

**Whiting Public Library
Regular Board Meeting
March 11, 2025**

Board Members Present:

Walter Wachel, President
Ashley Sudar, Vice President
Mary Lu Cowley, Secretary
Amy Holmes, Treasurer
Daniel Catlin, Board Member
Scot Kokandy, Board Member
Estela Waszak, Board Member

Board Members Absent:

Guests:

Others:

Montserrat Inglada, Director
Laura Lopez, Recording Secretary

Public:

A notice of the Regular Board Meeting was faxed to the Times on March 1, 2025. The notice was also posted at the Oliver Street and Ohio Avenue entrances on March 6, 2025.

Mr. Wachel, President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting – February 11, 2025

Mrs. Cowley moved:

THAT the minutes of the February 11, 2025 Regular Board Meeting be approved as submitted.

SECONDED by: Ms. Sudar

ACTION: Carried Unanimously

Report from Board President

No report from Mr. Wachel.

Treasurer Amy Holmes reported that one citizen reached out to her regarding the availability of renovation information on the website and the lack of extended hours.

Mrs. Holmes explained that the library's website was being revamped and was temporarily under construction. The website is back up with renovation information posted and will be updated accordingly.

The library is currently in compliance with State standards but once the renovation is complete, the Board may consider a change in hours based on the community's needs.

Director's Report

√ Upon review, all expenditures were approved for February 16, 2025 - March 15, 2025.

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- √ Funding for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has been secured for one year. The ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Gary Public Library has been postponed.
- √ On March 4th, the Whiting Common Council conducted a public hearing and approved an additional appropriation of \$1.8M to support the library's renovation project. DLGF has also approved.
- √ On February 18, House Bill SB01 passed its first reading and was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means. The next hearing for the bill is scheduled for March 5, 2025. The bill aims to offer property tax relief to certain Indiana residents. However, it would significantly impact libraries by freezing their budgets, preventing any growth for the next three years.
- √ As of March 1, 2025, Laura Lopez has officially assumed the role of Office Manager following Mary Kershner's retirement.
- √ A promotion from Library Clerk (Pay Grade 2) to Library Assistant (Pay Grade 3) has been requested for Ashley Cooper, an exceptional five-year employee.

Building Renovation Update

The advertisement for bids has been sent to The Times and Post-Tribune to be published on March 25 & April 8, 2025.

Thomas Irrigation, Maintenance Renewal

Mrs. Cowley moved:

THAT the library board approve the annual maintenance agreement with Thomas Irrigation at a cost of \$280.00.

SECONDED by: Mr. Kokandy

ACTION: Carried Unanimously

Personnel

Mrs. Cowley moved:

THAT the Office Manager position be moved from a Pay Grade 2 to Pay Grade 6, per the Board's role transition plan. Effective 3/16/2025, Laura Lopez's current annual salary would increase by \$12,250.00.

SECONDED by: Mrs. Holmes

ACTION: Carried Unanimously

Mr. Kokandy moved:

THAT Ashley Cooper be promoted from Library Clerk (pay grade 2) to Library Assistant (pay grade 3) with an increase of \$6,330.00 to her current annual salary effective 3/16/2025.

SECONDED by: Mrs. Holmes

ACTION: Carried Unanimously

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Ms. Sudar moved:

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

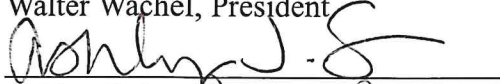
SECONDED by: Mrs. Holmes

ACTION: Meeting Adjourned 6:40 p.m.

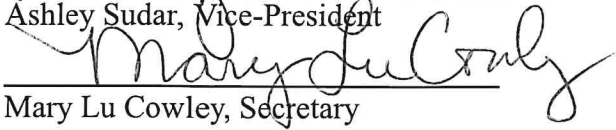
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Respectfully submitted,
Laura Lopez

Reviewed by: Mary Lu Cowley, Board Secretary