

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
October 20, 2022
4:00 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – Jason Jacob, Board President (4:00 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 Stickle, Board Treasurer – Present

Delores Watts – Present (4:08 p.m.)

Donald Luther, Jr. – Present

Kathy Wascom – Present

Nicole Allmon-Learson – Absent

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; Noelle Allison, Network Technician I.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2022 AND THE STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2022 – A motion to approve was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Donald Luther, Jr. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

II. SPECIAL ORDERS – There were no Special Orders.

III. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:01 p.m.)

- For 2022, operating expenditures through September 30 are 62.24% of the operating budget. Through September, we should have spent no more than 75% of the budget.
- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2022 are ahead of those collected in 2021, as we are approximately 0.84% ahead of the same 10 months last year.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:03 p.m.)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
- The 45th Author-Illustrator program was held October 6 and 7, with David Biedrzycki.
- The next Business Forum in November will feature CEO of Lamar Advertising, Sean Reilly; the online Author Talks continue to be a great experience for patrons; these online programs are proficiently produced and offer access to excellent speakers.
- Other fall activities in the Library system have included badging at Jones Creek Regional Library; a plant swap at Bluebonnet Regional Library; a visit from Forensic Detective, Shayna Landry, at the Main Library; musical concerts; a Halloween costume giveaway; and the Red Stick Farmer’s Market at the Main Library.
- The Red Stick Roller Derby held a demonstration in the plaza at the Main Library; Dustin LaFont, of Front Yard Bikes, was featured on a CNN special and was a presenter at this year’s Maker Faire.
- The Library’s Maker Faire was held October 10-15; the theme was “Reduce, Reuse, Re-make”; makers from all age groups and different community sectors were in attendance; several Library employees also attended as makers; Chef Philippe Parola presented on invasive species and served a gumbo; the Baton Rouge “BeignYAYS” performed a celebration and distributed bio-degradable glitter.
- The Louisiana Book Festival will be held downtown on Saturday, October 29.

- GIS Day will be November 16; a program for adults will be held at the River Center Branch Library.
- In continuation of celebrating family gaming, the Library is hosting “Game On” on November 19 at the Main Library, in conjunction with International Gaming Day.
- An outdoor screening of the movie, “Hocus Pocus,” will be in the plaza at the Main Library on October 21 at 6:30 p.m.
- Mary Stein displayed a large thank-you card from one of the schools the Library visits as part of the Home Library Project; the children expressed their gratitude for the donated books.

C. OTHER REPORTS

1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:16 p.m.)

- Kristen Edson and Alvin Rattle attended a training with City-Parish Purchasing to meet the new Assistant Director of Purchasing and learn about new upcoming features; additional training will be conducted in the future.
- The vendor continues to work on configuring the FlowPath event and work order management software; Facilities staff will receive work order and vendor communication training on October 25.
- Quarterly preventative maintenance was performed on chillers and air handling units; the cooling towers at the Main Library are experiencing corrosion issues; Facilities staff are working with the preventative maintenance vendor to mitigate the issue.
- Light bulbs and ballasts were replaced throughout the system, including the Main Library.
- The carpet on the third floor of the Main Library was deep cleaned on October 8; City-Parish Purchasing approved the Library’s request to bid for a floor care package for the entire Library system.
- Room number chiclets were installed at the Main Library, River Center Branch Library and Jones Creek Regional Library on September 28; a quote was received to replace the cracked plastic signage inserts at the Main Library.
- The final acceptance for the low bid for the Outreach Services renovation project was presented last night at the Metro Council meeting; discussions continue on the value engineering for the concrete paving work.
- The minor branch improvements package has gone out for bid; a mandatory pre-bid meeting is scheduled for October 25; work includes painting, minor floor repairs, bathroom fixture replacements, lighting repairs, and sheet rock repairs at Carver, Delmont Gardens, Fairwood, Pride, and Zachary Branch Libraries.
- Work has still not begun on the multi-branch roof replacements project; a meeting was held September 27 with the architect, the contractor and Architectural Services to discuss the status; there is a design issue for the gutters to be installed and a shortage of material for a fastener; it was requested that work begin at Delmont Gardens, as that branch does not need new gutters.
- Library staff received the second set of revisions from the designer for the new monumental signs; a few minor changes will be submitted back to the designer; the Board will be presented with a visual of the new draft at the next Board meeting; the final design will be a standardization for the Library system.

2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts (4:24 p.m.)

