

REVISED AGENDA  
FOR REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL  
**OLD STATE CAPITOL  
HOUSE CHAMBERS**  
**100 NORTH BOULEVARD AT RIVER ROAD**  
**BATON ROUGE, LA 70801**  
AUGUST 20, 2009  
4:00 P.M.

- I. ROLL CALL
- II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 16, 2009
- III. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR
  - A. FINANCIAL REPORT
  - B. SYSTEM REPORT
  - C. OTHER REPORTS
- IV. OLD BUSINESS
  - A. MAIN LIBRARY LEED CONSULTATION
  - B. BURBANK PROPERTY UTILIZATION
- V. NEW BUSINESS
  - A. RIVER CENTER BRANCH LIBRARY FEASIBILITY PRESENTATION –  
MR. TREY TRAHAN – TRAHAN ASSOCIATES
- VI. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

**ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**THE PUBLIC IS ALLOWED TO MAKE COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AN AGENDA  
ITEM AT THE DISCRETION OF THE LIBRARY BOARD PRESIDENT. ANY  
COMMENTS NOT RELATED TO AN AGENDA ITEM MAY BE RECEIVED AND  
DISCUSSED OR DEFERRED TO A FUTURE MEETING UNDER PROCEDURES  
DIRECTED BY THE LIBRARY BOARD PRESIDENT.**

Revised Minutes of the Meeting of the  
East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control

August 20, 2009

The regular meeting of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control was held at the Old State Capitol in the House Chambers on August 20, 2009. Mr. Dan Reed, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Members of the Board present were Ms. Tanya Freeman, Mr. Stanford O. Bardwell, Jr., Mr. Donald Browning, and Ms. Kizzy Payton. Also in attendance were Mr. David Farrar, Library Director, Ms. Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director of Branch Services; Ms. Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director of Administration; Ms. Brenda Lovett, Library Business Manager, Ms. Rhonda Pinsonat, Assistant Library Business Manager, Ms. Liz Zozulin, Executive Assistant to the Library Director; and Ms. Nikki Essex of the Parish Attorney's Office. Mr. Davis Rhorer, Director of the Downtown Development District; Mr. William Palmer, Superintendent of BREC; Mr. Trey Trahan, and Mr. Mark Hash with Trahan Architects also attended. Approximately 100 others from the Library staff, and the community were present. Ms Sandy Davis, reporter and Arthur Lauck, photographer both with *The Advocate* were also in attendance. Absent from the meeting were Board members Mr. Jamie Griffin and Ms. Elizabeth Tomlinson.

The minutes of the regular meeting of the Library Board on July 16, 2009 were unanimously approved on a motion by Ms. Payton, and seconded by Ms. Freeman with three corrections.

**Reports by the Director**

Mr. Reed asked Mr. Farrar to present his financial and system reports. The Cash Collections report as of August 4, 2009 shows the total cash received on property taxes and interest in the amount of \$33,620,511.40. The Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Encumbrances as of July 31, 2009 shows operating expenditures of \$12,491,530.24 which is 46.29% of the operating budget for 2009. The expenditures for the Library are on track for July. The capital outlay of \$43,451.95 does not include the cost of the two outreach vans that have been requisitioned in the amounts of \$38,498 and \$19,914 for a total of \$58,412. For the year 2008, 98.41% of the property taxes and 97.99% of interest earned on property taxes have been collected. The City-Parish Finance Department has recorded two quarters of interest earned on cash and investments in the amount of \$331,961.44. This amount represents only 16% of the budgeted revenues collected. If this trend continues the Library will not meet the \$2,000,000 budgeted for interest earnings on investments. Mr. Farrar said the system reports included Gate Count for July, Circulation Statistics for June and July, Programming for May and Database Usage for July. Mr. Reed noted that on-line database usage is down so he encouraged patrons to increase their usage of the databases so that the East Baton Rouge Parish Library will regain its position as the highest user of these databases in the State.

