

**TENTATIVE AGENDA
FOR SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
MAIN LIBRARY
THIRD FLOOR BOARD ROOM
7711 GOODWOOD BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LA 70806
JUNE 16, 2014
4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.**

- I. ROLL CALL
- II. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED 2015 LIBRARY BUDGET
- 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 Special Budget Meeting of the
East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control

June 16, 2014

The special budget meeting of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control was held in the third floor Board Room of the Main Library at Goodwood on Monday, June 16, 2014. Ms. Tanya Freeman, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. Members of the Board present were Mr. Stanford O. Bardwell, Jr., Mr. Jason Jacob, and Ms. Terrie Lundy. Absent from the meeting were Board members, Mr. Logan Leger, Ms. Kizzy Payton and, Mr. Travis Woodard. 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. Rhonda Pinsonat, Library Business Manager, Mr. Ronnie Pierce, Assistant Library Business Manager; Ms. Liz Zozulin, Executive Assistant to the Library Director and Ms. Sonya Gordon, Library Public Relations Coordinator.

Review and Discussion of Proposed 2015 Library Budget

Ms. Freeman asked Mr. Watts and Ms. Pinsonat to discuss the budget. Mr. Watts made some introductory comments about the proposed budget and the rationale for some of the requests and items in it. He explained that Ms. Pinsonat, Library Business Manager and Mr. Pierce, Assistant Library Business Manager, input figures and requests from the data provided by the Library's division supervisors over a two-month period. Prior to the distribution of the proposed budget to the Library Board, Mr. Watts, Ms. Husband, Ms. Stein, both Assistant Directors, and Ms. Pinsonat reviewed and revised the budget documents.

Mr. Watts noted that Ms. Pinsonat had already reduced the budget by \$500,000 by not including staffing for the South Branch Library. The reasoning is that it would be impossible to need staff for that new branch during 2015. However, the staffing is in the projections and the approved positions are reflected in the personnel plan.

Mr. Watts added that since the Metropolitan Council rejected the purchase of the outreach building which would have housed books that are checked out infrequently yet are important to keep in the collection, our capacity for collection growth has been limited. Therefore, he has not increased the book budget. However, he stated that the book budget is still strong.

Mr. Watts then introduced the request for the establishment of reserve funds and why these are financially prudent for the Library system. He said we need to be clear on why the Library has the reserves, and explain why we need reserves. He added that the only source of income for the operation of the Library system is through the 10-year dedicated property tax. Unlike some City-Parish agencies, we cannot expect any support from the General Fund since we are a special taxing body. We are totally dependent on ourselves. He added that in some states, entities funded by an independent tax are required to have operational reserve funds in their budgets for these unforeseen events.

Mr. Watts asked the Board to consider the following three reserve funds: a one-year operational fund, a casualty loss deductible fund, and an emergency/storm reserve fund. He explained why these would be necessary and how much money should be allocated to each fund.

He said the one-year operational fund would serve two purposes; those being if the 2015 Library tax renewal failed, or if there were an economic downturn in which tax revenues decreased. He suggested the amount designated for this fund should be \$45 million.

The second reserve fund would be for a casualty loss deductible. Mr. Watts noted that the casualty loss deductible on the policy carried for the Library contains a \$1 million deductible per occurrence. He suggested the amount designated for this fund should be \$2 million. He related a possible scenario in which this fund would be important. In one year a tropical storm could cause significant damage over \$1 million followed by a fire at a regional branch in that same year causing \$800,000 of damage. Mr. Watts added that \$2 million is a reasonable amount for a casualty fund.

The third reserve fund would be for an emergency/storm. He suggested the amount designated for this fund should be \$500,000. Mr. Watts said in the case of an emergency, the Library would have ready funds to respond to the emergency even if eventually FEMA might reimburse the costs. Ms. Stein noted that the Library must pay for the repairs before FEMA will consider reimbursement.

