

June 17, 2025

The Marion Public Library Board of Trustees met Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. on the second floor in the Library Program Room of the Marion Public Library. Present were Mrs. Pogue, Mrs. Wilk, Ms. Sumpter (on Zoom) and Mrs. Mathias. Jonie Riddle, Business Manager and Jaime Pitt, Director were also in attendance.

Library Board President Melissa Pogue called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

The minutes from the May 20, 2025, meeting was approved following a motion by Mrs. Mathias, seconded by Mrs. Wilk. The motion passed unanimously.

On the motion of Mrs. Mathias, seconded by Mrs. Wilk, the Treasurer's report and payment of the docket were unanimously accepted and payment authorized. The register of claims is made as a part of these minutes.

The Treasurer's report showed a balance of \$3,235,992.55 in the Library Operating Fund as of May 30, 2025.

Business:

- 1. Library Behavior Policy Review:** Director Jaime Pitt presented proposed updates to the library's behavior policy. Board members discussed the draft and recommended clarifying language related to alcohol possession, as well as adding more specific guidelines addressing stalking and sexual offenses. Director Pitt emphasized the need to make the policy more user-friendly while enhancing its effectiveness. The board agreed to pause final approval to allow for revisions and to revisit the discussion next month when additional board members can provide input.
- 2. Payment Resolution:** Director Jaime Pitt presented a draft resolution establishing authorized payments the library may make between board meetings. These include payments for property, services, subscriptions, insurance, utilities, grants, maintenance, legal fees, training, leases, payroll, taxes, and emergency expenditures. She highlighted the need for transparency and accountability in financial matters. Following discussion, Director Pitt agreed to add a provision requiring notification of the executive committee for any payments not outlined in the resolution that exceeds the director's spending authority. The updated resolution will be brought to the next board meeting for further review and approval.
- 3. ACH Resolution:** Director Jaime Pitt proposed a resolution authorizing the library to utilize ACH payments and transition to electronic bill payments. She noted that this change would streamline operations, reduce costs associated with postage and late fees, and support ongoing efforts to modernize library processes. Mrs. Wilk moved to approve the implementation of ACH payments. Mrs. Mathias seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Roof Bid:** Director Jaime Pitt reported that the library received four bids for the Carnegie roof replacement project. Ideal Roofing and Construction was recommended as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, with a bid of \$99,850. Mrs. Wilk moved to accept the bid from Ideal Roofing and Construction. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mathias and passed unanimously.

I. Director's Report

1. **Materials and Services:** Monthly Statistics will be presented at the meeting.
2. **Staff:** Kennedy Row joins the Children's Department as a part time employee.
3. **Conferences/Travel** – Gabe will be gone to Rare Books Conference for a week.
4. **Community Engagement:** Radio segment WBAT; MPL Happenings in the Chronicle Tribune; Hosted NE Indiana Library Directors; attended United Way Awards; Partnered with Marion Community Schools to bring author, Dwayne Reed, to the community; Attended Commissioners Meetings & County Council Meeting; Attended Delta Ahead Meeting; McCulloch Multilingual Family night; Boys & Girl Club.
5. **Grants:** Our application for the Indiana Historical Society (IHS) grant has advanced to the next stage of consideration.

6. Children's/Youth (Tylanna)

In May, our grab-and-go craft featured a colorful Hot Air Balloon, which proved to be a popular takeaway for visiting families. We hosted a total of 14 programs throughout the month, engaging more than 380 patrons. Highlights included a visit from author Dwayne Reed on May 8. His energetic presentation inspired families with a powerful message about using your voice, and we are grateful to The Giant Reading Program for making this event possible. On May 23, we welcomed author Rebecca Mullin, who led creative activities and shared her writing journey with families in an engaging and personal way.

Outreach efforts also continued strong. On May 15, third graders from St. Paul visited the library for a museum tour, book tasting, a summer reading overview, and a craft activity. A few days later, on May 19, kindergarteners from Allen enjoyed a full morning that included a museum tour, storytime, an introduction to the summer reading program, Lego Bingo, and hands-on Lego building.

Our Summer Reading Program launched with great enthusiasm, with over 600 readers signing up during the first week alone. In addition, the new Children's Courtyard has been a major hit with families. Most of the furniture and play features have been installed, and the space is seeing frequent use. We're still awaiting the addition of a shade sail and a STEM wall, but early feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Families are enjoying the opportunity to connect, play, and explore in this vibrant and welcoming new space.

7. Circulation (Michelle)

In May, the Garfield House welcomed visitors from several states, including Missouri, Virginia, Florida, Michigan, and California. Staff workspaces were enhanced with the

installation of new desks for Joanne and Recca in the main circulation area. Recca will represent the library at the upcoming local Juneteenth event on June 21 and is actively supporting summer programming by visiting St. Martins on Wednesday mornings to engage families with children. The Adult Summer Reading Challenge has launched successfully, under the capable leadership of Katie and Anna. Additionally, Joanne and Michelle contributed to beautifying the courtyard by planting flowers, and Joanne will be leading two adult Bowl Cozy classes scheduled for June.

