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Olga Granat

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Members

Kristy Merritt

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Stu Summers

Legal Counsel

Clay Patton

Library Director

Jesse Butz

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System
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Valparaiso, IN

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pcpls.org

BOARD MEETING AGENDA: Wednesday, February 19, 2025

NOTICE: The Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees will meet on **February 19, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.** for its regularly scheduled meeting at the Valparaiso Public Library, 103 Jefferson Street, Valparaiso, IN 46383. Board of Finance Meeting to follow

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

The public comment session is provided as an opportunity for patrons to address the Board of Trustees on matters related to agenda items.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of the Minutes from January 15, 2024
2. Financial Report
 - a. Treasurer's Report
 - b. Approval of the Claims Register
3. Approval of Communications
 - a. Friend's Report
 - b. Director's Report
 - c. Patron Comments

ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:

1. CSK Proposal
2. Portage Roofing Project
3. E-Rate Bids
4. Marketing Report
5. 2024 Annual Impact Report
6. Internal Controls Resolution
7. Elevator Maintenance

Any other items

Adjournment

Signature Session

Future Meetings: (Dates and times subject to change) 4:00 P.M.

- March 19, 2025 - Valparaiso Public Library
- April 16, 2025 - Valparaiso Public Library
- May 21, 2025 - Valparaiso Public Library

Porter County Public Library System

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for Feb 19, 2025

The regular meeting of the library board of trustees was called to order at 4:01 pm at 103 Jefferson St. Valparaiso, IN 46383. Olga Granat presided.

Members in attendance included Olga Granat, President; Kevin Pazour (remote), Vice President; Paul Knauff, Secretary; Julie Giorgi, Treasurer; Kristy Merritt, Roger Rhodes, Stu Summers. No board members were absent. Also in attendance: Director Jesse Butz, Library Attorney Clay Patton, Assistant Director Inge Kokidko, Finance Manager Hayley Scott, Marketing Coordinator Makenna Fetch, and Community Engagement Coordinator Willow Cataldo. Remote attendance was facilitated via Google Meet.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes from Jan 15, 2025

Financial Report

 Treasurer's Report

 Approval of the Claims Register

Approval of Communications

 Friends of the Library Report

 Director's Report

 Patron Comments

Motion: Paul Knauff moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Julie Giorgi seconded the motion.

Discussion: Communications reports were summarized.

Vote: The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Pazour	Knauff	Giorgi	Merritt	Rhodes	Summers	Granat
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

CSK Proposal

Approval for renovation work to be completed at Portage by CSK for \$65,000 was requested.

Motion: Roger Rhodes moved as requested. Julie Giorgi seconded the motion.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Pazour	Knauff	Giorgi	Merritt	Rhodes	Summers	Granat
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Internal Controls Resolution

Internal controls training was summarized and approval was requested for the written resolution in the board packet that affirms our internal controls are in place.

Motion: Stu Summers moved as requested. Roger Rhodes seconded the motion.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Pazour	Knauff	Giorgi	Merritt	Rhodes	Summers	Granat
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Elevator Maintenance

Approval for recommended elevator maintenance performed by Otis at each branch with an elevator for a total of \$31,993.62.

Motion: Julie Giorgi moved as recommended. Roger Rhodes seconded the motion.

Discussion: No discussion followed.

Vote: The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Pazour	Knauff	Giorgi	Merritt	Rhodes	Summers	Granat
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Portage Roofing Project

Roofing and siding materials were presented and summarized. The board agreed on the director's recommended style and color choices.

Marketing Report

Library marketing staff presented a summary of marketing development, activities, and contributions to the success of the library.

2024 Annual Impact Report

Library marketing staff presented the 2024 Annual Impact Report and summarized highlights.

Adjournment

Motion: Kristy Merritt moved to adjourn. Paul Knauff seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion was carried with the following roll call vote:

Pazour	Knauff	Giorgi	Merritt	Rhodes	Summers	Granat
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.