Mr. Watts noted that these funds would not formally appear as such in the City-Parish financial documents, but the Library Board will have indicated that these surplus funds have a designated purpose. Mr. Watts asked the Board if they agreed with his proposal. Ms. Freeman replied that as part of telling the story of the Library during the 75th anniversary celebration of the Library system the purpose of the reserve funds could be mentioned. She added that many members of the public and some Metropolitan Council members think the Library has too much surplus money. This would provide the explanation. Mr. Watts noted that the Library Board members could assist in getting this message out to the public and the Council.

Mr. Jacob verified that there would be three separate funds: one for the operation of the Library if the tax election fails, one for a casualty loss and one for a storm/emergency loss. Mr. Watts agreed. Ms. Stein added that the Library cannot keep ready cash in a safe for these emergency situations. Petty cash reimbursement is limited to \$29.99. Both Ms. Stein and Ms. Husband stated that during Hurricanes Katrina and Gustav they used their personal money for some emergencies and got reimbursed later by the City from Library money. Ms. Husband noted that during these storms overtime hours were charged for necessary activities as a result of the hurricanes. Under FEMA regulations employees were paid overtime, and not through the accrual of comp hours. The Library had to pay these overtime salaries and later FEMA reimbursed the Library.

Mr. Bardwell said by setting up these three emergency funds with a set amount in each, we are giving ourselves some control over our surplus money. Mr. Watts again emphasized that the City-Parish budget would not reflect these funds. He added that after Ms. Pinsonat submits the

proposed 2015 budget to the Finance Department, she will begin to work on projections in preparation for the discussions about the millage rate request in 2015.

Mr. Bardwell asked how the funds would be designated to which Mr. Watts replied that it would be explained that prudent management means that these reserves are in place. Some people will understand that is wise management of resources. Ms. Freeman again stated that some members of the Metropolitan Council think that the Library has too much money which we do not spend; thereby concluding that our millage is too high. Ms. Lundy asked if we had ever had a reserve fund to which Ms. Stein said no. Ms. Freeman added that all of this discussion is in preparation for the passage of the tax renewal.

Ms. Pinsonat noted that Ms. Marsha Hanlon, Director of City-Parish Finance has always emphasized that a department with special funding such as the Library, should have money in reserve for the types of events we are discussing today.

Mr. Jacob asked Ms. Freeman how we would publicize the establishment of these reserve funds to which Ms. Freeman replied through press releases. Ms. Pinsonat said she would add line items for these three funds under the budget summary.

Ms. Pinsonat asked if there were any questions regarding salaries. It was noted that there is only one new position requested. That is for a Network Technician I in Computer Services. The Computer Operator III position is deleted and replaced with a Library Technician II. Since quarter-time page positions are hard to recruit for and retain, we are requesting that the four quarter-time page positions in Circulation be replaced by two half-time positions.

Mr. Bardwell asked about the millage rate of 11.1 mills under the 2012 millage roll back page. Ms. Pinsonat explained that she inserted this page as it will appear in all of the millage forms that she will be using. She agreed with Mr. Bardwell that with the 2012 millage roll back the Library is not collecting at the rate of 11.1 mills.

Ms. Lundy asked about the RFID implementation. Mr. Watts answered that this system will provide many benefits over time for the Library system. Once implemented patrons will be able to self-check materials they wish to borrow or return. This will enable staff to be utilized for other types of activities to assist patrons. Mr. Watts added that they will contract with a company to tag the entire collection. Ms. Lundy asked what company the Library will use. Mr. Watts said they had hoped to work with 3M. However, Bibliotheca had contested the proposal request, and won a judgment in their favor. Now the Library will need to submit a request for proposals again.

Mr. Bardwell asked a question about contractual services. He wondered why the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's charge was only \$5,000. Ms. Pinsonat explained that this is a possible capital assessment that can be made by the Sheriff of any tax division for which the Sheriff collects taxes. It is based on a percentage of the revenues collected.

Ms. Pinsonat further explained that each individual Sheriff's deputy that the Library employs, signs a separate contract with the Library to provide security at the rate of \$25.00 per hour with

no more than 29 hours per week. Mr. Jacob asked about the rate that is paid. Ms. Pinsonat replied that the rate is set by the Sheriff. However Captain Blair Nicholson of the Sheriff's Office, and the Library's security consultant, is paid \$35.00 per hour.

