

TENTATIVE AGENDA  
FOR REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL  
**MAIN LIBRARY**  
**FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**7711 GOODWOOD BOULEVARD**  
**BATON ROUGE, LA 70806**  
**JUNE 15, 2017**  
**4:00 P.M.**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I. ROLL CALL

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 18, 2017

III. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

- A. FINANCIAL REPORT
- B. SYSTEM REPORTS

IV. OTHER REPORTS

- A. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS
- B. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

V. NEW BUSINESS

- A. SETTING OF DATE FOR SPECIAL 2018 BUDGET WORK SESSION – MR. JASON JACOB

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A. UPDATE ON RIVER CENTER BRANCH LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION – MR. SPENCER WATTS
- B. UPDATE ON RENOVATION OF GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD REGIONAL AND JONES CREEK REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARIES – MR. SPENCER WATTS AND MS. PATRICIA HUSBAND
- C. UPDATE ON SEARCH FOR A SITE FOR A SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY – MR. SPENCER WATTS

VII. 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 Meeting of the  
East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control

June 15, 2017

The regular meeting of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control was held in the first floor Conference Room of the Main Library at Goodwood at 7711 Goodwood Boulevard on Thursday, June 15, 2017. Mr. Jason Jacob, President of the Board called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Members of the Board present were Mrs. Martha Guarisco, Ms. Terrie Johnson, Mr. Logan Leger, Mr. Donald Luther, Jr., Ms. Candace Parker, and Ms. Kathy Wascom. 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; and Ms. Liz Zozulin, Executive Assistant to the Library Director. Also present were Mr. Michael Smith, Library Network Technician I; Sgt. Patricia Carr of the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office; and Mr. Mike Davis, videographer for Metro 21.

Mr. Jacob asked Mr. Luther to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr. Jacob asked Ms. Zozulin to take the roll which she did.

Mr. Jacob asked for the approval of the minutes of the regular Library Board meeting of May 18, 2017. Mr. Luther made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mrs. Guarisco, and approved unanimously.

### **III. Reports by the Director**

#### **A. Financial Reports**

Mr. Jacob asked Mr. Watts to present the reports. Mr. Watts asked Ms. Pinsonat to make the financial report. Ms. Pinsonat said for 2017, operating expenditures through May 31, 2017 are \$14,069,174.81, or approximately 32.35% of the operating budget. Through May, we should have spent no more than 42% of the operating budget.

Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2017 are ahead for the same six months as last year, and we are approximately \$1.5 million and 3.8%, ahead of 2016.

Ms. Pinsonat asked if there were any questions about the financial statements. There were none.

Mr. Jacob then read Item B.

Ms. Johnson arrived at 4:04 p.m. and Mr. Leger arrived at 4:12 p.m.

## B. System Reports

Mr. Watts asked Ms. Stein to give the systems report. Ms. Stein said that during the summer months there are many special activities and events held at the Library. Some of those are featured in the information contained in the Board packets for this meeting. These are representative of the wonderful media coverage we have had ranging from the ballet to natural hair. Social and digital media have also expanded the effect through their channels. Obtaining placement through print media coverage is increasingly difficult to secure. However, the Library's events such as the *Movies in the Plaza* have been featured in several print media outlets.

Ms. Stein then gave the *Around the Parish* report.

- *The Digital Learn Platform* will be introduced at Community Centers in July and August. The Library's Outreach Services staff have taken the classes in order to better assist their clients.
- We have already conducted some demonstrations of the platform at the Main Library, and some of the branches.
- We have completed formal programs on *Digital Learn* with the local Refugee Services. Many other community service organizations can also promote *Digital Learn*.
- We are arranging for training sessions with BREC counselors who work with senior citizens in their new digital lab.
- The Library has many digital products on its website. The *Library Academy Video Tutorials* will assist patrons to find and use our digital resources through video tutorials. A tab on the right side of the homepage labeled Tutorials lists the databases and how to use them.
- *Library Academy* contains podcasts on various subjects for patron use and staff use. One of the staff videos addresses homelessness and how to assist these patrons.
- *Kanopy* is a new database which contains an entertainment collection, including the *Criterion* collection, the *Great Courses*, and PBS documentaries. This collection is described as thoughtful entertainment.
- The Summer Reading Program for children and teens began after Memorial Day with the theme, *Build a Better World*. The adult program theme is *Red Stick Reads*.
- The *World Wide Knitting in Public Day* was one of the programs for adults. The Library committed to knit 200 items linking this event to the Baton Rouge Bicentennial Celebration. One item will be placed in the time capsule, and the others will be donated to local shelters.
- *Build a Better World* for teens involves STEM and STEAM activities in the form of classes, workshops, and social events, along with arts and crafts projects. A ticket is issued for inclusion in a drawing for a special gift donated by the Patrons of the Public Library and local vendors for every 3 books read.

