hire, PTO is based upon the PTO schedule for regular hours worked per week.

PTO is not permitted on days before or after a paid holiday without prior approval from the employee’s supervisor or Human Resources.

PTO cannot be used to increase an employee’s regular work hours.

PTO may not be accumulated from year to year.

Upon termination from employment, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, an employee will receive a payout of 50% of earned and unused PTO. No payment will be made for sick leave that is unused at the time of termination of employment.

Eligible employees will be entitled to paid time off on an annual basis in accordance with the following chart:

Amount of Paid Time Off (in hours)

Years of Service	Number of Hours Scheduled Per Week				
	Less than 20	20 to 29 hrs	30 to 39 hrs	40 hrs	Professional Employees
Less than 1 year	0	Pro-rated	Pro-rated	Pro-rated	Pro-rated
1 through 4 years	0	60	90	120	170

LA PORTE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MINUTES JULY 15, 2021

5 through 9 years	0	80	120	160	210
10+ years	0	100	150	200	250

Sick Leave Bank

At the end of a calendar year unused PTO hours may be transferred into a sick bank according to the following criteria. The maximum number of hours that may be transferred is the equivalent of 1 week of the employee's regular work hours. For example, an employee who regularly works 20 hours per week could transfer no more than 20 unused PTO hours.

The maximum amount of hours that can be accumulated in an employee's sick leave bank is equivalent to 10 weeks of the employee's regular work hours per week. For example, an employee who regularly works 20 hours per week can accumulate a maximum of 200 hours (20 x 10) in their sick leave bank. The maximum for an employee working 40 hours per week would be 400 hours (40 x 10).

Sick leave can be used for documented illness or injury only if PTO has been completely exhausted. Banked PTO will be applied to any qualified FMLA leave after all other PTO is used. All use of accumulated banked leave is subject to approval by Human Resources.

The vote was taken and the motion carried.

**Date Change for September Board of Trustees Meeting**

Dave Decker moved and Michelle Shirk seconded to change the date of the September Board of Trustees meeting to September 23, 2021. The vote was taken and the motion carried.

**QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

President Ellison called for questions or comments from the public. There were none.

**QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

President Ellison called for questions or comments from the Board. Dave Decker recommended that Director Owens forward a letter to the City regarding concern of the uneven sidewalk out in front of the LPCPL Exchange Building as a trip hazard.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dave Decker moved and Dara Jeffries seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 PM.