

TENTATIVE AGENDA  
FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING WORK SESSION OF THE  
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL  
**EDEN PARK BRANCH LIBRARY**  
**MEETING ROOM**  
**5131 GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD**  
**BATON ROUGE, LA 70806**  
**AUGUST 10, 2013**  
**9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.**

I. ROLL CALL

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION – MODERATED BY MS. DIANE BROWN, DEPUTY  
STATE LIBRARIAN, STATE LIBRARY OF LOUISIANA

III. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

**ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BOARD'S PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY, ALL ITEMS ON WHICH ACTION IS TO BE TAKEN ARE OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT, AND COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS MAY BE RECEIVED ON OTHER TOPICS REPORTED AT SUCH TIME AS THE OPPORTUNITY IS ANNOUNCED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OR THE PERSON CONDUCTING THE MEETING.**

Minutes of the Strategic Planning Work Session of the  
East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control

August 10, 2013

The Strategic Planning Work Session of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control was held in the meeting room of the Eden Park Branch Library on Saturday, August 10, 2013. Mr. Travis Woodard, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Members of the Board present were Mr. Stanford O. Bardwell, Jr., Mr. Charles P. “Chip” Boyles, Jr., Ms. Tanya Freeman, and Mr. Jason Jacob. Absent from the meeting was Board member, Ms. Kizzy Payton. Also in attendance were Mr. Spencer Watts, Library Director, Ms. Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director of Branch Services, Ms. Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director of Administration, Ms. Liz Zozulin, Executive Assistant to the Library Director; and Ms. Diane Brown, Deputy State Librarian, State Library of Louisiana. Also present was one member of the community.

Mr. Woodard asked Ms. Zozulin to take the roll which she did. Ms. Freeman arrived at 9:15 a.m.

**New Business**

**A. Strategic Planning Session – Moderated by Ms. Diane Brown, Deputy State Librarian, State Library of Louisiana**

Mr. Woodard said the Board was meeting today to begin updating the strategic plan for the East Baton Rouge Parish Library. He noted that the last formal planning session by the Board was held in 2011. He introduced Ms. Diane Brown. Ms. Brown is the Deputy State Librarian at the State Library of Louisiana.

Ms. Brown began the session by presenting a list of what the outcomes of this meeting would be:

- Reviewed Strategic Planning Process
- Examined Data of the Past Two Years
- Identified Overarching Goals
- Brainstormed Strategies

She said she would function today as a facilitator as she had done during their strategic planning session in 2011. She will help the group to stay focused on the topics they need to address. Ms. Brown said she will keep a list of topics that might come up that are not part of the agenda today, but that they may not want to forget. She called these items parking lot topics.

The group began their work with a visioning exercise. Each Board member was given three strips of paper and asked to complete the sentence on each to produce a “bumper sticker-type” message. The sentences were *My Library is \_\_\_\_\_.*; *My Library does \_\_\_\_\_.*; and *My Library could \_\_\_\_\_.* Ms. Brown noted that the first sentence illustrates

what the Library is. The second sentence describes what currently goes on in the Library, and the third refers to the future.

Ms. Brown noted that a vision describes where the Board wants the Library to be. The role of Library Board members is to represent the public and to define the vision for the Library. The staff carries out the vision by developing the elements and the specific goals for the patrons.

Ms. Brown then gave an overview of the strategic planning process. She quoted the definition of strategic planning from *The Free Management Library* ([www.nonprofits.org/npofaq/03/22.html](http://www.nonprofits.org/npofaq/03/22.html)) as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future. She then described the reasons to plan; the elements/issues of the strategic planning process; what may come from a long range strategic plan; and considerations and precautions.

Ms. Brown noted that the strategic plan that they will begin to work on today will encompass the years from 2015 – 2025. This will coincide with the next tax renewal period and election in 2015. Ms. Freeman asked who would write this plan since they do not have Ms. Christee Atwood as a consultant this year. Ms. Brown replied that the Board and the staff should decide who will write the plan. Her advice was that they choose one person to write it with a review by the Board members and administrative Library staff.

Ms. Brown then gave the participants a copy of the current strategic plan for the years 2005 – 2015. They reviewed the Core Values which are the following:

**Focus on customer:** We demonstrate customer focus through flexibility, respect, inclusiveness and responsiveness.

**Strive for excellence:** We achieve excellence through enthusiasm, expertise, innovation and evaluation.

**Foster teamwork:** We create a team environment through respect for staff and their contributions, commitment to staff development, accountability, open communication, informed decision-making and risk taking.

