

**TENTATIVE AGENDA
FOR THE MEETING OF THE
SPECIAL AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
FOR THE STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF
A BOOKMOBILE FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH
BOARD ROOM OF THE MAIN LIBRARY
7711 GOODWOOD BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LA 70806
APRIL 29, 2009
10:00 A.M.**

- I. ROLL CALL**
- II. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS**
- III. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**
- IV. GENERAL DISCUSSION**
 - A. SITE SELECTION CRITERIA**
 - B. EQUIPMENT CHOICES**
 - C. INVENTORY SELECTIONS**
 - D. SEASONAL VARIATION**
 - E. OTHER**
- V. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
- VI. ADJOURN**

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Ad Hoc Committee of the
East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control
for the Study of the Application of a Bookmobile for Community Outreach

April 29, 2009

The first meeting of the Special Ad Hoc Committee of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control for the Study of the Application of a Bookmobile for Community Outreach was held in the Board Room of the Main Library on Wednesday, April 29, 2009. Mr. Stanford O. Bardwell, Jr., Chairman of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:17 a.m. Members of the Committee present were Ms. Tanya Freeman, Library Board member, Ms. Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director of Administration; Ms. Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director of Branch Services, Mrs. Jenola Duke, Chair of the Education Team for the Children's Coalition of Greater Baton Rouge, and Ms. Patience Travasos, Preschool Resource Coordinator for the East Baton Rouge Parish Public Schools. Also in attendance were Library Board member, Mr. Donald Browning, Mr. David Farrar, Library Director; Ms. Pabby Arnold, Library Division Head of Children's Services, and Ms. Liz Zozulin, Executive Assistant to the Library Director. Also present were Mr. John Berry, Mr. Tom DuBos, and Mrs. Gayle Smith, members of the community.

Introduction of Members of the Ad Hoc Committee

Mr. Bardwell asked each member of the committee to introduce herself and state her group affiliation. Mr. Bardwell also recognized Ms. Pabby Arnold, Library Division Head of Children's Services and the members of the community who were present.

Statement of Purpose

Mr. Bardwell said that at the Library Board of Control meeting on April 16, 2009 an ad hoc committee was appointed by Mr. Dan Reed, Board President, to continue a detailed discussion of the issues presented at that Board meeting involving library outreach, including the use of a bookmobile. This committee is to report their findings and recommendations to the full Library Board. He said that he would like the members of the committee to create a statement of the purpose of this ad hoc committee. Ms. Freeman referenced the document produced by the library staff about outreach and bookmobiles that was distributed at the Board meeting. She continued that under the section entitled the *Role of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library System*, it states the following as the role of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library:

- to serve all of the people of the parish as an informational, educational, cultural, and recreational center through a wide variety of materials, services and programs;
- to acquire, organize and administer books and related educational and informational materials in order to enlighten the citizens of the parish and to enrich their lives;

- to provide a total self-directed educational opportunity for all ages and social conditions;
- to sponsor or provide programs, activities, and materials which encourage constructive use of leisure time;
- and to be the major community outlet for continuing education in the broad spectrum of human endeavor.

Ms. Freeman added that the mission of the Library is reflected in the Library's *Strategic Plan 2005 -2015*. The committee is to explore the viability of and the specific role of a bookmobile in carrying out the mission statement of the Library. Ms. Freeman added that the committee should have documentation to support their findings. Mrs. Duke said that a statement of purpose will illustrate to the public that the Library has a strategic plan.

Mr. DuBos, a member of the community, said he thought that the committee was appointed to focus on a bookmobile and make a recommendation to the Library Board. Mr. Bardwell said that the primary function of the committee is to study the use of a bookmobile, but that he does not want to limit the discussion to just which bookmobile they prefer. The need and the uses for this vehicle should be included. Ms. Stein noted that the answer could be a bookmobile or even another type of vehicle. Ms. Husband said they need to discuss what they wish to accomplish such as fostering literacy, or teaching people to read, or getting library materials to people who do not go to a library building. Ms. Freeman said that they are formulating action steps. Ms. Stein asked if the committee wants to create a document similar to the *2006-2011 Community Plan for Children* produced by the Children's Coalition of Greater Baton Rouge. Mr. Bardwell said he wanted just a statement of the purpose. Mr. Farrar added that they should include fostering awareness of library services as well as the literacy component.

After this discussion the committee agreed that the following would be the statement of purpose:

To explore the application of a bookmobile in furtherance of the mission of the Library. Such an application would have as its objective, increasing interest in reading and, facilitating an increased awareness of library services and programs.

