

MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL  
**MAIN LIBRARY**  
**FIRST FLOOR LARGE MEETING ROOM**  
**7711 GOODWOOD BOULEVARD**  
**BATON ROUGE, LA 70806**  
**FEBRUARY 25, 2021**  
**4:00 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER – Jason Jacob, Board President (4:06 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Donald Luther, Jr., Board member

- I. ROLL CALL – Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director  
Jason Jacob, Board President – Present  
Candace Temple, Board Vice President – Present (4:19 p.m.)  
Martha Guarisco, Board Treasurer – Present  
Delores Watts – Present  
Donald Luther, Jr. – Present  
Kathy Wascom – Present  
Nicole Allmon-Learson – Present (4:19 p.m.)  
*A quorum was present*

STAFF PRESENT – Spencer Watts, Library Director; Kristen Edson, Deputy Library Director; Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director; Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director; Rhonda Pinsonat, Library Business Manager; Ronnie Pierce, Library Assistant Business Manager; Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director; Bryan “Cyn” Foreman. PC/LAN Specialist

- II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 21, 2021 – A motion to approve was made by Delores Watts and seconded by Donald Luther, Jr. **The motion was carried unanimously.**
- III. SPECIAL ORDERS – There were no items to cover under Special Orders.

Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to move agenda item VI. (A) UPDATE ON SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY to be discussed first on the agenda. A motion to approve was made by Martha Guarisco and seconded by Donald Luther, Jr. **The motion was carried unanimously.** (4:07 p.m.)

- Architects from Post-Gould Architects presented to the Board the site plan, concept plan, floor plan, and elevation drawings for the new South Branch Library.
- Key discussions included: parking restrictions; challenges faced to develop an efficiently functioning building; dual entries that will funnel patrons to the service area; a courtyard that will be fenced, with part of the oak tree canopy and grass area exposed beyond the fencing for public use at any time; a covered porch area as a practical matter and as a reflection of Louisiana social culture; and colored glass glazing to prevent glare and add to the aesthetic features.
- A public open house will be held March 10<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Bluebonnet Regional Branch Library for the public to view the design plans and ask questions regarding the South Branch Library.

IV. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

- A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:31 p.m.)
- For 2020, operating expenditures rose to 86.35% of the operating budget. This number is not final, as adjustments and charges will continue to be recorded for another 1 – 2 months.
  - For 2021, because of year-end work on 2020, very few expenditures have been recorded. As of January 31<sup>st</sup>, expenditures are 4.84% of the operating budget. Through January, no more than 8.34 % of the operating budget should have been spent.

- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2021 are slightly ahead of those collected last year, as we are roughly 1.43% ahead of 2020. Because of businesses that either temporarily or permanently closed due to Covid-19, there is not enough information to determine if this small increase will remain, or if the cumulative collections will go back into negative territory in future months.
- Cash collections for 2020 will be finalized when 4<sup>th</sup> quarter interest earnings are posted, which will take another 1 – 2 months.

#### B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:33 p.m.)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
- Over 8,000 lbs. of food were collected during the Library’s Food for Fines program; translates to almost 7,000 meals; Library continues to host blood drives.
- In honor of Black History Month, on February 20<sup>th</sup> the Library hosted a virtual presentation by Dr. Lori Martin and Chris Tyson regarding their new book, *Black Baton Rouge Yesterday & Today: Looking Back to Effectively Move Forward!*
- On March 10<sup>th</sup>, the Business Report will host Renee Mauborgne, author of *Blue Ocean Strategy* and *Blue Ocean Shift* as the guest speaker for their Business Forum series; registration is required.
- A virtual presentation and reading will be held featuring Derrick Barnes, author of *I Am Every Good Thing* and *Crown*, along with illustrator Gordon C. James, on March 18<sup>th</sup>; registration is required.
- Library Children’s Services staff received training on implementing Sensory Friendly Story Time; developing curriculum for sensory-challenged children.
- February’s Garden Discoveries was Garden Gnomes and Fairies, for children and families; March’s theme will be Louisiana Iris; hybrid programs continue to include both in-person activities and virtual streaming.
- May 15<sup>th</sup> is the tentative date for Authors After Hours, featuring Sarah M. Broom and Margaret Wilkerson Sexton; in conjunction with One Book One Community 2021.
- Key performance indicators were reported for 2010-2020; Covid-19 affected percentages; website hits and online catalogue statistics were double compared to the previous year.
- Question from Kathy Wascom regarding if E-Books are included in the circulation statistics; Mary Stein responded that yes, they are included, adding that since OverDrive purchased the E-Book platform, the audiobook circulation immediately tripled.

