
BOT Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2026

Call to Order

The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees for the Working Men's Institute was held on May 21, 2026. Attendees included Vice-President Connie Weinzapfel, Secretary Christine Crews, Treasurer Tamara Allison, Trustee Mike Axton, and Director Ryan Rokicki. Those not in attendance included President Nathan Maudlin.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 16, 2026, meeting were sent electronically. Tamara Allison moved to accept the minutes which Mike Axton seconded. The motion carried.

The minutes of the special meeting held on May 6, 2026, were distributed electronically. Christine Crews made a motion to approve the minutes, which Tamara Allison seconded. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Tamara Allison then presented the Treasurer's Report. There was a brief discussion regarding the Vanguard account's relation to the archive project. Christine Crews moved to accept the report and hold for audit, which Mike Axton seconded. The motion carried.

Friends of the WMI

Christine Crews discussed the 4th of July programming as well as the planned drone show and continued activities for July 11. Brian Fox Ellis will portray Robert Owen, and Martha Raske will portray Frances Wright. Martha still needs a period costume, and possible sources for this were discussed.

Old Business

Archive Expansion Update

Ryan and Mr. Maudlin had a virtual meeting with Leah Seigel of the Lilly Endowment on Friday, May 15. We briefly recapped the work completed through the planning grant and discussed our next steps for the project, which include a feasibility study. When asked about further support, Leah invited us to submit JGA's proposal for review and discussion with her colleagues.

Owen/Maclure 200th

Last night's celebration of the Owen/Maclure 200th anniversary featured Bill Bartelt, who spoke about Robert Dale Owen and Abraham Lincoln. Following the talk, there was a book signing with Mr. Bartelt and Ryan Rokicki. A total of thirty-five people attended the event. Although it was held at the Atheneum, we will count it as an outreach event for the WMI.

Looking ahead, we have two upcoming lectures: *Frances Wright: A Radical Owenite in America*, presented by Dr. Cheryl Coulthard, and *The Life and Times of Thomas Say*, featuring Randy Patrick. Dr. Coulthard will speak at 6:30 p.m. on June 11 at the WMI, and Dr. Patrick will present at 3:30 p.m. on June 27 at the Atheneum.

Audio/Visual Equipment Update

As reported last month, Midwest Systems is still awaiting back-ordered parts before proceeding with the equipment upgrade.

New Business

No New Business

Director's Report **Program Highlights**

- Heritage Artisan days took place on Thursday, April 23, and Friday, April 24, with approximately 250 children on Thursday and 1000 children on Friday.
- On April 24, we hosted the Blaffer Foundation and Alistair Baldwin, who presented the final design plan for the Poets House. Eighty-seven patrons were in attendance.
- On April 25, Bill McKnight presented his Woody Plants lecture and led a tour the following day. Eight patrons attended the lecture, and forty-seven attended the tour.
- On May 6, the Blaffer Foundation's Creative -in-residence Constance Edwards Scopelitis presented an Artist's Talk at the WMI. Eighteen patrons attended.
- May 7, The New Harmony Clay Project's Artist in Residence, Brock Thompson, held a presentation for sixteen patrons.
- On Tuesday, May 12, Hope McLeod delivered her Arlene Feiner Grant presentation about the Parke sisters to an audience of forty-one people.
- On Thursday, May 14, Kelly Reid from Wild Birds Unlimited captivated an audience of thirty-nine patrons with her engaging FWMI program about local bird populations.
- Bill Bartelt presented *New Harmony, Robert Dale Owen, and the Politics of 1860* on Wednesday, May 20. Thirty-five people attended.

Facilities and Maintenance

- HF Refrigeration continues work on our HVAC system.
- The electricians from Josh Lamb have installed new exterior lighting.
- Koorsen Fire and Security has completed the annual inspection of our fire extinguishers.

Staff and Administration

- I spoke with Crystal at 5/3 Bank regarding amending the list of signatories for our accounts. Once the Trustees determine the list, all will need to sign paperwork at the Mt. Vernon Branch.
- We are excited to have received six proposals for the Arlene Feiner Memorial Grant for Women's Studies. Four of the applicants have been invited to submit a full proposal.
- Mr. Maudlin and I represented the WMI at the Posey County Community Foundation's Women's Fund Award Breakfast on May 14. We received a grant of \$750 for our "Library of Things."

Upcoming Events

- May 23- The first day of The New Harmony Farmers' and Artisans' Market- Presented by the WMI
- June 11- 6:30 p.m.- Dr. Cheryl Couthard- *Frances Wright: A Radical Owenite in America* (Owen/Maclure 200th)
- June 17-6:30 p.m.-Bill McKenzie-*Adventures in Therapy: How People Got Better*
- June 25-10:30 a.m.- First day of the *Unearth a Story* Summer Reading Program
- June 27-1:00 p.m.- Bill Clevlin- *Presidential Road Trips*
- June 27-3:30 p.m.-Dr. Randy Patrick-*The Life and Times of Thomas Say* (Owen/Maclure 200th)-will be held at the Atheneum

For the Good of the Order

Tamara Allison mentioned the Historic Preservation Grant from Indiana Humanities as a possible source for project funding.

Connie Weinzapfel then formally welcomed Mike Axton to the Board of Trustees and thanked him for his willingness to serve. Mr. Axton expressed his appreciation for all the Trustees do on behalf of the WMI and stated that he hopes his service will contribute positively to the organization.

Claims

Mr. Rokicki presented the claims. Christine Crews moved to accept the claims, and Tamara Allison seconded. The motion carried.

Adjournment

Christine Crews made the motion to adjourn.