Paul Knauff, Secretary, Porter County Public Library System Board of Trustees

January 2025 Director's Report

Overview

January was filled with our annual reporting projects and year-end wrap-ups. The team is required to submit reports for the SBOA and the Indiana State Library annually. In addition to these required reports, we are always looking forward to the submission of our annual impact report where we can highlight the many activities, initiatives, and partnerships that set our organization apart from the many outstanding services in our community. This amazing report also highlights the value our library provides. Spoiler: Over 10 million in savings to our community last year through circulations of materials alone!

While circulation was down slightly this month compared to last year the dip was expected as we had a substantial ebook purchase in December 2023 that resulted in a spike of circulation in January. Overall, circulation is healthy and in line with expectations and ongoing trends. One special highlight would be electronic audio, which continues to be up double digits over the previous year.

Important Upcoming Dates

- February
 - 19: Board of Trustees Meeting
- March
 - 5: Friends of the Library Meeting
 - 19: Board of Trustees Meeting

Personnel

- Ending Employment
 - Laura Clymer, Library Clerk at Valparaiso
- New Employment
 - None
- Promotions
 - None
- Interviews
 - Monique and Kellie conducted interviews for a part-time Library Clerk position at the Valparaiso branch.
- Professional Development
 - Monique, Kellie, Allison, Corine, Liz, Emily, Jack, and the System Programming team virtually attended the CSLP 2025 webinar presented by Beth Yates at the Indiana State Library. This was a great opportunity to start the conversation about Summer Reading planning.

Finance Notes

- The budget benchmark for the end of January is that 8.3% of the budget should be expended. So far, 5.8% has been spent, and we're on target to be within our estimated budget.
- The Library earned \$30,624.29 from Trust Indiana during the month of January with a 4.39% interest rate. Of that total, \$2,641.65 was earned for the Mills Trust fund.

Subscription/Contract Renewals

- Subscriptions
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - None
 - Cancellations
 - AdFontes Media Bias Chart - \$1,333 (remote access not available)
 - Chicago Tribune - \$1,200 (remote access not available)
- Contracts
 - New
 - None
 - Renewals
 - None
 - Cancellations
 - None

Buildings & Grounds

- Jesse and Jason met with Trout Glass to make final selections for the new ADA sliding doors in Portage.
- Jesse met with Stratelign energy consultants to obtain a proposal for an energy assessment of our facilities.
- Jack attended the Hebron Board of Zoning Appeals meeting this month and successfully secured approval for the fence variance for the Hebron garden.
- Jesse and Jack attended both the Hebron Parks Board meeting and the Hebron Town Council meeting to discuss a partnership to install storyboards at the Community Center Park. Both groups were enthusiastic about this exciting opportunity to promote literacy and engage the community in a new and interactive way. These storyboards will be provided by the Friends of the Library.
- Quotes are being obtained for the repair of walls in our meeting rooms. With our enhancements to the space, it is time to bring the wall coverings up to the same status.
- Our Valpo air handler VFD(variable frequency drive) has been malfunctioning and steps are being taken to replace it to ensure proper operation.
- Jason and Aiden installed a new shelving area in Valpo to highlight our new materials. This new section will also be getting additional spotlights to highlight this patron's favorite section.

- The Portage air handler room heater fan motor was replaced.
- A Valpo cold water circulation pump bearing and bell housing went bad and are in the process of being replaced. We have backups so operations will not be impacted.
- The JCI compressor was fixed in Hebron while the sprinkler system was being inspected.

Technology

- Sounds Cool Live Audio continues with AV installation in the Kouts meeting room. The South Haven meeting room will be adjusted due to some needed improvements that were identified after installation, and then they will move on to Hebron.
- Nathan has still been working with Library Market to make some corrections in the Tech help form for our website and will then continue working on the Notary form.
- Angela has begun looking at other vendors for our printer management services. The library has been with Copier Consultants for some time now and it is time to shop other vendors to compare services and pricing.
- Angela has been working with AdTec to move the networking RFP forward. The library hosted a site visit for interested vendors to answer questions about the project and discuss each of our branch's specific networking needs. AdTec has been an excellent partner and has guided our team through this process.
- Angela is working with Cardinal Point to create a more robust disaster recovery plan.
- Nathan is testing digital marketing solutions for our branches.