Ms. Pinsonat explained that the Vinson Security Guard Service is under a professional services contract to supplement the services of the Sheriff's deputies here at the Main Library. Mr. Jacob asked how many guards would be employed and where would they be patrolling. Mr. Watts replied they would be inside and outside of the building. He noted that these grounds are dark at night, so it makes people feel safer if security is present. Mr. Watts explained that incidents do occur in libraries, so security is essential. Mr. Bardwell agreed that they need a security presence at the Library.

The staff and Board then discussed Capital Outlay. Ms. Husband said that the furniture at the Jones Creek and Bluebonnet Regional Branch Libraries is 25 and 22 years old respectively. It is showing wear and the public has expressed the desire for some updating. Much of the furniture does not work for the needs of patrons today.

Mr. Jacob then asked about a contract listed under the Budget Message on page 6 for a social media correspondent. Ms. Stein replied that Ms. Claire Delaune is an independent contractor who posts on Facebook and other media for the Library in consultation with Ms. Stein. She is an asset to the Library posting for 20 hours per week with an annual contract of \$26,000.

Ms. Stein noted they are requesting a professional services contract for 2015 for a social media administrator to work with patron accounts. Mr. Watts noted that patrons are increasingly using social media to handle problems or questions concerning their library accounts, reserves, and requests for information. Through this contract the Library will explore the possibility of providing service to our patrons via social media channels.

Mr. Bardwell then asked how the Arts Council helps the Library with performers and speakers. Ms. Pinsonat said they are a vendor for the Library and they serve as the booking agent for us. They work under a purchase order for the entire year hiring clowns, performers and other groups for Library programs and events. The Arts Council is also a vendor for the City of Baton Rouge. They have enabled the Library to provide programs that would otherwise have been impossible because of the many requirements under a City purchase order that small entertainers and performers find too cost prohibitive to supply.

Ms. Pinsonat then stated that also under Capital Outlay the Library is requesting the replacement of the Elf bookmobile which is 13 years old. Ms. Freeman said she will not support the purchase of a replacement bookmobile. She said she does not see its value because it is difficult to get repairs in a timely manner, and the Library does not have a place to park it. She added that because of its size, the big bookmobile cannot go everywhere. She has not seen a good return on investment with the bookmobiles. Ms. Freeman acknowledged that they can be beneficial, but she has not seen this in our case. She added that she would rather purchase vans for outreach to patrons.

Mr. Watts replied that the issue with repairing the vehicles is that we must use the City-Parish Central Garage. They are always backlogged, so time in the shop is longer than average. Ms. Pinsonat added that all City vehicles must use the Central Garage. However, she is trying to have an exception made for the bookmobiles based on the fact that OEP vehicles are not maintained through the Central Garage.

Ms. Lundy asked how many outreach vehicles the Library has. Ms. Pinsonat replied six vehicles currently with a new bookmobile scheduled for delivery in September. Ms. Stein said that patrons of all ages love the bookmobiles. They enjoy getting in the vehicle where the staff can check out their books and easily show them our electronic resources. She added that the large bookmobile, "Big Blue" does go everywhere. In fact it is in such demand that the staff has a rotating schedule for visits by "Big Blue", so that each facility has the opportunity to use it.

Ms. Freeman again emphasized that they need to purchase smaller van-type vehicles, and not vehicles the size of the Elf. She added that the Library must remember the original purpose of the outreach vehicles and get back to that type of service. Ms. Stein then noted that senior citizens really enjoy getting in the Elf and browsing the collection. The lift enables those in wheel chairs to benefit from a Library visit also.

Mr. Watts explained that the purchase of a bookmobile is much less than the construction of a branch library. It also helps provide library services to two segments of the population, the elderly and poor children, groups who may not be able to travel to a branch library. Mr. Jacob asked about the size of the Elf to which Ms. Stein said about half the size of "Big Blue".

Mr. Bardwell said the Elf gets a lot of use at senior facilities for checking out books. He added that he does not want to delete the Elf for seniors and supports replacing the 13 year old vehicle for senior outreach.