Mr. Farrar announced that on August 6<sup>th</sup> Mr. Reed and the City-Parish Architectural Selection Board chose Bani, Carville & Brown Architects, Inc. to design the Fairwood Branch Library. Mr. Farrar has met with Mr. Richard Brown, one of the principals of the firm and they will tour

some of the branch libraries so that Mr. Brown will be familiar with some of the design features of our buildings. Mr. Reed added that Bani, Carville & Brown designed the beautiful Bluebonnet Regional Branch Library. He is confident that the firm will again create a good design for the Fairwood Branch. Mr. Farrar concluded his report by announcing that the statistics for the 2009 Summer Reading Program at the Library have exceeded the 2008 statistics.

## **Old Business**

### **A. Main Library LEED Consultation**

At the July 16<sup>th</sup> Library Board meeting Mr. Steve Jackson and Mr. Ken Tipton of The Library Design Collaborative discussed the need for a commissioning agent in order to comply with the requirements of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Reference Guide. The commissioning agent will ensure that the new Main Library will receive the designation of a LEED building. Mr. Reed said that the City-Parish Department of Public Works agrees that a commissioning agent is necessary. Therefore, Mr. Reed made a motion that the Library staff produce the documents in order for the Department of Public Works to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a LEED consultant. Mr. Bardwell seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

### **B. Burbank Property Utilization**

Since May 2009 the Library Board has been discussing the construction of a branch library on the donated property on Burbank Drive. The Board has looked at the suitability of the site and the potential size of a branch library on that site. Mr. Reed said that the Library Board would like to take action toward constructing a branch building. Because of her absence today, Ms. Tomlinson and Mr. Griffin have asked the Board to defer a decision and vote until next month. Mr. Reed asked the Board for their input on the deferment. Both Mr. Browning and Ms. Freeman said the Board should make a motion today regarding a branch library on the Burbank site. Therefore, Mr. Browning made a motion that a full size neighborhood library of approximately 15,000 square feet be built at the Burbank site, with minimum impact to the wetlands thereon, and that the sum of \$6 million be added to the 2010 budget for capital improvements. Ms. Freeman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

## **New Business**

### **A. River Center Branch Library Feasibility Presentation – Mr. Trey Trahan and Mr. Mark Hash – Trahan Architects**

Mr. Reed introduced Mr. Trey Trahan and Mr. Mark Hash of Trahan Architects and asked them to make their presentation of the River Center Branch Library Feasibility study. Mr. Trahan said that about a year ago his firm was asked to conduct a feasibility study for a downtown branch library. This study involved four phases; those being, analyzing the facilities in the current River Center Branch; renovating the current building; renovating and expanding the current building; and constructing a new facility. Mr. Trahan and Mr. Hash then directed the Board to a

PowerPoint presentation of their findings. Mr. Trahan emphasized that these ideas are not concrete plans, but are design studies for consideration. He added that they looked at how technology affects the library of today, how the library should be developed and what role a downtown branch library should have for downtown.

Mr. Hash said they looked at the River Center Branch and its location in downtown. It frames the Old State Capitol and is east of Galvez Plaza. It was constructed in the 1970's by John Desmond and Associates and was part of the four buildings comprising the Centroplex. However, the facility now does not connect with the area around it. Parking is critical to the success of a downtown branch, and there is parking downtown, but no on-site parking for library patrons.

The building consists of four floors which are isolated from each other. The first floor contains adult resources, periodicals, computer stations, and help and check-out desks. Children's Services occupies the second floor, the third floor houses resources and stacks, and the fourth floor is utilized for book storage, a conference room, the Career Center and the Baton Rouge Room. A monumental stairway only connects the first and second floor. As part of this study engineers analyzed the structure and concluded that it could not sustain any additional load. The engineers said that all building systems such as mechanical, electrical, and plumbing would need to be replaced including the exterior glazing and the roof. Upgrading the restroom facilities to be ADA compliant would be necessary. Additionally, the current facility has no storage capacity, has a low floor to ceiling height on each floor, and contains the original elevator which is very slow.