- Mr. Watts commented on the Author-Illustrator program, expressing his appreciation and enjoyment of David Biedrzycki’s presentation.
- Progress has been stalled on the Baker Branch renovation project; Mr. Watts noted the dedication and able approach exercised by Sean Johnson with Architectural Services in working on difficulties with the design team; one of the main architects has resigned, and a new one has begun working with the principal architect; recent attempts to modify the design continue to need adjustment.
- Mr. Watts attended the City-Parish Personnel Board meeting on October 13; revisions for the Library Page and Library Aide job descriptions were approved; included updated revisions for administrating the skill test for Library Aides after the first six months of employment and on the job training.
- Computer Services update:
 - An RFP for development of a new website has been released by Purchasing; Mr. Watts expressed his appreciation for library staff who have worked on the project for the past three to four years, as well as the new Assistant Director of Purchasing, Paul Narcisse; a pre-proposal meeting will be held on November 10, with a deadline for questions set for November 21; the Library hopes to have a contract by March of 2023
 - The Library received the purchase order for the new PC and print management system, and staff are working on a new contract for a cabling provider
 - The Main Library’s PC’s are being replaced on the second and third floors, representing the last of the staff PC replacements for the library system during this cycle, with a new replacement cycle set to begin in 2024

- Self-check-out items total around 208,000, or 25% of circulation, so far this year
- The new WiFi hot spots circulated just under 2,000 times by the end of last month, for 741 patrons
- Library staff are testing enhancements to the Purchase Request App
- The Library has had only a few confirmed cases of Covid-19 over the past month; there has also been several reports of Influenza; the City-Parish is offering free flu shots until November 1; several Library branches are hosting the free shots, including the Main Library.
- Library staff attended the WRKF Founder's Day Luncheon, as well as Board member Kathy Wascom; author Steve Roberts gave a talk centered on his book about his wife, *Cokie: A Life Well-Lived*.
- Board members were given a draft of the Library's Employee Handbook; a vote to approve the updates will be placed on November's agenda; Library staff received suggestions, amendments and edits from the City-Parish Attorney, and made changes to the policy; many of the handbook's policies were previously approved, and are incorporated into the new document to make it more organized for Library staff use.
- The Library's 2023 requested budget continues to be reviewed by the City-Parish; Rhonda Pinsonat updated the Library's "charge back" listing with a total value of Library property; the Library also received its indirect cost notice for Central Services Support, which was an increase from the previous year.
- The property owner adjacent to the Eden Park Branch Library has replaced the fencing that he previously modified; it now sits on the appropriate property line.
- The Garden Café, located on the shared plaza for Independence Park and the Main Library, has closed; BREC announced it would be responsible for the operation of the building going forward.

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

IV. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – UPDATE FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE (4:37 p.m.)

- Board President Jason Jacob announced that the job posting has officially closed; seven applications were received.
- Board members were given the seven applications to review.
- A meeting will be held November 4 with consultants from the search firm to review the applications and select a group of semi-finalist candidates.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband and Mary Stein (4:38 p.m.)

- Library staff submitted their construction document comments last month; also met with the architects and Architectural Services to review the updated value engineering list.
- Issues that have been resolved included reducing the steel framing at the south entrance and changing the acoustical ceiling tiles, as well as other issues that were easy to resolve.
- New items and updates that were accepted included the following:
 - Lowering the courtyard curtain wall to 10 feet, instead of 12 feet
 - Lowering the height of tile on restroom walls
 - Removal of steel lattice on the north entry canopy and drop-off covering
 - Lowering the west wing roof by one foot
 - Removal of courtyard clerestory windows, to be replaced with brick instead of metal panels
 - Acceptance of a 12-inch reduction in width of windows on the south portion of the building to allow for more shelving space
- Several items are being readjusted for cost, including the following:
 - Removal of the wood wall along the top of the Circulation desk to add battens along the gypsum board wall; will give the illusion of board-and-batten
 - Changing dimensional letters to vinyl
 - Using millwork to construct the laptop table, instead of purchasing furniture
 - Uniform lowering of the meeting room ceiling was suggested, but did not provide a suitable cost benefit
- The largest unresolved issue is whether or not to use spandrel glass or metal panels along the east wall, and the west wall; Mr. Watts commented that the corrugated metal panels presented by the architect had too much of an industrial appearance; there was also deliberation on the number of panels to be used; the architects are working on different options and presented one alternate option earlier this week; the spandrel glass has a more pleasant appearance but is higher in cost.