Community Engagement

- PCPLS celebrated MLK Day with a variety of engaging activities, featuring a successful "MLK Talk to a Lawyer" event in collaboration with NWI Volunteer Lawyers, Inc., which drew in 38 attendees. Additionally, crafts were available at the branches, along with displays highlighting the significance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- PCPLS participated in three outreach events during the month of January, with a total reach of 131 people. Events included a presentation to Portage Kiwanis, participation in Hebron Parks Frosty Fest, and attendance at Valparaiso Event's annual January Open House.
- Jesse met with members of the Surf Internet team to plan for a program at our Kouts branch regarding state and federal grants to increase internet access to homes.
- Jesse met with Porter County Commissioners and ISP providers to obtain letters of support for BEAD funding that would drastically improve internet access throughout Porter County.
- Jesse met with Bill Higbie from the Porter County Community Foundation regarding donation opportunities at the Kouts Branch. Jesse and Bill will be giving a presentation to the Kouts Town Council.

Social Media Engagement

- The total reach for social media and newsletters during January was 99,735.
- Facebook:

- We have 7,155 followers and reached 5,354 individual people who viewed our content 20,649 times this month.
- Instagram:
 - We have 1,580 followers and reached 872 individual people who viewed our content 3,403 times this month.
- TikTok:
 - We have 997 subscribers and our content was viewed 675 times this month.
- YouTube:
 - We have 159 total subscribers and our content was viewed 70 times this month.
- Pinterest:
 - We have 85 followers and reached 10 individual people who viewed our content 18 times this month.
- Newsletters:
 - Our Newsletters were opened by 40,849 individual people who viewed the content 74,920 times this month.
- The PCPLS Virtual Customer Service Team interacted with 48 patrons this month.
- Google: 4 new five-star reviews
 - “Clean building, well organized with very good selection, friendly & helpful staff.”
 - “Great staff that are knowledgeable and helpful when you need help.”
 - “Pretty great place there, very nice, and it's a great environment.”

Youth and Teen Services

- PCPLS had 241 patrons complete the 2024-25 Winter Reading Program with a total of 67,013 minutes read and 1,052 activities completed. We had winners of the weekly raffles and grand prizes from across the system! The most completed activity was the “Sleepytime Snowflake,” which awarded 183 badges! “Read a Book while wrapped up in a blanket or sitting in your favorite cozy reading nook.”
- PCPLS visited four Portage Elementary Schools, engaging with 232 students and promoting the Library! This initiative is part of our partnership with the Portage Schools.
- Despite the snow and cold, patrons made their way to the Kouts branch this month to attend storytimes and Mother Goose on the Loose. Many shared their appreciation for the staff’s patience and encouragement, especially on days when their little ones were having a tough time.
- This month, the Kouts LEGO Club held a STEAM Challenge where kids built LEGO mansions, displaying their creativity. The Hebron branch hosted programs inspired by the Dogman series, allowing participants to create tech-savvy doghouses and solve mysteries as Dogman recruits. Meanwhile, Valparaiso’s LEGO Club increased attendance by extending its program to one hour, adding a STEAM challenge and presentation that families enjoyed.
- The Hebron Branch continued to see excellent turnout for their youth art programs. Teens enjoyed learning about Andy Warhol and creating their own Pop Art pieces. Younger children explored the whimsical world of Thomas Dambo and his Trolls, even crafting their own box trolls inspired by his work.

