

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**  
**JULY 21, 2022**  
**4:00 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER – Jason Jacob, Board President (4:05 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 – Present

Martha Guarisco, Board Treasurer – Present

Delores Watts – Present (4:07 p.m.)

Donald Luther, Jr. – Present

Kathy Wascom – Present (4:13 p.m.)

Nicole Allmon-Learson – Present (4:27 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, Assistant Library Business Manager; Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director; Daniel Dearing, Network Technician I; Adam St. Pierre, Librarian II, and Wesley Morgan, Librarian I.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 16, 2022 – A motion to approve was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Martha Guarisco. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

II. SPECIAL ORDERS – There were no Special Orders.

III. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:06 p.m.)

- For 2022, operating expenditures through June 30<sup>th</sup> are 40.84% of the operating budget. Through June, we should have spent no more than 50% of the budget.
- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2022 remain slightly ahead of those collected in 2021, as we are approximately 0.45% ahead of the same seven months last year.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:08 p.m.)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
- Mary Stein showed the Board pages from The Advocate newspaper that featured programs occurring at the Main Library.
- Over 1,000 patrons have registered for the summer reading program through the Beanstack app; the adult program has the highest number of registrants that it has ever had; the children’s program has logged over 650,000 minutes read by participants and acquiring over 40,000 badges.
- Summer feeding was held at most branches; the Library system has been busy engaging children with both virtual and in-person programs and events, including the installation of new AWE computers.
- The Carver Branch Library hosted Carver Cubs Kids Camp, which partners with the LSU Department of Education Home Scholars that includes teachers promoting reading and literacy; this year’s camp featured players from the LSU football team who read books to participants on the final day of camp.
- The Library is now circulating new games and activity kits; patrons are donating gently used and new games for the collection.
- The Wi-Fi 2 Geaux pilot project has been very successful, especially at the Pride-Chaneyville Branch Library; two additional library branches were added to the circulation; over 520 circulations have been logged since the program’s inception on June 7, 2022.

- The Main Library hosted an author talk for Mary Manhein, also known as, “The Bone Lady”, as she debuts her new book, *Cities of the Dead*.
- The Library’s Career Center is hosting “Cool Careers,” a series aimed toward teens that highlights different types of careers, such as healthcare, construction and forensic science.
- In partnership with the Library, the Baton Rouge Parents Magazine rededicated their sponsored “family room” space at the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport to reflect a learning lab; Children’s Services staff attended the rededication ceremony.
- The Library hosted several public meetings over the past month, such as Unity Fest, Summer of Hope, Heal the Block, and MOVEBR: Old Hammond Hwy.
- The Virtual Author Series with the Library Speakers Consortium continues to be successful; includes both fiction and non-fiction authors.
- Author Jon Gordon was this month’s speaker for the Business Forum webinar; next month’s guest will be author Whitney Johnson.
- The Library’s annual Micro-Con event will be held the first weekend of August at the Main Library.

## C. OTHER REPORTS

### 1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:25 p.m.)

- The waiting period for the cooling coil for Central Branch Library’s HVAC system is now 4 to 6 weeks, (instead of 10 to 14 as previously predicted); dehumidifiers have been placed in the building to assist with high levels of humidity.
- The Outreach Services building received error codes on the rooftop HVAC units; the issue is being resolved by the installation company, per the preventative maintenance contract.
- Issues arose with the air conditioning unit at Jones Creek Regional Library, but were resolved by cooperation between Facilities staff, the manufacturer, and the installer.
- A build-up of condensation on chilled waterlines at Pride-Chaneyville Branch Library was reported and will be closely monitored; the branch is scheduled to have the chiller replaced later this year.
- Roof leaks occurred at Zachary Branch Library in the compact shelving area, which is a continuing problem area; patches were installed to stop the leaks; Eden Park Branch Library also sustained a few minor roof leaks after a recent rain event.
- Library staff met with a landscaper on July 15<sup>th</sup> to plan and discuss a new project for planting options on the rooftop terrace at the Main Library; the current agave plants are not surviving well, due to lacking the right amount of soil; a new plan was created in hopes to begin the project before the end of the year.
- The vendor repaired the large vehicular gate in the shipping yard area at the Main Library; the parts for the access control system should be arriving within a few months of the predicted delivery timeframe.
- The Main Library’s concierge elevator is now working again; it was out of service while awaiting parts needed for repair; the preventative maintenance contract for the elevators will be revised.
- The contractor for the Jones Creek Regional Library renovation project continues to work on outstanding punch list items; the final two items include installation of the plaque and adjusting the heavy study room doors.
- Phase 2 of the Outreach Services renovation project will include new cooling units for the reflective server room, as well as resurfacing the parking lot and fence repairs; will go out to bid within the next month.
- A pre-construction meeting was held June 20<sup>th</sup> for the multi-branch roofing and exterior restoration project; it was agreed that a pre-mobilization meeting will be held at each project location two weeks prior to beginning work; the first meeting will be held July 27<sup>th</sup> at Zachary Branch Library, with work to begin on or around August 15<sup>th</sup>.

### 2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts, Adam St. Pierre and Wesley Morgan (4:33 p.m.)

- Adam St. Pierre and Wesley Morgan demonstrated to the Board a virtual reality simulation of the Library’s circulating headset and software that provides skilled trades training; the Library is seeking to purchase eight new headsets that will provide a more integrated user experience for the SkillMill virtual training; the East Baton Rouge Parish Library system is only the second library in the nation to begin circulating this type of virtual training; discussion on what other skilled industry trainings could be added to the programming and eligibility for trade certification.
- Update on COVID-19: Over the past month, 14 new infections among staff at branches and 14 cases at the Main Library; staffing levels remain thin, and the recent infections have caused additional stress in maintaining adequate coverage.
- The Fairwood Branch Library will not be affected by the widening of Old Hammond Road; the branch’s setbacks and buffers will be sufficient; some patrons may be impacted by the closure of the Flannery Road

bridge for several months; a roundabout will be built at the intersection with Flannery Road, along with a median strip in the highway.

