

La Porte County Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

November 21, 2024 at 5:30 PM CDT

904 Indiana Avenue, La Porte, IN 46350

Attendance

Present:

Dara Jeffries, Corey Campbell, Justin Holmquest, Nicole Florek and Karen Ellison

Also Attended

Fonda Owens, Director

Anthony Novak, Attorney

Absent:

Amy Jackson and Bonnie Snider

Call to Order

President Dara Jeffries called the meeting to order at 5:30PM

Public Forum

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

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes of October 17, 2024 2025 Budget Adoption Meeting
2. Minutes of October 17, 2024 Board of Trustees Meeting
3. Financial Report
4. Statistics Report

A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Corey Campbell to approve the consent agenda. The vote was taken and the motion carried.

Reports

Managers Reports

Toni Kester Bulger, Holly Trott and Pam Okosun shared highlights from their monthly reports.

Director

Director, Fonda Owens, reported that the 2025 budget was approved by the Department Local Government Finance. Also reported by Director Owens was the continuing work on the new strategic plan with focus on three pillars; Welcoming Spaces, Exceptional Service and Operational Integrity.

Director Owens reported that she attended the annual report and bookkeeping workshop that were presented by the Indiana State Library and Indiana State Board of Accounts. Annual Report changes will help with streamlining data collection but will impact previous years comparisons.

Director Owens also reported, there is a system software evaluation in progress with a goal of maximizing the use of the Microsoft 365 suite. Other software has been discontinued as a result of improving the use of Microsoft 365 products. One of these products is OnBoard. The document sharing

software that has been used for Board meetings for the last couple of years. Beginning in January Board documents will be shared via a Microsoft Sharepoint site.

Director Owens had meetings with La Porte Community Schools Corporation, AK Smith Center and Center for Workforce Innovations regarding the English as a Second Language classes support. The focus of the meetings is to find out what classes are available and to determine gaps in services.

Legal Counsel

Attorney Anthony Novak, informed the Board that forms for the Director's review will be sent to them. An executive session will take place at 5:00pm before the regular December Board meeting to discuss the Director's review.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

a. Minor Revision to the Volunteer Policy

A motion was made by Corey Campbell and seconded by Nicole Florek to approve changes made the La Porte County Public Library Volunteer Policy as presented:

La Porte County Public Library Volunteer Policy

Purpose

The La Porte County Public Library (LPCPL) Volunteer Program is a resource to the Library that provides valuable services to meet the needs of the customers, while allowing individuals the opportunity to contribute to their community in a manner that is meaningful to them. The Library uses volunteers to supplement the efforts of paid library staff in meeting demands for quality public service and aid the library in making the best use of its fiscal resources.

Policy

A volunteer is any individual, 12 years or older, who contributes time, energy, and talents directly or on behalf of LPCPL and is not paid by library funds.

Volunteers under the age of eighteen may need Parent/Guardian written permission before volunteering depending on the nature of the volunteer assignment.

Volunteers may also be a part of a group or organization that volunteers at the Library as a team of people.

Members of the La Porte County Public Library Friends of the Library are considered volunteers under this policy.

Individuals who are completing Court Ordered Community Service are also considered volunteers under this policy.

All volunteers are required to fill out a Volunteer Application Form, which can be submitted electronically through the library's website.

Background checks are an important aspect of the selection process to promote a safe environment for volunteers as well as for employees and visitors to the Library, to protect organizational assets such as people, property and information and to ascertain suitability for a volunteer assignment. Therefore, the La Porte County Public Library conducts background checks on all individuals 18 years and older who apply to volunteer for the Library. These checks are required for all individuals 18 and older that are members of the above referenced groups and organizations as well.

It should be noted that all LPCPL staff and those individuals who contract with the La Porte County Public Library to perform, entertain or instruct library customers shall be subject to a criminal history check.

The two types of checks are:

Criminal History Check

All volunteer applicants eighteen (18) years or older are required to undergo a criminal history check as a condition of a volunteering assignment. Having a criminal history of criminal conviction will not automatically preclude volunteer placement. The nature of the offense and its relevance to the particular volunteer assignment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Motor Vehicle Record Check

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles makes driving record information available online through Access Indiana to determine a volunteer or employment applicant's driving record and status. Any individuals accepting volunteer assignments that require operation of a motor vehicle will be required to undergo motor vehicle checks.

Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications in relation to the needs of LPCPL at any given time. All volunteers must be accepted by LPCPL prior to performance of assigned tasks. Acceptance of an application is at LPCPL's discretion.

Volunteers are expected to act in accordance with library policies and to reflect positive customer service attitudes to all library customers and staff.

Each approved volunteer is assigned to a supervisor. A partnership is created between the volunteer and supervisor to ensure good working relations and communication. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to provide on-the-job training and serve as a direct link between the volunteer and the rest of the staff.

All volunteers are required to read the LPCPL Volunteer Handbook in its entirety prior to beginning their volunteer placement. Each volunteer will participate in an orientation to the Library at which time any questions or concerns about the guidelines, policies, or procedures contained herein should be directed to the staff member providing orientation or to the Volunteer Coordinator before placement.

Volunteers agree that LPCPL may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with LPCPL, or to make changes in their volunteer assignment.

As adopted by the La Porte County Public Library Board of Trustees 09-19-2024

The vote was taken and the motion carried.

b. Revision to Code of Conduct Policy

A motion was made by Karen Ellison and seconded by Corey Campbell to approve revisions made the La Porte County Public Library Code of Conduct Policy as presented:

Purpose

The library serves all customers/users in an equal manner and is open to everyone. The Library's goal is to allow all customers to enjoy the Library facilities, materials and services in a secure, relaxing, and pleasing environment that supports education, reading, research, and learning.