- Liz at the Valpo branch worked on an interactive display that will go up next month in support of our "I Love My Library" initiative as well as Valentine's Day. She designed a large candy heart box for the wall where kids can write and display what they love about the library on paper "candy hearts."
- Allison shared her ideas for Summer Reading displays at Valpo's program meeting in January. She has taken feedback from the Community Engagement Team to come up with some amazing designs that our staff can't wait to make a reality!
- Liz at the Valpo branch led her first Cookies Canvas, an acrylic painting program geared towards kids. Patrons really enjoyed this, and we are excited to offer this on a quarterly basis to start.
- The Portage branch installed a new toy storage unit, enhancing the tidiness of the toy area and providing additional space for play.
- The Portage branch hosted a beginner crochet class for children. Due to the class's success, we will soon be introducing crochet classes for adults and teenagers as well.
- Amy Keleman reorganized and enhanced our picture book section in South Haven, creating a more spacious environment and making the books more accessible.

Adult Services

- The Fix it Fair at the Valparaiso Branch achieved great success, attracting 77 attendees. Among the items that received repairs were heaters, lamps, sweaters, computers, and jewelry.
- AARP started their tax appointments at the South Haven Branch. AARP will be doing tax prep for seniors and low-income community members at PCPLS every Friday through the beginning of April.
- Both adult book clubs at the South County branches have kicked off the year strong and are thriving! Some dedicated readers are even traveling between branches to participate in both clubs, showing their enthusiasm for great discussions and love of reading.
- The Valparaiso team is progressing with collection shifting projects. The Fiction and Western collections are complete, with the Western collection now more accessible to patrons. They are currently halfway through shifting the Mystery and nonfiction sections.
- The Valparaiso team reorganized furniture and equipment in the entrance to enhance flow. Copier machines were relocated near the Adult Services desk, and quick print computers were placed outside the computer lab creating a more inviting walkway for patrons entering the Adult Services department.
- The Valparaiso branch has high public interest in displays, with the community display case fully booked for 2025 and reservations starting for 2026. The Community Art Wall remains popular, showcasing local artists' work monthly.
- Rachel S. updated end caps and signage in the fiction and nonfiction sections at the South Haven branch, as well as backshifted and straightened shelving, making that area look really nice and inviting.
- Donna S. shifted and updated display easels in the nonfiction section of the Portage branch, utilizing new shelf displays to highlight books of interest in that section.

- During a recent meeting in Kouts, Jesse, Jack, and Sarah M. discussed merchandising and display techniques. South County is implementing these strategies at both library branches to attract patrons and encourage the exploration of new resources.

Collections

- Jesse, Inge, & Elizabeth continue to explore resources offered by Backstage, the state library, and other vendors to discover ways to expand access to our genealogy and local history collection.
- Elizabeth and the collections team have been working on prepping Tonies! These are designed to promote early childhood literacy support through figurines of familiar childhood characters that easily attach to a speaker to play music or stories related to the character. These came to our attention from a patron request, and we love being able to respond to our community with a new (and fun!) literacy tool!
- Inge and Jesse met with the IDL advisory committee to make important updates to the IDL MOU which will lay the groundwork for enhanced governance to ensure the continued growth and success of our ebook consortium.
- Jesse and Kevin met to go over genealogy enhancements and collaborative efforts to highlight Porter County History by the Library, POCOMuse, and the general public.

Genealogy

- The department assisted Valpo Parks and POCO Muse with requests early in the month.
- Chris H compiled a list of Valparaiso City Council members for the City Clerk. There are microfilmed records of meetings for certain years, which has been helpful.
- Chris M is making good progress indexing the obituary books, and Kathy L. is working on a family tree project.
- Chris H started her research for the Spring Chamber article.
- Staff in the department assisted with a number of patron requests, including but not limited to, the history of Stagecoach Road in Portage, several family and house history questions, and the history of the bridge on the south side of Valparaiso University.

Hebron



1

Play is a crucial aspect of literacy development. These young ones learn to balance polar bears on the ice, discovering new skills along the way.

2

Young children participate in play and singing with an exciting new twist on the traditional "Hickory Dickory Dock" song.

3

Storytime unites friends and families, allowing them to share tales and engage in creative crafts.