#### C. OTHER REPORTS

##### 1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:52 p.m.)

- Facilities staff completed deliveries and assemblage of interactive game tables to Children’s Services at branch locations that did not receive a table in the previous purchase.
- The roof and skylights were soft washed at Fairwood Branch Library.
- Landscaping was installed at Jones Creek Regional Branch Library the week of February 8<sup>th</sup>; a crack in a window in the Teen Services area was replaced on January 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Flooring is being replaced around the courtyard at Baker Branch Library; Facilities Services staff are waiting on delivery of matching tiles.
- An air compressor was installed on the fire pump at the Main Library; still experiencing issues with the fire alarm system triggering false alarms; Facilities Services staff are working with IT staff members and Cox Communications to resolve the issue; new storefront doors and key fob access units have been installed on the third floor for the staff lounge.
- Main Library server room upgrades: New air handling units have been installed in the storage room; installation continues for ductwork; condensing unit has been set in place on the roof; discussion continues between the contractor and engineer for hurricane supports for the condensing unit; all electrical work is finished; the wet pipe fire suppression system has been removed; waiting on parts for the dry pipe system; projected to be fully completed within several weeks.
- Main Library boiler issues: Architectural Services has engaged a mechanical engineering firm for the design and replacement of all three boilers; drifting of exhaust has occurred, causing corrosion inside the boilers; original manufacturer has ceased making this type of boiler, and the City-Parish is now replacing all boilers of this type; the project is expected to be presented as an invitation to bid within the next several months.
- Carver Branch Library repairs: two photos were presented to the Board of recent work; all damaged sheetrock has been removed; the partition wall has been removed, and prep-work has begun for the new automatic partition; bollards were installed at the front of the building; covers have been

ordered for the bollards; all electrical work is completed; a new temperature and humidity space sensor has been installed due to damage to the meeting room thermostat; the roofing repair project will have to be re-bid in April due to high steel costs.

- The wire panel for the chiller at Eden Park Branch Library was installed and modified to fit around existing piping; owner training for the new chiller has been postponed.
- Update on roof replacements: Persistent leaks are occurring at Bluebonnet Regional, Jones Creek Regional, Delmont Gardens, and Zachary Branch Libraries; Architectural Services engaged an engineering firm to determine location of leaks and shingle conditions; recommendations include a partial roof replacement at Jones Creek Regional and Delmont Gardens Branch Libraries, and a full replacement at Bluebonnet Regional and Zachary Branch Libraries; also replacement of the Kalwall skylights at Jones Creek and Bluebonnet Regional Libraries with a raised clerestory window instead of the skylights; all four buildings will be pressure washed and cleaned; a clear penetrating coating will also be applied on the bricks at Bluebonnet Regional, Jones Creek Regional and Zachary Branch Libraries.
- Question from Kathy Wascom: Do all library locations have a generator? Kristen Edson responded that they do not, but all locations have emergency lighting with a UPS backup. The Main Library and River Center Branch Library are the only two locations with generators. Spencer Watts added that the HVAC at the River Center Branch Library is tied into the central system for the entire River Center complex, therefore it does not allow for the generator to be connected to the library's HVAC system.
- Question from Delores Watts regarding if all library branches have emergency lighting, except those with generators; Kristen Edson responded that it is a code requirement for every location to have emergency lighting, and those with generators can power the emergency lighting through the generator.
- Question from Jason Jacob regarding if the new South Branch Library will have a generator; Kristen Edson and Spencer Watts responded that there will not be enough room for a generator at the new library.