General Discussion

A. Site Selection Criteria

Mr. Bardwell said that what he means by site selection criteria is where the bookmobile would go in the parish. He emphasized that it should encompass the entire parish. Ms. Stein noted that historically a bookmobile would park in a place for a given amount of time, and patrons would come to the bookmobile. She said that today a bookmobile usually travels to a site with a built-in audience.

Ms. Freeman said that this committee will not decide where the bookmobile is to go, but rather they will make recommendations to the Library Board for a Board decision. She said she spoke to several Metropolitan Council members about this service, and that it will be important to

inform the members of the Council so that they can support this service in their districts. Mr. Farrar agreed that they could look at the Council districts to determine where the bookmobile could go. Mr. Bardwell agreed that they should look at the Council districts. Ms. Stein said that at risk children live in every district of the parish. Ms. Freeman added that security is also very important in choosing sites.

Ms. Husband again referred the committee to the document that the Library staff produced and that was distributed at the last Board meeting. She quoted from the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS) regarding the criteria for establishing and maintaining bookmobile stops (Part I, Section 1.4 of *Association of Bookmobiles and Outreach Services Guidelines 2008*). She added that there could be more than one target population.

Ms. Stein said that many parents in at risk areas will not allow their children to check out books because of the financial implications if those books are not returned. Mr. Farrar said that statistics show that the cost of collecting on overdue materials is not cost effective for a bookmobile. He added that the Library could give away books in these situations. If books are given away, this would need to be a recurring expense in the Library budget. Once a service is offered, it should not be discontinued. Ms. Freeman said a Library Foundation could aid in this process.

Ms. Stein said that the outreach vehicle can offer more than checking out of books. Computers can be available along with programs given by the library staff. Mrs. Duke said they have found that they need to get parents involved in the process of literacy. She said a “make and take” activity is helpful. Ms. Arnold said that the children need to be read to so that they are ready to learn to read. When computers with the Internet are accessible, children will not handle the books. She said the special Advanced Workstations in Education (AWE) computer that they have in the Children’s Services Division is helpful for developing reading readiness. Mr. Bardwell added that the focus should be on enhancing an interest in learning. Mr. Farrar noted that he had approved the purchase of twelve new AWE computers for the branches which have now been installed and are operational.

Ms. Arnold said that appropriate sites could be where children are located. However, the Library staff should not be used as “babysitters” for a group of children. Mrs. Stein said a site should be chosen at which staff are encouraging an interface with the Library staff. Ms. Husband added that an agreement could be created and signed by the participants stating that they will work with the Library staff. Mr. Farrar said that the Library staff already has information about established partnerships in the community.

Mr. Berry asked if the Library goes to half way houses. Mrs. Stein said that they have depository collections in some of those sites. She added that children do come to the Library from group homes.

After the discussion the committee formulated the following as site selection criteria:

1. Parish-wide application.

2. Sites that are most likely to attract the most individuals who do not have access to or do not currently utilize library services.
3. Target sites where children are accompanied by adults.
4. Target sites where a successful partnership can be established with the community.

Mr. Bardwell then said that he would define the other topics under the general discussion agenda item. At the next committee meeting, they would continue discussing the topics they did not complete today.

B. Equipment Choices

Mr. Bardwell said this item will involve picking a vehicle to meet the need for outreach.

C. Inventory Selections

This item will list what materials the vehicle will contain.

D. Seasonal Variation

This item will cover the different opportunities based on the needs of children such as during the summer months or during the months in which school is in session.

Ms. Freeman asked whether the Farber Bookmobile that is being built to be used at the American Library Association (ALA) Conference is still available for purchase. Ms. Stein said it has not been purchased yet, but she noted that this bookmobile would be too small to conduct programs in it. This vehicle could be used to bring materials to patrons. Mr. Bardwell said that possibly they could recommend two bookmobiles of different sizes, noting that the small vehicle is priced at about \$200,000 and the larger one at about \$300,000. Ms. Husband and Ms. Stein both said that if this is the recommendation, the budget for 2010 will need to reflect additional staff, additional collection materials and space for storing the additional collection. Mrs. Duke suggested that the library staff take the concept of having two bookmobiles and report on the details of what that would involve.

Mr. Bardwell asked the committee to focus on how to enhance literacy.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the special ad hoc committee of the Library Board for the Study of the application of a bookmobile for community outreach will be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the Main Library.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Stanford O. Bardwell, Jr.,
Chairman of Ad Hoc Committee

David Farrar
Library Director