For the Library to fulfill this mandate regulations must be set to govern conduct. These regulations also cover penalties for infractions and, when appropriate, removal from and denial of access to the Library.

Statement of Policy

No one may engage in conduct that interferes with anyone else's ability or right to use and benefit from the Library facilities.

Customers/users who engage in such conduct will receive a warning from the Library staff and/or an opportunity to cease the violation or leave the Library.

Illegal activity, willful or repeated violations of conduct or other posted Library regulations (e.g. computer use rules), may result in removal from the facility and/or suspension of Library privileges. Enforcement will be by Library staff and if necessary, local police departments as appropriate. Where authorized by Federal, State or local law, conduct violations may also result in arrest.

Requirements & Guidelines

The La Porte County Public Library strives to provide an environment for customers that:

- Is free of disruptive activity
- Has confidential access to library materials
- Has library materials that are complete and not defaced
- Has surroundings free from any kind of smoke and carelessly discarded waste materials
- Has quiet areas for individuals to study and to engage in research
- Has spaces that encourage learning on an individual and collaborative basis

Customer conduct is unacceptable if it:

- Impedes other persons from a timely use of facilities or materials
- Excludes others from using the library for its intended purpose
- Results in injury to oneself or others
- Results or may result in damage to library materials, building, or equipment

Enforcement

In order to preserve the peace and provide public access to library facilities, the library may

suspend access to the library for persons who fail to follow the Library's established behavior guidelines. The Library reserves the right at all times to immediately discharge a customer who is dangerous or in any way threatening library staff or other customers.

Examples of unacceptable conduct include may be found at laportelibrary.org on the Library Info tab under Policies, Fines and Fees link or at any customer service desk.

Examples of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

Behaviors that disturb the normal functioning of the Library:

- Engaging in illegal activities.
- Being in possession of or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while in the library.
- Smoking, including the use of electronic or vapor cigarettes, inside library facilities or within 8 feet of the library entrance.
- Consuming food or uncovered drinks during computer use or in non-designated food or drink areas. No customer is permitted to leave food and drink residue or otherwise create a custodial workload on library property.
- Creating loud noises that are disruptive to other customers is not allowed.
- Causing strong pervasive odors that constitute a nuisance to others is not permitted.
- Interfering with or disrupting service of computer networks, library services, or equipment.
- Failing to wear shoes or clothing that covers the upper and lower body.

Creating a disruptive or unsafe environment:

- Illegal behaviors such as acting in a lewd or lascivious manner; voyeurism; peeping.
- Harassing, threatening, assaulting, fighting, challenging to fight or intimidating staff or other customers, including physical, sexual, racial, or verbal abuse
- Bringing illegal weapons into the library
- Vandalizing library facilities, equipment, or materials
- Soliciting, petitioning, panhandling, or gambling
- Removing library materials without checkout
- Behaviors prohibited by other library policies

Inappropriate use of facilities or equipment:

- Using restrooms inappropriately, such as for shaving, bathing, laundering, or loitering
- Blocking aisles or any other passages in such a way as to prohibit free flow of pedestrians, strollers, or wheelchairs
- Using furniture or building facilities in ways which may cause damage or excessive or unreasonable wear, e.g. lying down, putting feet on the chairs/walls, using more than one seat per person, etc.
- Using library furniture or collections in a manner other than its intended purpose
- Using electronic devices or any other noisemakers that interfere with other library users, except when authorized by library staff

- Leaving young children unattended anywhere in the library, including the children's areas. A parent, guardian, or other responsible adult must accompany any children who do not know their first and last names, their phone number, and the first and last name of the person who brought them to the library
- Bringing any animals except service animals, or animals authorized by library staff, onto library property
- Running, riding skateboards, scooters, roller shoes, roller skates, roller blades, or similar devices inside library facilities or on library premises. Such items are permitted inside library facilities provided that they are carried, not ridden, and are stowed away from the public right of way.
- Bringing bicycles, unicycles, tricycles or other similar conveyances into library facilities, or leaving such conveyances at the entry or exit areas in a manner that blocks ingress or egress. This regulation does not apply to wheelchairs, other medical devices, strollers, or other similar devices, provided they are utilized and stored in a manner that does not restrict public access.
- Camping in library facilities or on library grounds. "Camping" refers to the use of library property for lying down, sleeping in a reclined position, living or accommodation purposes
- Customers may bring in up to two (2) bags that do not exceed the following dimensions: 26" x 4" x 4". More than two (2) bags, or bags that exceed 26" x 4" x 4", are prohibited.
- Customers shall not block aisles with personal items.
- Customers shall not leave personal items unattended on library premises at any time. If any item is left unattended for 30 minutes or more, or in the event an item appears to have been abandoned, then the Library reserves the unilateral right to remove and dispose of the items from Library premises.
- Misusing library spaces designated for particular customers. Such spaces vary by branch, and include, but are not limited to:
 - Children's Rooms Teen Rooms, Study Rooms, Makerspaces and Meeting Rooms
 - Certain computers and study rooms are designated for customers working individually and quietly, and other uses of these spaces are not permitted.
- Using the Internet in ways that interfere with a safe, welcoming and comfortable environment for the public and staff.

The vote was taken and the motion carried.

Presentation by Trudy Menke

a. Strategic Planning Discussion

Trudy Menke led the Library Board through a set of questions to gather their input on the new strategic plan.

Approval and Payment of Claims – APV Batch November 21, 2024

A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Corey Campbell to approve the payment of claims APV batch dated November 21, 2024. The vote was taken and the motion carried.

Questions or Comments from the Public

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

Questions or Comments from the Board

President Dara Jeffries called for questions or comments from the Board. Reminder that the next Board meeting is December 19th.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Nicole Florek and seconded by Karen Ellison to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 PM. The vote was taken and the motion carried.