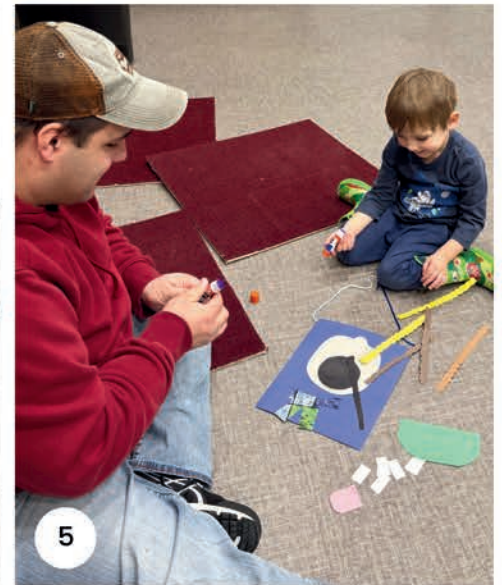
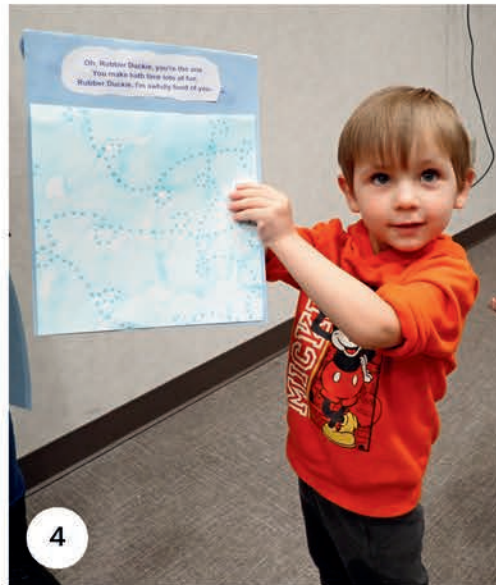
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Families cherish the experience of intergenerational play during Family Game Night. This father and son pair mastered an exciting new spy game.

5

This young artist beamed with pride as they unveiled their vibrant Pop Art masterpiece.

Kouts



1

Collaboration truly stood out at this month's Kouts Lego Club. By joining forces, these talented LEGO enthusiasts constructed the tallest mansion.

2

A fellow Lego Club enthusiast looks forward to connecting with friends before the building session begins.

3

Incorporating stories and play during Storytime helps young children continue learning and developing their literacy skills effectively.

4

Visitors had a delightful time making whimsical water art during Storytime and crafting their own storybooks centered around rubber duckies.

5

It's craft time! Engaging in crafts after enjoying stories combines two essential aspects of early literacy development: play and reading.

Portage



1 Engaging in music and movement serves as essential introductory activities for Portage's Storytime.

2 Visitors are thrilled to discover their snowflakes from Winter WonderFest collaged together with photos from 2024 programs in this display!

3 STEAM Homeschool Hour, led by Amanda and Anna, focused on the science of snowflakes.

4 Kids painted snowflakes using watercolor paint & salt over white crayon in this winter themed STEAM program.

5 Portage school students absorb every word as they listen intently to Amy and Anna during their recent class visit.

South Haven



1 There was an abundance of electrostatic excitement at South Haven's inaugural Big Blue Blocks program.

2 What a blast! These vision board silhouettes turned out to be a hit at Sandra's Adult Craft Hour.

3 Enthusiastic young learners are captivated as Sandra reads during our South Haven Storytime.

4 Storytime attendees are captivated while singing, "Apples and Bananas." Singing plays a crucial role in developing strong literacy skills.

5 More children engage in active play while utilizing their engineering skills to create various shapes and structures with the beloved Big Blue Blocks.

Valparaiso



1

Arts and crafts classes are popular among adults, fostering community by bringing friends together at local library branches.

2

Participants collaborated to craft beautiful mosaic designs during this enjoyable activity at the Valpo Branch!

3

PCPLS partnered with Porter County Parks for Springtime on the Farm, where attendees enjoyed meeting and learning about different animals.

4

Children and their adults enjoyed painting a cheerful penguin design on wooden eggs during this delightful program with Miss Emily!

5

Cookies and Canvas is an exciting new program spearheaded by Liz at the Valpo Branch, and the kids absolutely adored it!