- Game shows are very popular on TV. The staff at the Jones Creek Regional Branch Library, created the Library version of *The Price is Right*.
- *A House for Hermit Crab* by Eric Carle inspired the hermit crab story crafts at the Delmont Gardens Branch Library.
- At the Pride-Chaneyville Branch Library children were building with Legos. One group constructed a display of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, and another built a scene from *Rapunzel* just in time for showing the movie, *Tangled*.
- The very popular Farmer Minor and Daisy, the Reading Pig, returned this summer to all of our branches. A highly successful new performer, Lady Chops, a former member of *STOMP*, brought street percussion to the Library, and will return next summer.
- The Children's Summer Reading Program is rewarding children for their reading successes each week with a small hand-out, fostering the habit of reading throughout the summer.
- Dr. Skinner's (LSU Professor of Literacy) education majors and graduate students again participated in the popular Carver Cubs program at the Carver Branch Library. Children enjoy reading activities that are fun with the college students who pre- and post-test them to measure their progress.
- Several of the branches of our Library are serving as sites for the summer lunch program. Through a federal grant children from pre-school to the age of 18 can get a summer meal at designated sites. The sack lunches are delivered to the branch to coincide with story time.
- Children come to the Library individually and in groups from camps and daycare centers to enjoy many fun programs presented by 3 different ballet companies, and the Baton Rouge Mounted Police.

The *Movies in the Plaza* is back again this June, and off to a great start with 300 people attending the first and second films. *Field of Dreams* will be shown on June 16<sup>th</sup> which will especially appeal to adults.

Ms. Stein announced the date for the 2017 Baton Rouge Mini Maker Faire®. It will be held at the Main Library on Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>. The theme, Feed your Brain, will be related to food. Our event's mascot, Sprocket, will wear a chef's hat, and our special guest will be local Chef Jeff Ducote. Exhibitors will demonstrate "making" with food and food products such as tea, coffee and spices. The event will feature high and low technology makers. We began to call for makers at noon today through our social media channels and have already received tweets and retweets. Ms. Stein encouraged makers to sign up as available space will fill quickly.

In regard to the Baton Rouge Bicentennial Celebration, our local media such as *The Advocate*, *InRegister*, *The Business Report*, and *225* are continuing to feature bicentennial stories. On the back page of *InRegister* this month is a photo of the docks at Baton Rouge many years ago. The photo was provided by the Library from the Elizabeth Nichols collection.

Ms. Stein concluded her report. She asked if there were any questions. Ms. Wascom asked where the tutorials are located on the Library's website. Ms. Stein replied that on the homepage on the

right side is a tab labelled Tutorials. Clicking on the tab reveals the offerings. Double clicking on a particular database opens the tutorial which provides information about how to use that program.

She added that the *Digital Learn Platform* is a special platform branded by the American Library Association, and Cox Communications as a pilot program which we are testing. Users can go directly to the program at [www.ebrpl.DigitalLearn.org](http://www.ebrpl.DigitalLearn.org) without having a Library card. Library card holders can also access this site through the Library's website on the digital library page.

Ms. Wascom asked about the databases such as *Ancestry* that are not available outside of the Library. She wondered if the tutorial indicates this. Ms. Stein said the tutorial is generic, so we could not note that in the tutorial. Fortunately, we only have three databases in our collection that can only be used in the Library. Those three indicate this, if you try to use them remotely. All of the other databases can be accessed remotely with a library card.

Ms. Wascom asked if the Library staff has contacted Catholic Relief Services about *DigitalLearn*. Ms. Stein replied affirmatively indicating that this is the organization that works with the Library through its refugee program. We have attended several of their meetings and our Coordinator for Reference Services, Mr. Andrew Tadman, attends their quarterly meetings. Catholic Relief Services operates across several parishes, and since *DigitalLearn* is a platform outside of our Library, it is available to all of the clients assisted by Catholic Relief Services.

Mr. Jacob thanked Ms. Stein. He asked for public comments. There being none, he read Item A under Other Reports.

#### **IV. Other Reports**

##### **A. Maintenance Report and Additional Capital Projects**

Mr. Watts stated that Ms. Husband will report on maintenance and capital projects. Ms. Husband said the Exterior Lighting Project for the Baker, Delmont Gardens, Eden Park, Scotlandville and Zachary Branch Libraries is 97% complete. The contractor, Allrite Electric Inc. has installed new LED lamp posts, lights near signs and flag poles, and courtyard wall lights at all five branches. Most of Baker's interior lights have also been upgraded. Construction Change Directive #1 has been approved, making adjustments to the work as deemed necessary, adding lights to reflect off the interior mirrors at Eden Park, and providing the Library with some additional fixtures and spare parts for future use. A Final Completion review will be scheduled in the near future. Ms. Husband said this project makes a difference in added security for patrons by providing good exterior lighting especially in the winter months when it gets dark early.