- Computer Services Update: The VDI project is in its final stages with installation of additional terminals; Kristen Edson will meet with community center directors for implementing the more robust Wi-Fi hotspots; self-checkout usage continues to hover around 24% to 25%; staff continue to record all issues related to RFID equipment.
- The Baker Branch Library renovation project will likely appear on the Board meeting agenda beginning in August or September; Library staff met with the architects and Architectural Services on July 7<sup>th</sup>, and they discussed the following:
  - Two schematic options presented by the architect exceeded the amount of square footage to be allowed for expansion; the plans will have to be modified by the architect.
  - The architect presented a useful site plan that included a second entrance at the Jefferson Street side of the property; will present the option to Baker officials to consider.
  - Library staff did not approve the proposed layout of interior spaces; there were a number of issues, including the failure to make the best use of the existing space.
  - The next meeting with the architect is scheduled for July 27<sup>th</sup>.
- A patron pulled the fire alarm at the Main Library on July 19<sup>th</sup>, causing the evacuation of the building; the individual was identified through security footage and will be suspended from the library for one year.
- The Main Library was eliminated as a possible location for installation of the hearing loop technology, mainly due to the terrazzo flooring and high cost; will be easier to include the technology as new spaces are built.
- Baker Branch Library was closed on July 1<sup>st</sup> due to lack of water service and HVAC; Central Branch Library will be closed July 22<sup>nd</sup> for a planned power outage by Demco.

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 (5:19 p.m.)

- Construction documents were delivered via Dropbox on July 18<sup>th</sup>; printed copies were ordered on July 20<sup>th</sup>; the specifications and manual have not yet been completed or delivered.
- The Board was shown a photo of the parking and landscaping site plan; the library will have 70 off-street parking spaces and 14 on-street spaces; discussion on the closest building entrance near the parking spaces.
- A furniture meeting was held July 5<sup>th</sup> and covered the following topics:
  - Review of laminates for display cases, finish options for end panels, and upholstery choices
  - Type of lectern has yet to be selected; also reviewing Teen Services computer and lounge chairs.
  - The configuration of the conference room has yet to be finalized
  - Animal-shaped seats will be added to the Children Services area; the wall treatments for Teens and Children's will be moved to their corresponding south wall
  - The proposed sliding barn door for the story time room entrance is too big; Library staff have proposed use of a smaller sliding door
  - Library staff are requesting the delayed egress for the emergency exit from the courtyard to be a 15 second delay with a buzzer notification at the Children's, Teen's and Circulation desks, as well as a loud signal at the exit.

##### B. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY – Spencer Watts and Patricia Husband (5:30 p.m.)

- Meetings were held June 30<sup>th</sup> and July 5<sup>th</sup> with library staff, the architects, the interior designer, and Architectural Services.
- The June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting included the following topics:
  - Fence and gate replacement along the south perimeter of the property
  - Construction phasing and adapting the Archives building for public use as a temporary library during renovations; a ramp will need to be installed
  - General design items, such as use of gutters at the entrance
  - Discussion on lighting selection and use of LED lights; recessed lights and colored trim lighting to include red, copper, orange and blue

- Review of millwork in the staff workroom, Children Services, Teen Services, meeting rooms, and Black Heritage; storage options will be replicated from the Jones Creek Regional Library configurations; library staff are reviewing the architect's revised drawings and will submit comments
- The architects suggested vertical vinyl signage due to low ceiling heights, similar to ones used at Greenwell Springs Regional Library; will also provide some color
- Paint and flooring finishes were also reviewed; splashes of color will be placed strategically throughout the building; some flooring will also contain color
- Library staff received a set of 80% complete construction documents; prioritization was given to sheets that need review at this time.
- The July 13<sup>th</sup> meeting was held to introduce the technology consultant to the architects and electrical engineer; intention is to standardize the library's AV equipment to make it easier for patrons and staff to use; a power and data meeting was held today, and another one is scheduled for next week.

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

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

### A. VOTE TO ADOPT PROPOSED 2023 LIBRARY BUDGET – Jason Jacob (5:36 p.m.)

- Jason Jacob thanked the Board and library staff for their hard work and dedication to putting together the proposed budget.
- Spencer Watts also thanked the Board for their work at last month's budget work session; additional information was received by Architectural Services to clarify their guidance for construction costs to allow for a 20% increase for this year alone, based on last year's estimate; the budget was adjusted for an additional \$2.2 million to be distributed among the following projects: the new South Branch Library, Scotlandville, Baker and Central Branch renovations, and the Outreach Services/Disaster Recovery building; adjustments would be transferred from the fund balance, as part of the capital pay-as-you-go plan.
- Spencer Watts also announced the Mayor-President's proposal for a 5% increase in employee pay; will have to be approved by the Metro Council; if passed, the budget will need to be readjusted; a resolution was drafted for the Board to approve the proposed budget while allowing for library staff to make any needed adjustments for funding a new compensation plan.
- Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to approve the 2023 proposed budget; a motion was made by Nicole Allmon-Learson and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously.**
- Donald Luther, Jr. read aloud the resolution and made a motion to amend the proposed budget to include the language of the resolution; Martha Guarisco seconded the motion. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

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

## VII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

- Donald Luther, Jr. thanked Adam St. Pierre and Wesley Morgan for their demonstration of the new virtual reality programming.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Delores Watts. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m. by unanimous vote.**

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Mr. Jason Jacob, President

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Mr. Spencer Watts, Library Director