

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee of the  
East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control

June 7, 2007

The fourth meeting of the Finance Committee of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control was held at the River Center Branch Library on Thursday, June 7, 2007. Mr. Dan Reed, Chairman of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. Mr. Stephen Moret, and Ms. Dorothy Stepteau, members of the Committee were present. Also in attendance were Mr. Stanford O Bardwell, Jr., a member of the Library Board of Control; Mrs. Lydia M. Acosta, Library Director; and Mrs. Brenda Lovett, Library Business Manager; Mr. Davis Rhorer, Director of the Downtown Development District; Mr. Steve Jackson, Architect with Cockfield Jackson Architects; five members of the community; and Mr. Scott Dyer of *The Advocate*.

The minutes of the meeting of May 3, 2007 were unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Moret, seconded by Ms. Stepteau after a correction requested by Mrs Stepteau was made. Mr. Reed welcomed those in attendance.

Mrs. Acosta and Mrs. Lovett stated several financial items had developed since the May Finance Committee meeting that prevented the Finance Committee from recommending bonding to fund the four buildings under the proposed timetable. A City-Parish budget directive will impact the 2008 Budget, increasing post employment benefits by 2% in 2008, resulting in a \$6,000,000 increase for the remaining 7-year tax period. Further, Mr. David Medlin, Director of the City-Parish Department of Finance advised Mrs. Lovett that anticipated cash surpluses should not be used in the Library's projections for the repayment of bonds. The surplus must be realized before using it in the calculations.

A discussion followed about the next course of action in light of this new information. Mrs. Acosta said that it would not be wise to operate under the assumption that the Metropolitan Council will approve two roll forwards for the Library in 2008 and 2012. Mr. Reed felt that the Library could ask for one roll forward in 2008.

The Finance Committee addressed the factors which affect the construction schedule of three buildings from 2008 to 2010. Mrs. Acosta mentioned that JTS Realty Services, LLC is anticipating appearing before the City-Parish Zoning Committee in July to request the rezoning of the Ford property and conceivably, this project could move forward expeditiously. Mrs. Acosta also stated she had a donation agreement form for property on Old Hammond Highway at the site of the former Fairwood Country Club. One additional public meeting is anticipated to gather input on the new Main Library. Once that is completed, Denelle Wrightson can complete the building program. It is possible under this timetable to anticipate the signing of a contract for architectural services for the design of a new Main Library in 2008 followed by a contract for construction of the facility.

Mr. Reed asked about the proposed new branch library for downtown. Mrs. Acosta noted that the Library anticipates budgeting \$18,000,000 for a 45,000 square foot facility. Community

fund raising may expand that facility. Mr. Reed said that in the prior tax renewal period, the Library did not budget for a new branch in Zachary. However, a branch was built there because a cash surplus was available, and the citizens of that area needed a library facility. Mr. Reed remarked that the same approach could be utilized for a downtown branch.

Mr. Berry questioned the lack of progress toward the construction of the projects and encouraged the Finance Committee to move forward on the construction of the Main Library.

Mr. Moret suggested that the Library proceed with the construction of a new Main Library and new branches in the southern and eastern portions of the parish, and then construct a new downtown branch at a later date. Mr. Moret believes that individual donors would pledge money to build a new facility downtown and pay the pledge over a period of several years. Mr. Moret asked for confirmation of his understanding of the budget being prepared by Mrs. Lovett. He understood that the figures for 2008 are a formal budget request. Whereas, the projection is an estimate for the remaining 7-year period of the current millage. Mrs. Lovett agreed with his statement.

Mr. Reed observed that the tax rate of 11.1 mils voted upon by the citizens in the 2005 tax renewal election will not generate enough income to fully fund the projects and operate the system. Mrs. Acosta agreed and said that the library administration had requested a higher tax millage. However, the Library Board of Control felt that the public would not vote for a millage greater than 11.1 mils. In the next tax election the millage rate will need to be increased to properly fund the Library system.

Mr. Reed asked Mrs. Lovett to produce a projection with one roll forward in 2008, and with \$18,000,000 budgeted for a new downtown branch. She will calculate these figures for the July Finance Committee meeting.

The meeting concluded with the scheduling of the next Finance Committee meeting for Monday, July 9, 2007 from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Mrs. Acosta said that the location for the next meeting will be announced on the Library's Website once the location is established. The Summer Reading program will still be in progress with many special events scheduled, some of which are held in the meeting rooms. All meetings are open to the public.

At the next Finance Committee meeting naming rights will be discussed. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Ms. Stepteau, seconded by Mr. Reed.

---

Dan Reed, Committee Chairman

---

Lydia M. Acosta, Director