- **New Library Cards Issued:** 58 Adults | 27 Children (doubled)
- **Care Kits Distributed:** 46

8. **Indiana History (Rhonda)**

The Indiana Room will be hosting a special program on June 30 featuring Dr. Kersten Priest, who will present on the African American pioneers of Jamestown, North Carolina, and their connection to the Pettiford and Weaver families of Grant County. This event is particularly timely as Mayor Morell is working with officials in Jamestown to establish a sister-city relationship. Notably, several Pettiford and Weaver family members from Jamestown will be attending the Pettiford Reunion in Grant County this August for the first time. Staff and community members are encouraged to help promote the program by sharing library social media posts and distributing printed flyers.

Looking ahead, the Indiana Room is also preparing for the upcoming Family History Conference on Friday, October 17. Marketing materials have been received from the Genealogy Network of Texas, along with a map of participating libraries—around 20 in Indiana, including nearby Wabash, Anderson, and Fort Wayne. With limited regional overlap, we are optimistic about drawing a strong local audience and are currently working on event plans.

Digitization efforts continue to progress thanks to our BookEye scanner. We currently have four collections available on Indiana Digital Memory and have just submitted six more for approval. Our growing digital archive can be accessed at: Indiana Digital Memory Collections. Much of this recent momentum is due to our new volunteer, Ron Eddy, who brings significant experience in digital imaging, scanners, and technology. Impressively, Ron came in on his first day already well-versed in the BookEye scanner, having studied the manual and watched tutorials beforehand. He now volunteers two to three times per week and is making tremendous progress with scanning projects.

In addition, volunteer Linda Sewell has completed indexing the Chronicle-Tribune's person photo files and has started work on the topic files. The Grant County Historical Society will be hosting a work night in the Indiana Room on June 18 to support the Chronicle-Tribune photo project. During this session, volunteers will organize boxes of negatives, place loose photographs in envelopes, and label them for future access and preservation.

9. **Museum & Special Projects (Kelsey)**

In collaboration with Indiana History, the Museum co-hosted a virtual presentation by Bill Munn in May. This was a repeat of his February *Freedom Stories* talk, specifically held to produce a recording for future use and sharing. Staff members Kelsey and Gabe also attended a half-day grant writing workshop at Taylor University to strengthen our

capacity for future funding opportunities. Additionally, we partnered with Indiana History to digitize a small but valuable collection of Marion-related blueprints, including those of the Carnegie Library, First Friends Church, and Memorial Coliseum. These fragile yet high-research-value documents are now accessible to the public through Indiana Digital Memory. Gabe continued work identifying items for deaccession, with a particular focus on textiles and toys, and updated object photographs and descriptors in PastPerfect. We also accepted several new donations related to quilt history and women's suffrage in Marion.

Our IHS Project Grant application progressed with approval of the first phase; much of our recent time has been dedicated to preparing the next phase. Volunteer support for the Chronicle-Tribune photo project has grown, with four new volunteers joining. As of early June, over 5,700 photo prints have been indexed, and we're now transitioning from personal photos to topical ones. The museum hosted guided tours for three different groups, totaling around 100 visitors. The *Home of the Hog* exhibit and Gabe's "object show and tell" continue to be major highlights for guests.

At the Jay House, we hosted four external meetings and one library program in May, with a total of 34 attendees. Meanwhile, significant progress was made on the PPS Grant-funded courtyard project. Major construction was completed, including the installation of artificial turf, picnic tables, entrance signs, and new furniture for the Children's Courtyard. Early results show a major increase in usage and a decrease in trash and behavioral issues—excellent outcomes. Kelsey also picked up native plants from the Upper Wabash Interpretive Center, which were planted with help from Garden Club volunteers. Michelle led the planting of zinnias and arranged baskets in the courtyard planters. We've begun conversations with local artist Tashema Davis about a mural for the courtyard, expected to be completed in the coming weeks. Planning is also underway for a courtyard celebration and ribbon cutting scheduled for Saturday, August 23 from 12–3 p.m. All departments are encouraged to brainstorm engaging activities for patrons to enjoy during this event.

10. Reference (Barb Enslen)

Our current collaboration with Marion Health for community programming has experienced a slow start. Despite promotion efforts on both sides, attendance for the Wellness Wednesday sessions has been low, with no participants at the most recent event. Marion Health remains committed to the partnership, and we will continue to support their efforts by promoting future opportunities. Similarly, the *Lunch & Learn* series with the Extension Office has not drawn significant interest. I plan to meet with Mindy Mayes later this week to rework the format and introduce a new series that will require advance registration. We hope that requiring sign-ups will encourage better attendance through added commitment and reminders.

On a more positive note, our recent in-house programs, including the chenille stem flower workshop, craft sessions, and book club, were well attended. Passive programming continues to be a success, with many patrons enjoying our ongoing puzzle and coloring table.

We featured several engaging displays throughout the month, including exhibits on Indy 500 memorabilia, National Alligator Day (featuring a real alligator head), Star Wars Day,

Anna and Katie have worked closely on launching this year's Summer Reading Program. They have introduced new elements, such as prize drawings simply for signing up, which we hope will increase participation. I am also collaborating with the Children's and Teen departments on family-focused programming throughout the summer, with plans to extend those efforts into future seasons.

11. Technical Services (Kristen)

12. Teens (Katie)

Featured displays included *First Book in a Series* and *Books Guaranteed to Make You Ugly Cry*, both of which received positive attention from browsing teens.

_____ President Richard J. [Signature] Secretary
 _____ Member Seamus M. [Signature] Member
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