## 2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts (5:10 p.m.)

- Around 250 responses have been received from the staff survey produced by the Management Partners Study; currently collecting and analyzing the data; the next phase will include surveys of other library systems regarding service areas and customer experience.
- A draft design contract has been issued to the architect for the Scotlandville Branch Library project; the firm for the Baker Branch Library project is currently fulfilling its obligations on the Jones Creek Regional Library project, so the contract has not yet been issued; Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director for Branch Services, has analyzed data and redesigned the scope of work to make it more efficient; work should begin on Scotlandville Branch Library in a few weeks.
- The Main Library cleaning services contract bid was awarded to the lowest bidder, who is also the current contractor, but who then declined the award due to an optional service that was priced too high for the Library to accept; the award then went to the second bidder who accepted the condition.
- Computer Services Updates: The VDI servers have been installed and staff are working with the vendor on configuration and training; pilot migration for the exchange online has been completed; development for the new statistics application is complete for the intranet hub, and the budget application is nearing the testing stage; additional applications are being considered, such as office supply requests and program pre-approval forms.
- The City-Parish has adopted the same cybersecurity training service used by the Library, "KnowBe4"; the library's team developing the Incident Response Plan is working with a vendor to assist in analysis and discovering gaps where improvement is needed.
- Comment by Donald Luther, Jr. that it is important to take cybersecurity seriously because the threats are plenty; Spencer Watts responded how the recent training included being aware of and securing your physical device as threats can also come from in-person interventions.
- Library staff completed training on Diversity and Inclusion, which included different elements of focus: mindfulness and empathy of your own culture as well as others', and how this may affect another's response to the same circumstance; onboarding processes of introducing new people to your organization and how their perceptions are important when defining the organization's culture; more library staff will take the introductory course.
- Update on Covid-19: Staying mindful that levels are high, but hopeful that the rate will decline as more vaccinations are administered; Mardi Gras restrictions seem to have helped slow the spread; mask fatigue continues, and more guidance will be issued on suspending patrons who repeatedly fail to maintain proper mask-wearing; some library staff have requested N95 masks but they are in short

supply, so the Library will look into obtaining three-ply masks and other filtering alternatives; the Library will indicate to Homeland Security the need for staff to receive the vaccine under the Phase 1-B, Tier 2, COVID-19 Mass Vaccinations Plan for Government Employees; all Library employees should be eligible since they interact with more than 85,000 customers each month.

Board President Jason Jacob asked for public comments. No public comments were made.

V. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – There were no reports of committees.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY – Moved to earlier discussion on the agenda.

B. UPDATE ON RENOVATION OF JONES CREEK REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband (5:31 p.m.)

- Slideshow of new furniture in different areas of the library.
- Most lounge seating and computer tables have been installed; also study room tables and chairs, as patrons are wanting to use the rooms.
- Tables and chairs for the Teen Services programming room have been delivered; waiting on parts for one lounge seat in Children’s Services.
- Waiting for delivery of study tables in Reference, computer and study tables in Children Services, end panels and canopies for shelving, online public access catalogs (OPACs), and service desks; the OPACs and service desks will ship this week; end panels and canopies were delivered today and will be installed next week.
- The interior designer is working with the furniture vendor to attempt to get a partial shipment of the study tables and chairs for Reference and Children’s Services.
- The water intrusion issue is still being resolved; French drains were installed to help remove water that is collecting near the rear emergency exit.
- The contractor has received and reviewed punch-list items; continues to work on resolving outstanding issues; the interior designer will also create a punch-list for furniture once all of it has been delivered and installed.
- The location for the monumental sign was established and reconfirmed; collecting cost estimates for both digital and non-digital options.

Board President Jason Jacob asked for public comments. No public comments were made.

VII. NEW BUSINESS – There was no new business.

VIII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

- Delores Watts commented on how beautiful and informative were the library’s displays for Black History Month and how she has heard many compliments throughout her local community. Spencer Watts responded even though this year most programs and activities have been virtual, the library continues to try reaching out to make connections with people.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Delores Watts. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 p.m. by unanimous vote.**