

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
MAY 19, 2022
4:00 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – Jason Jacob, Board President (4:03 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Donald Luther, Jr.

ROLL CALL – Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director

Jason Jacob, Board President – Present

Candace Temple, Board Vice President – Absent

Martha Guarisco, Board Treasurer – Present

Delores Watts – Present (4:14 p.m.)

Donald Luther, Jr. – Present

Kathy Wascom – Present

Nicole Allmon-Learson – Present (5:09 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; Ronnie Pierce, Assistant Library Business Manager; Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director; Bryan Foreman, PC/LAN Specialist.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2022 – A motion to approve was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Kathy Wascom. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

II. SPECIAL ORDERS – There were no Special Orders.

III. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Ronnie Pierce (4:05 p.m.)

- For 2022, operating expenditures through April 30th are 26.18% of the operating budget. Through April, we should have spent no more than 33% of the budget.
- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2022 remain slightly ahead of those collected in 2021, as we are approximately 0.64% ahead of the same date last year.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:06 p.m.)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
- The One Book, One Community program wrapped up with author Gwen Roland, Calvin Voisin, and C.C. Lockwood.
- The Red Stick Farmers Market will continue to take place at the Main Library on Tuesday afternoons from 3:30pm – 6:30pm.
- Assistant Library Director, Mary Stein, and Andrew Tadman, Reference Librarian IV, attended the grand opening to the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Black Chamber at their new headquarters at Exxon Mobil in north Baton Rouge; the Library’s small business center provided assistance.
- The River Center Branch Library served as a support site for the filming of *National Treasures*.
- STEM Librarian Adam St. Pierre participated in testing out augmented reality prototypes for possible use in training library staff.
- Next month’s guest for the Business Forum will be Chris Tuff, author of *The Millennial Whisperer*.
- The Library’s Baton Rouge Room/Special Collections hosted a special event to commemorate the 1950 census release; included an antique car show, an Elvis impersonator, doll displays, old fashioned games and more.

- The Library released its community survey for several weeks; 1,468 responses were received; results should be available within the next few weeks.
- The Bluebonnet Regional Library hosted the public meeting for the Mississippi River Bridge Project; library meeting rooms give the library an important connection to the community.
- Library administration attended a tabletop exercise at MOSHEP for hurricane emergencies and preparedness; also reviewed continuity of operations plans.
- The Main Library hosted the spring concert for the East Baton Rouge Parish School System Talented Strings; also hosted the Civic Orchestra, which will return May 28th.
- A Memorial Day concert will be held at the Main Library on May 30th; the Baton Rouge Concert Band will perform their annual Memorial Day concert.
- The Library has completed the first year of its Home Library Project in its pilot phase, which includes delivering books to school children to keep at home; five schools in the EBR school system were selected.
- Preparations for the Library's summer reading program are underway; this year's theme is Oceans of Possibilities; the Beanstack app will provide the reading tracker, but paper trackers will still be available.
- Friday night Movies on the Plaza will return this summer, scheduled for Fridays in June at the Main Library.

C. OTHER REPORTS

1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:22 p.m.)

- Landscape mulching was completed at Baker, Carver, Fairwood, Greenwell Springs, Pride, Scotlandville, and Zachary Branch Libraries; landscaping at the front of the Main library will be scheduled within the month.
- Grout cleaning was completed at Fairwood Branch and Bluebonnet Regional Libraries; carpet cleaning continues at Main Library.
- The splash pad at the Main Library is currently not working; waiting on parts for repairs.
- The monumental sign at the Main Library has been fully repaired; landscape replacement will be next.
- The vendor made service calls to replace the Variable Air Valve boxes at the Main Library; will also troubleshoot other issues.
- The server room at the Main Library has been experiencing several problems; Entergy will check the voltage in the lines for possible issues; a power surge caused the server room air conditioning unit to trip, which caused a portion of the room to nearly overheat; adjustments will be made to stop the sensor from tripping.
- The patron elevators at River Center Branch Library have been taken out of service after two occurrences of patrons getting stuck in the elevator; response times were quick and nothing was found to be wrong with the elevators; the amount of weight in the elevators may have caused the safety sensor to trip.
- A broken underground pipe caused a water leak inside the building at Jones Creek Regional Library; an engineer will assess how to best backfill the hole in the shipping area.
- An architect visited the Bluebonnet Regional Library to count and measure existing furniture for the upcoming renovation project; waiting on updated plans from last month's meeting.