**Increase community collaborations:** We foster dynamic collaborations with other agencies to offer opportunities for more effective and efficient services.

The Board members agreed on adding some statements to the Core Values for the East Baton Rouge Parish Library System. This included the idea that the Library has a leadership role in the state and even the nation. They also felt that they should emphasize the teamwork the Library fosters with its stakeholders. They also wanted to begin the statements of each value with an action word rather than the word “we”.

Next Ms Brown directed them to the mission and vision statements in the current strategic plan. Ms. Brown defined the mission statement as the reason why the organization exists and the vision as a statement of what the organization is and can become.

**Mission**

The mission of the East Baton Rouge Parish Public Library is to serve all of the residents of the parish as an educational, informational, recreational and cultural center through a wide variety of resources, services and programs.

The Library contributes to the quality of life, enjoyment, enlightenment and economic vitality of our diverse and dynamic community.

**Vision**

The East Baton Rouge Parish Library system will contribute to the success of our community by becoming a vital center of learning, knowledge, communication, culture and enjoyment for all residents.

The Library will:

- Offer services that meet the needs of our diverse neighborhoods
- Provide welcoming spaces
- Build strong collections
- Support relevant technology
- Employ well-trained, friendly and flexible staff

After a brief discussion they agreed that the mission statement needed to be shorter. Ms. Brown said that the goals and the objectives in the current plan were broad and well stated.

Next Ms. Brown distributed a document produced by the Library Board at their 2011 strategic planning session. It outlined what they considered the physical, social, economic, educational, and recreational/cultural needs of the community. At that meeting the Board summarized these needs into a list of priorities in East Baton Rouge Parish over the next five years. The list included the following:

- Better Access to Cultural and Recreational Activities
- Workforce Development
- Literacy
- Arts/Creativity
- ESL
- Children and Parental Services
- Meeting Spaces
- Personal and Professional Development
- Lifelong Learning
- Senior Service

Ms. Brown then said that the senior staff of the Library had met after the Library Board strategic planning session in 2011. These senior staff members participated in their own visioning exercise. They listed priorities for the Library such as:

- Library on the Run
- Box Libraries
- Netflix-type Resources
- Continue School Outreach Services
- More Programs for Seniors
- More Community Outreach
- Security

Ms. Brown then discussed the patron feedback that the staff received at each branch during the “Geek Week” events conducted in the fall of 2012. She noted the following priorities of patrons:

- Wireless Printing
- More Programs and Classes
- Fountains
- More Resources for Teens
- Internet
- Wireless
- More and Newer Technology; More Computers that are Up to Date
- Technology to Create and Make Something such as Editing Audio and Video
- Technology and Computer Training
- E-books and e-Book Readers with Easier Downloading Features
- Easier to Access the Library
- Allowing Eating and Drinking in the Library
- Social Media Access and Instruction for Its Use
- Longer Hours
- More and Better Meeting Spaces
- Math Classes
- More Books

Ms. Brown added that among teens they requested access to the Internet, wifi, programs and classes. Mr. Watts noted that many of the requests have been addressed and are now available.

Ms. Brown asked the Board to review their priority list from 2011 and to update their list. Mr. Elwin Burns, a member of the community, said he wished to speak. He said that some boys had broken a window at the Eden Park Branch Library after hours. He requested that they enhance security lighting for the building to discourage this type of behavior. Ms. Freeman replied that the solution to this situation requires more than additional security lights; these individuals need mentoring. Ms. Brown placed this request under the parking lot category to be addressed by the Library staff.

The Board members then updated the priority list. They deleted ESL (English as a Second Language) as this is not a pressing need in this parish.

The following were the additional priorities that they decided upon:

- Technology
- Mentoring (Students and Youth)
- Building Maintenance
- Staff Development (Retention/Motivation)
- Café (Coffee and Food)
- STEM Education (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)
- Maker Spaces
- Early Childhood and Teen Services
- More Space (Renovations, Repurpose, Expand)
- Collections (Content of All Types)
- Security
- Diversity of Services
- Marketing, Outreach and Visibility
- Customer Centric Services
- Racial Sensitivity

Mr. Burns had mentioned during this discussion the need for staff to be motivated to provide good customer service and the need for racial sensitivity.