Mr. Trahan noted that a contemporary design such as the River Center Branch is authentic at the time of its construction, but over time it becomes outdated. The architects looked at precedent research involving the history and evolution of libraries including technological and cultural advancements. Libraries are now gathering places that are extroverted through the use of glass. These libraries become an urban living room connecting the interior of the building with the exterior.

The architects turned their attention to a program analysis based on a building program written by Ms. Denelle Wrightson of PSA Dewberry. With this building program in mind, if the Library Board decides to update the current facility, the architects recommend that the perimeter of the building contain reading spaces and circulation features; that a relationship be developed with the public square and North Boulevard, the city's green axis; and that a vertical foyer connect all floors. Mr. Trahan said it is also important to consider that the current site is near the Shaw Center and the courthouse and to also look at the various communal events that occur in downtown such as the Art Melt, Live after Five, Festival of Lights, Mardi Gras parades and Fest for All.

This renovation would not alter the original building, but would increase the square footage from 26,500 to 31,915 by in-filling the atrium area and modifying the south elevation. A second elevator could be placed on the east side. The existing south façade glazing could be replaced with pre-cast concrete panels which would make possible a new monumental stairway to connect

all four floors. The renovation would not provide on-site parking nor achieve complete programmatic requirements.

Mr. Trahan and Mr. Hash then discussed renovation and expansion possibilities for the building. Their concept drawings illustrate a scenario in which expansion could occur on the south side of the building increasing the square footage to 56,250. Entrances to the building could be located on North Boulevard and at Galvez Plaza. The building would be more visible to pedestrians walking on Third Street and St. Louis Street because the expansion would project past the north-east and south-west corners. The expansion could look like the pages of a book with circulation on the edges. In this option the strategy would be to reinforce the character of the original building while adding a contemporary look through the expansion.

This renovation and expansion would not provide on-site parking, but it would achieve complete programmatic requirements. It would require the infilling of the atrium and the reinforcement of some of the existing building. It would feature the replacement of the current elevator and the addition of a new one.

The architects then discussed their ideas for the construction of a new facility. The new facility would also be 56,250 square feet with about 100 parking spaces below the building. The entire façade of the building could look like the pages of a book with circulation on the edges of the building. The northeast perspective could expand with the possibility of outdoor reading areas. There could be more engagement with Galvez Plaza, the Mississippi River and the urban atmosphere. The building could be constructed with glass or a translucent material that would reflect light making the building look like a lantern at night. A spiraling foyer would allow for connections from floor to floor. The North Boulevard entrance could open to a lobby with a casual meandering atmosphere.

A new building would achieve complete programmatic efficiency and ease of use. A new facility would also foster technological upgrades over time. The open spaces and circulation would serve as visual deterrents and would also allow staff to roam and better serve patrons. Public restrooms could be integrated into the base of the building with exterior access to supplement community activities. The building could be compartmentalized to service after-hour events.

Mr. Reed thanked Mr. Trahan and Mr. Hash for their presentation. Mr. Reed said the designs were beautiful and liked the concept of the interface moving to the edges of the building. Mr. Trahan added that people are physically disconnected from the outside environment, but by moving activities to the perimeters of the building, people will be engaged with the outside. Mr. Hash stated that architects need to bring people into the environment. One of the questions to ask is, "What does this library mean to the community?" A feasibility study answers some of the questions, and also leads to additional questions and ideas. One of the considerations is how much renovation needs to be done. Too much renovation can result in the destruction of the original building.

Mr. Bardwell told the architects that he would like them to produce a bulleted list of the three options that were presented. A summary of each of the options would enable the Board to

review and understand what each option proposes. Mr. Bardwell also asked if the architects could include the cost in this summary. Ms. Freeman agreed with Mr. Bardwell's request. Mr. Trahan replied that they can provide a cost per square foot for each option, but that it would be a ball park figure and not a solid quotation. He added that sometimes when one renovates, the cost per square foot is actually more expensive than building new.

Ms. Freeman asked if 150 parking spaces were sufficient for a 56,000 square foot building to which Mr. Trahan said that the number of parking spaces is based on usable patron space. In a building of 56,000 square feet, 45,000 square feet are patron areas. The additional square footage contains such areas as mechanical and plumbing. So an allotment of 150 parking spaces is acceptable.