2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts (4:30 p.m.)

- A kickoff meeting was held May 10th for the Baker Branch Library renovation project; Library staff highlighted the main areas of construction that will be needed; Architectural Services provided massing diagrams to the architect.
- Library staff and Architectural Services staff walked the site for the new proposed Delmont Gardens Branch Library; also obtained a re-subdivision survey of the site that showed 1.73 acres available; will need almost the entire site for a multi-story footprint.
- The service yard gates project issue has been resolved with BREC and will begin to once again move forward; the requisition for parts was approved yesterday.
- The Parish Attorney's Office reviewed the Library's revised Employee Policy Handbook and met with Library staff on May 3rd to review some of the details; it was suggested to separate the handbook into different sections to create three manuals; another meeting will be held again soon.

- The Library's carry-forwards were approved and released by the Finance Department; the Chief Administrative Officer will have to approve each expenditure before funds are released; the first item on the funding agenda is the roofing project and two chiller replacements.
- Internal Audit completed their study of the Library's work schedule and difficulties encountered by staff; some staff have to periodically work 8 or 9 days in a row due to the revised City Parish work week plan; this impacts service and morale; some solutions presented were approaches that the Library has already tried with limited or no success; the Library is also looking into retaining a consultant that specializes in work flow and scheduling processes.
- Computer Services update: the hot spots are being shipped following a supply chain delay and will be ready for distribution early next month; the multi-function devices (printers/copiers) are being systematically replaced with new models; training will begin for the new Skilltype staff development platform; Kristen Edson completed the third application for the Emergency Connectivity Fund, which was certified and submitted on May 3rd; the inventory management firm has returned on site for additional tagging and upgrading their previous work; the budget app is now ready for staff use.
- Library administrative staff has begun discussions with Bradbury Miller, the executive recruitment firm that will conduct the search for a new Library Director; they suggested scheduling a meeting with the Search Committee and other Board members in late July; this would allow for interviews to begin in early December.
- Yesterday, Library staff met with Mayor-president Sharon Weston Broome and the new Chief of Staff, Dante Bidwell, to discuss issues with purchasing, the low compensation rate, and scheduling issues for library employees.
- The Library is beginning its hurricane preparedness throughout the system.
- The summer school nutrition program released its schedule for lunch delivery; most branches located within the East Baton Rouge Parish school district will be a host site for school-aged children to pick up free lunches.
- Board members and Library staff discussed job openings listed on the City's website and difficulties the Library is facing in filling vacant positions at every classification level.

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

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

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY – Spencer Watts and Patricia Husband (4:52 p.m.)

- The architects have submitted an updated project schedule; construction documents should be delivered on June 24th; Library staff and Architectural Services will have a month to review and submit questions and corrections; the projected bid date will be in early August, with construction possibly beginning in late November or December; brief discussion on the project timeline once construction begins.
- The April 22nd meeting included reviews of signage and furniture.
- The May 2nd meeting included discussions on types of signs and way-finding signs; also discussed emergency exit locations and information on electrical systems for card access, RFID and other systems.
- The May 12th meeting focused on AV needs, as well as a final review of AV requirements throughout the building, as well as security and surveillance.
- Board members and Library staff discussed security lighting, reduction of light pollution, and types of exterior lighting commonly used at other libraries located in residential areas.

B. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY – Spencer Watts (5:03 p.m.)

- The Board was shown photos of the new exterior elevation drawings and the new canopy that will replace the porte-cochere at the building's entrance; will also allow for additional ADA parking spaces near the entrance.
- More natural light will be allowed to filter into the building, creating a feeling of lightness and openness; original architectural elements at the entrance of the building will be more prominent; higher ceilings will also provide a line of sight to the back of the building from the main entrance.
- Board members and Library staff discussed public transportation enhancements in the local area; there is also a multi-agency project pursuing a federal grant to enhance crossing walks, sidewalks and transit access in the area.

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. SETTING OF DATE FOR SPECIAL 2023 BUDGET WORK SESSION – Jason Jacob (5:16)

- City-Parish Finance is requesting departmental budgets be approved by the end of July; library staff would need to finalize the workshop budget before the regular July Board meeting for a final vote of approval.
- Four dates and times have been chosen as possible options; Board members will receive a survey to select which days and times would work best for their schedules.

VII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL – No comments were made.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Delores Watts and seconded by Donald Luther, Jr. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:21 p.m. by unanimous vote.**