Ms. Brown then asked the Board members to form two groups to participate in a group envisioning exercise. She asked them to brainstorm how they would see the Library in six or seven years. She asked them to consider these questions as they worked.

- Why are you going to the Library?
- How are you getting to the Library?
- What are you thinking about as you travel to the Library?
- What does the Library look like outside?
- How is the Library laid out inside?
- What are they doing inside?
- What signage and resources are inside?
- What is the atmosphere like?
- What is the staff doing?

After the group envisioning exercise they presented the results of their discussions. The following is a summarized list categorizing how the Board members saw the Library of the future:

- More Technology/Machines
- Less Staff
- Less Public Money
- More Partnerships
- More Diverse Population

- Different Ages-Most Younger
- Diversity of Services
- More Businesses Using the Library
- More Marketing, Advocacy, Build Awareness
- Re-package What We Have
- Staff Going Out to Promote Awareness

Mr. Watts mentioned that they would continue and enhance training for staff to make the public aware of the Library's resources. Mr. Woodard agreed that this is important so that the Library can reach the audience that may never come to one of the Library's facilities.

Mr. Burns then held up the pocket *Source* and said this was a very good way to reach people. He suggested putting the phone number of each branch on the bookmark size *Source*. Ms. Freeman noted that she had suggested these be created several years ago to market the Library's programs.

Ms. Brown distributed an article entitled *Communicating with Local Decision Makers* by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. She suggested they read the document while they had lunch.

The Board members then discussed their ideas on why the public will come to the Library citing such reasons as for social interaction, to obtain unique collections, and for classes and programs. As to how the public would get to the Library, they felt patrons would access library resources virtually, digitally and in person. They also agreed that facilities would have a variety of spaces and unique service delivery through technology such as holographic assistance.

Ms. Brown then asked the Board to imagine the Library in five years and discuss what trends and needs would be most important. From this discussion they formulated a list of goals. They ranked these in order of importance with the following being the most important to the Board:

- Technology
- Social Atmosphere
- Money
- Marketing

Ms. Brown asked the Board members to look at each goal and write down their ideas on how the Library will reach these goals.

**Technology**

1. Materials-hardware and software
2. Training
3. Cutting Edge Spaces
4. Social Aspect as a Business Tool, for Marketing and Provide Classes
5. Digital Collections

### **Social Atmosphere**

1. Environment
2. Events and Programs
3. Physical Space (Collaborative)
4. Staff

### **Money**

1. Alternate Funding Sources
2. Foundation
3. Tax Renewal
4. Sustainable Funding
5. Partnerships

### **Marketing**

1. Plan
2. Implementation
3. Market the Plan

Ms. Brown noted that these goals become the vision that the Library Board has for the Library system. She said that now that the Board has listed their goals she would share some goals that the senior staff of the Library cited about two months ago.

- Go Out to Patrons
- Communications Plan
- Marketing
- Technology
- Establish a Foundation
- RFID
- Augment Services (especially to 9-11 year old patrons)

Ms. Brown then said that the next step would be that later this year, or early in 2014, Mr. Watts will present a draft strategic plan to the Board. The Board will make their comments and changes which will be incorporated into the final document. The Board will then approve the document.

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

Ms. Freeman asked if marketing will begin next year. Mr. Watts replied that marketing research will be implemented because the Board approved a budget item for this in the proposed 2014 budget.

Ms. Freeman also asked about the upcoming tax election in 2015. Ms. Brown offered several insights about library tax renewal elections. She noted that it is good to schedule a positive event or program at election time so that the public are reminded of the good service that the Library provides. She added that the people who can most assist in achieving a positive campaign result

are supporters of the Library. They can encourage others to support the Library. She also stated that the Library staff cannot get involved in campaigning or asking patrons to vote. Their role can only be to provide information. They cannot spend public money or use work time to promote the passage of the tax. Ms. Stein noted that prior to the 2005 election, Ms. Rannah Gray, a media consultant, donated her services to the Library. She ran the Library's campaign and formed a PAC (Political Action Committee) to accept monetary donations to pay for the campaign materials.

The Board wanted to be sure that all of their comments that were placed on the chart paper during the work session would be preserved. Ms. Brown said that Ms. Zozulin would write the minutes of the meeting and would also transcribe the notes from the chart paper.

There were no additional comments by the Board.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

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Travis Woodard, President

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Spencer Watts, Library Director