Several people in the audience wished to make comments or ask questions about the proposals. One citizen said he likes the sunken look and the transparent walls of the proposed new structure. Another patron commented that every time there is a festival type event downtown, the Library closes causing her to ask if a library downtown is necessary. Mr. Trahan noted that with a new design, the bottom floor could be accessible to the public even if the rest of the building were closed. Mr. Tom DuBos pointed out that the Board is being asked to spend tax dollars on an underused and overbuilt facility. Mr. DuBos further stated that all three of Mr. Trahan's options should be presented on paper.

Ms. Chris Nichols said that she and many of the downtown residents would like to know how much input residents will be able to have or will this decision about a downtown library be made by the Library Board alone. She said the residents of Beauregard Town and Spanish Town would like the opportunity to give their ideas. She added that she is a resident of Beauregard Town and she likes what she has seen today. She said her children would like a coffee shop in the library. She concluded by thanking the Board for the opportunity to speak.

Another citizen said that since the River Center Branch is under-utilized, why would the Library Board consider making any changes? Mr. Trahan replied that the current building does not have the technological advances that people want and that are available in the other library facilities. Downtown needs a fresh, dynamic new library branch. A new facility can have a significant impact on downtown. Young people are leaving Baton Rouge for more progressive cities. Mr. Hash added that the current building is not a destination library.

Mr. Davis Rhorer, Director of the Downtown Development District, then spoke and indicated that Advance Baton Rouge plans on operating two charter high schools downtown. They intend to use the downtown library. He added that the designs presented by Mr. Trahan are incredible. Mr. Reed thanked Mr. Rhorer for arranging to have the Library Board meeting downtown at the Old State Capitol.

Another member of the audience said that Mr. Trahan showed some iconic libraries. He asked where this library would rank. Mr. Trahan responded that we have built facilities that become outdated, but we should change our design to include forward thinking. Mr. Reed noted that Mr. Trahan has accomplished what the Library Board asked him to do. The Board will need to determine what option they can afford. Mr. Reed asked Mr. Farrar and Mrs. Stein to devise a

way for the Board to receive comments from the public. Mr. Farrar said that they will provide a link on the Library's website for the public to make comments and to also access Mr. Trahan's presentation.

Another member of the public asked about the number of people that could be expected to use a downtown library. Mr. Reed gave an example of the discussions that occurred during the design phase regarding an appropriate size for the new Scotlandville Branch Library. It was decided not to further increase the square footage of the initial design. He said the circulation statistics are not high, but the use of the building and its other resources by the community is high. Another citizen added that the day of the book is on its way out, and therefore, the Board should think past newspapers and books. Mr. Reed replied that the Library does support digital and entertainment resources such as *OverDrive*.

Mr. Reed concluded the discussion by saying that these issues will need to be studied and decided upon by the Library Board. He thanked the architects for their presentation.

### **Comments by the Library Board of Control**

Mr. Reed asked for comments from the Board members. Mr. Bardwell said that the Board has a charge to utilize the downtown library as a branch library. The Main Library and the destination library will be on Goodwood Boulevard. The facility downtown will be used by those in the downtown area. He added that when events are going on downtown, it does not mean that people will also want to use the library.

He further commented that he had been in Colorado recently visiting friends who had lived in Baton Rouge. They commented that patron service in the Genealogy Department in the Bluebonnet Regional Branch Library is excellent and is better than patron service in the Library of Congress. Mr. Bardwell congratulated our Bluebonnet staff. Mr. Farrar agreed and said kudos go to Ms. Cassandra Fedrick, genealogy librarian and her staff.

Ms. Freeman said she attended the American Library Association's Annual Conference in Chicago in July. Her conclusion is that the East Baton Rouge Parish Library is the best system. She attended many presentations and thought that the staff from our system could have made very successful presentations at this national conference.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Freeman seconded by Mr. Reed.

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Dan Reed, President

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David Farrar, Library Director