Ms. Stein explained that in the summer months Outreach Services goes to locations where free lunch is served to children. Ms. Freeman said the Library has not fulfilled the mission of outreach services. Mr. Jacob asked about the mission. Ms. Stein replied that Outreach Services was to go to pre-school and day care facilities during the week, and we do that. We bring a deposit collection of 25 books to each facility. This service reaches children between the ages of 3 and 5 with pre-literacy materials. The staff also holds a story time on the bookmobile.

Mr. Watts asked Ms. Stein if she would provide the Board with some statistics for the last two months to illustrate the services of the bookmobiles. He added that we can increase the number of patrons we serve through the bookmobiles. Ms. Freeman asked the staff to re-purpose their goals for the bookmobiles.

Ms. Pinsonat then discussed the Communications budget. She noted that because E-Rate is not guaranteed, 100% of the total projected expenditures are budgeted.

Computer Software and Related supplies were discussed next. In Children's Services 15 AWE subscriptions are requested. Under Public Relations Ms. Freeman asked about the *Survey*

Monkey renewal. Ms. Stein answered that this is the service she uses to conduct surveys of the public and staff for the Library.

Ms. Pinsonat pointed out that under Contractual Services the Library is budgeting for the rental of a small space for temporary use as the River Center Branch and also a warehouse type space for the River Center collection during construction of the new facility.

Ms. Freeman then asked a question about Dues and Memberships. She said she had received in the past a magazine published by the American Library Association which she found to be very informative. She added that the Board needs to be kept abreast of public library activities and news. Mr. Watts said that a subscription to the magazine is \$110.00. She may have been getting the magazine after the Library enrolled her in an ALA conference. Mr. Bardwell suggested that the Library pay for subscriptions for the three Board officers.

Ms. Pinsonat pointed out the line for "Other Contractual Services", which includes grounds maintenance such as grass mowing, edging, and bush hogging.

The Board members and staff reviewed the insurance budget. The coverage amount is set by the City and includes general liability, auto liability, and fire and extended coverage insurance. They then went over the Inventoried Assets, the Inventoried Supplies, and the Janitorial and Extermination budgets.

Ms. Pinsonat noted the Waste Disposal and Recycling Services budget explaining that recycling service will be available at all of the branches.

Mr. Bardwell asked about the Printing and Binding budget for Public Relations. Ms. Stein replied that the printing covers items such as flyers, brochures and bookmarks. She said the staff does not print these items, but contracts with a vendor. Mr. Bardwell felt we should have a printing capacity in-house. Both Mr. Watts and Ms. Stein said that we do print a small number of items in-house, but that it is more cost-effective to use an outside service. Ms. Freeman agreed mentioning how professional the dedication invitations for the Main Library looked.

Mr. Bardwell then asked what the total was for advertising. Ms. Pinsonat answered that they paid for a great deal of advertising in 2014. The amount of \$283,375 is budgeted for 2015. Mr. Bardwell said he is happy with the advertising to which Ms. Stein noted she has been increasing that budget each year since 2008.

Ms. Pinsonat said the budget for Repair/Maintenance of Buildings is general maintenance such as light bulbs, paint, plumbing supplies, and window repairs. Repair and Maintenance for Office Equipment includes service agreements for a variety of equipment in Circulation, Computer Services and Public Relations.

The budget for Special Events was discussed. It includes refurbishing of costumes for Mrs. Claus and the elf, the Pride-Chaneyville Community History Day and the Multicultural Day at the Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library.

Mr. Watts then pointed out the Travel and Training budget. He told the Board that we increased this budget for 2015 by \$63,000. Ms. Pinsonat added that much of the training is allocated for Computer Services staff.

The last budget item discussed was Utilities which includes electricity and gas. Ms. Pinsonat noted that this year Mr. Pierce noticed that the water bill for the Jones Creek Regional Branch Library was so abnormally high that he felt there was an error. After continued communication with the water company, it was discovered that the meter was broken. The Library was refunded over \$80,000.

Ms. Pinsonat will make the changes that the Board has requested. The Board will approve the proposed 2015 budget at the June 19th Board meeting.

Comments by the Library Board of Control

There were no additional comments by the Board.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Jacob made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lundy. The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Tanya Freeman, President

Spencer Watts, Library Director