The Exterior Restoration Project (for the Carver, Central, Delmont Gardens, Eden Park, Greenwell Springs Road Regional, Scotlandville and Zachary Branch Libraries) is substantially complete. After a review of the Carver Branch Library on June 1<sup>st</sup>, the architect noted a few punch list items. A Change Order has been prepared combining the work of the six Construction Change Directives. The approval of this Change Order was placed on the Metropolitan Council agenda for yesterday's meeting. However, due to lack of time, the Council deferred this item to the next Council meeting.

We are nearing Final Completion and are under budget for this project even with the additional scope of work. The architect with City-Parish Architectural Services discussed the project with Ms. Lynn Bradley, architect with Bradley-Blewster & Associates. They agreed that this was the appropriate time to conclude the work.

The carpet for the flooring project at the Zachary Branch Library has been selected, and ordered. We are reviewing schedules and programs in order to provide times when the installers can work with a minimum of disruption of library services. We do not plan to close this branch during the installation.

Ms. Husband told the Board that the Library is in the process of updating much of the furniture at the Bluebonnet Regional Branch Library as part of the upgrade and renovation of the branch. New technology tables for computers will replace existing carrels. In other branches these tables have allowed staff members to more easily identify patrons who need assistance, and patrons who need help can request assistance without leaving their computers. Some of the furniture will facilitate the patrons' use of their personal portable electronic devices by providing additional powered study spaces.

Mr. Jacob thanked Ms. Husband and asked Mr. Watts to give the Miscellaneous Reports under Item B.

## **B. Miscellaneous Reports**

Mr. Watts reported that the RFID project is continuing to move forward. Equipment has been arriving frequently on large pallets. There were some shipping issues including incomplete shipping lists which have been addressed. He thanked Ms. Tameka Roby, Library Technician II, in Outreach Services, for inspecting pallets to determine which items were delivered. Mr. Pierce and Ms. Stein reconciled the invoices against the shipping lists to ensure all of the billed items were in our possession.

An amendment to this project was placed on the Metropolitan Council agenda for yesterday's meeting. However, due to lack of time, the Council deferred this item to the next Council meeting. In addition to this amendment, approval of the contract for our RFID tagging project with Backstage Library Works was deferred. This delay will create a severe issue. We first had internal concerns and delays with the equipment project contract. The tagging process by Backstage was to begin next week, but now the Council approval will not occur until June 28<sup>th</sup> at the earliest. Backstage will possibly need to assign their staff to other projects and re-schedule our project for a later date due to the delay in contract approval.

Mr. Watts then discussed the CEA for the Main Library and Independence Park that the Library and BREC staffs have been finalizing. A survey was completed and reviewed. The CEA outlines the responsibilities and stewardship of the various shared areas of the property, as outlined in our agreement. The issue of the re-subdivision of the BREC café brought to light an earlier CEA by the City-Parish. The initial CEA states that the City-Parish owns Independence Park, and this agreement is between the City-Parish and BREC. BREC has use of Independence Park for park

and recreation activities. The Library as a City-Parish Department cannot do a re-subdivision of property the City already owns. The purpose of the re-subdivision was to obtain an address for the café in order to move forward with a contract for a café vendor. The Parish Attorney pointed out that in the past a re-subdivision was not necessary to obtain an address for the BREC Theatre or Garden Center. BREC can obtain a street address without a re-subdivision.

Progress was made in obtaining more space for Library use in the gravel area of the service yard. We are having difficulty getting everything we need in the space allotted to the Library. Mr. Jacob asked if that is the space behind the Main Library to which Mr. Watts replied affirmatively. He added that on the north side of the driveway into the service yard, BREC is constructing a new volunteer center with locker space and a break room. Construction was to begin several weeks ago, but rain has delayed the work. There is already much congestion in the service yard where all of our large deliveries are made.

Mr. Watts said we are working toward finalizing the reconciliation of the payments that each of us must make toward the cost of constructing the parking lots, the shipping yard, and the Plaza that we share. This process needs to be completed by the end of the year because the construction of these areas has been finished.

Ms. Wascom asked Mr. Watts about a vendor for the BREC café. He said BREC has said they have a vendor in mind. Ms. Wascom asked if BREC is responsible for finding a vendor to which Mr. Watts said yes. BREC built that facility and paid for it. It is also a learning center with classrooms, and areas for plant specimens and materials. It is difficult to find a vendor who is interested in a café of that nature. The profit margins can be very thin especially if it is an independent vendor with no other source of income. Ms. Wascom asked about the Library's use of that building during the Maker Faire<sup>®</sup> last year. Mr. Watts said BREC allowed us to use the facility due to the huge number of people who are drawn to this event. The Library is grateful that we were allowed to use that space.