- Question from Jason Jacob regarding the square footage of the new South Branch Library and the current Fairwood Branch Library; Patricia Husband responded that the new South Branch will be around 18,000 sq. ft., and Fairwood Branch is 15,800 sq. ft.; she also mentioned that Eden Park Branch Library is 14,000 sq. ft., and Carver Branch Library is 12,000 sq. ft.; the new South Branch Library will be closer in size to Zachary and Delmont Gardens Branch Libraries.
 - Mary Stein commented that the architects are gathering images of other buildings that have the metal panels.
 - Question from Kathy Wascom regarding if the changes mentioned are due to budget, aesthetics or function; Patricia Husband responded that some of it is due to simple functionality and design details, which is covered during preliminary and final reviews of floor plans and specifications; the value engineering review is focused more on the budget and how items can be altered to maintain functionality while saving costs.
- B. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband and Kristen Edson (4:52 p.m.)
- Library staff received construction documents on September 6 and sent comments to the architects and Architectural Services on October 7; notes included items that will be salvaged, as well as height placement of interactive monitors on the walls.
 - The public open house was held September 20; around 34 patrons attended, as well as Library staff; feedback was generally enthusiastic, and included appreciation for the larger meeting room, the enlargement of the Black Heritage space, and updated technology in the study rooms.
 - Library staff met with the architects on September 22 to present the feedback from the open house; a second sink will be placed in one of the meeting rooms, and another printer/copier station will be added, from staff suggestions based on patrons' use patterns.
 - Revisions for the meeting room changes will be sent back to the Library today; specification comments from Library staff were submitted earlier this week.
 - A meeting with the architect will be scheduled to discuss questions concerning the retractable stage; Library staff are also awaiting updates to the resilient flooring finishes, as the original choices are no longer available; the architect is also revising other specifications and will submit those to the Library later this month for review.
 - Kristen Edson commented that while attending the open house, she noticed a que of patrons waiting to use the copier; the suggestion for an additional printer/copier station was a great idea.
 - Donald Luther, Jr. commented that he enjoyed the open house and feels the new facility will be much better than the current one.

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. UPDATE ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS FOR PATRON RULES OF BEHAVIOR – Spencer Watts (4:57 p.m.)
- Board members were given the current rules to review; a vote to approve will be placed on next month's agenda.
 - Some of the updates address issues such as nudity on library property, bathing at any place on library property, prohibitions on fire and open flames at any place within buildings or on library property; and regulating the use of devices for heating or cooking, and similar equipment.
 - Library staff also submitted suggestions for updated rules; one of the most recent problems involves activities that interfere with patrons' use of public spaces approaching or adjacent to the library such as walkways, plazas, and courtyards; the rule change would be designed to limit actions by individuals or groups that may impede access to facilities or the normal use of exterior spaces.
 - Donald Luther, Jr. asked if the tobacco use policy could be extended to include the entire Library property; Mr. Watts responded that the Library follows the City-Parish ordinance but will review it.
- B. VOTE TO APPROVE UPDATED LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN – Spencer Watts and Mary Stein (5:01 p.m.)
- Mr. Watts thanked the Board member who were able to attend the September 22 strategic planning session; the session was highly productive, and valuable conversations resulted in practical enhancements to the plan.
 - Some of the highlights of the work session included the following:
 - Alternating the positions of the Mission and Vision Statements
 - Addition of literacy in the Vision Statement
 - Discussion of importance of Goals, Strategies and Values
 - Discussion on communicating the value of the Library's services, programs and content, to show the community there is a good return on its investment

- Changing the use of “customers” to “library patrons”
- Discussion and affirmation of the importance of including key descriptions of the nature of library collections
- Discussion on the need to expand and enhance staff development goals
- A motion to approve the updated Library Strategic Plan was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

C. VOTE TO ADOPT UPDATED MEETING ROOM USE POLICY – Kristen Edson and Mary Stein (5:04 p.m.)

- A motion to approve the updated Meeting Room Use Policy was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

D. VOTE TO SEND COMMENTS TO CITY-PARISH ADMINISTRATION REGARDING TAX ABATEMENT PROPOSAL – Spencer Watts (5:05 p.m.)

- A motion to defer to the Metro Council and not submit comments was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

E. APPOINTMENT OF EVALUATION COMMITTEE; ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF LIBRARY DIRECTOR – Jason Jacob (5:06 p.m.)

- Board president Jason Jacob asked Martha Stickle and Candace Temple to assist with conducting the evaluation.
- Spencer Watts commented that he will complete the self-evaluation and submit it to the Board by November 1.

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

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 Candace Temple and seconded by Donald Luther, Jr. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m. by unanimous vote.**