Mr. Watts then said the Library is working with the City-Parish IS Department regarding shared use of our Outreach Services building on North Boulevard. This facility houses all of the collections used by the Outreach Services staff with space to perform their work comfortably. Recycled Reads, our monthly donated book sales location is also there. Our patrons enjoy shopping in this space. Another portion of the building contains a 2,900 square foot state-of-the-art medical data processing center which will house the Library's redundant servers and backup servers for the Library network. Since we do not need the full space, we have offered to share this space with the City IS Department because the City also needs a backup space for all of their functions. On June 14<sup>th</sup> Mr. Eric Romero, Director of Information Services and his staff toured the facility with Mr. Spencer Watts, Mr. Brian Thornhill, Library LAN Administrator, and Mr. Brandon Trent, Library PC LAN Specialist. In order to securely utilize the space, we will need to upgrade the fire suppression system. The roof over the data center is new, but the roof over the remainder of the building will need to be replaced in a couple of years. At that time we may add another roof over the data center for added protection.

Mr. Watts discussed some issues that were raised by a member of the community who looked at the Open BR database and was concerned regarding the large number of contract workers

providing security for the Library. We explained that we do have a large number of contracts with law enforcement officers. However, they do not all work for us each week. Many are on contract so that they can serve as substitutes. Many of the substitutes only work for the Library one or two days per year. At most locations we have one guard on duty during the day, or part of the day. At times we may have two serving on overlapping shifts if there is a need. Mr. Watts added that the officers cannot work more than 29 hours per week on contract necessitating multiple officers to fill the schedule at a facility. Another schedule issue occurs when a deputy must unexpectedly work longer hours to meet the obligation of their primary job as a Sheriff's deputy.

Mr. Watts noted that the Library depends on our deputies. They are well trained, and professional, and because they are officers of the law, on the few occasions when we need a more decisive action taken in a situation that is escalating, they have the right to exercise that authority. Because it is sometimes hard to have the coverage we need at the Main Library from the Sheriff's Office, we supplement the security force with security guards. It is particularly important in the morning as we need a security presence in a building as large as Main.

Having the deputies and the security guards on duty acts as a deterrent. Of course, this is hard to measure because one cannot know how many incidents are forestalled because of the officers' presence. Mr. Watts noted that the Library security personnel exhibit a good balance of behavior avoiding the extremes. They are a friendly presence, and most patrons consider them a protective presence.

The cost for security is high because the Library's hours of operation are long. The budget for security is \$900,000 per year. Our security precautions also include camera surveillance, and intrusion devices. Mr. Watts said he feels fortunate that the Library has the resources to provide this protection.

This need was brought home to library personnel this past weekend when there was a shooting at the Metropolitan Columbus Ohio Main Library. One patron was shot by another, but they were quickly subdued by the security personnel before any harm could be done to anyone else. Libraries are public places, and we attract a very broad segment of society. Mr. Watts said 99 % of the people who enter the Library are good people. Some may be difficult to get along with, but few pose a danger. However, it only takes one who is unbalanced to cause severe trouble. This is the case wherever large numbers people might go such as a retail establishment, or a location that is not tightly controlled.

Ms. Wascom asked if the Library staff provided an explanation to the patron who was concerned about the expense of security for the Library, and if so, was the patron satisfied with the response. Mr. Watts replied that the citizen contacted a Council member. He provided a lengthy response to the Council member.

Ms. Wascom noted that if this citizen is a member of a homeowner or civic association, he would be aware of the use of part-time patrol officers for security in neighborhoods. Mr. Watts replied that once he began to explain the reason for the number of contracts, the Council member understood the Library's situation.

Mr. Watts said providing security in a public library is always a delicate balance. We aim to be welcoming and to provide safety at our facilities. Mr. Luther agreed with Mr. Watts and added that he is always thankful to see our deputies at our Board meetings. Mr. Luther thanked Sgt. Carr for her presence at this meeting. He noted that all of the deputies are courteous and professional. God bless them for being here to protect us. They are worth the money that we pay for their service. Mr. Watts concurred with Mr. Luther's sentiments.

Mr. Watts then said the proposed 2018 budget binders for the Administrative staff have been distributed. On June 20<sup>th</sup> the Administrative staff will meet to review and make changes in preparation for the production of the proposed budget for Library Board review.

Mr. Watts said the Summer Reading Program that was well covered by Ms. Stein, is very important. It is important for children to maintain their reading skills and avoid the "summer slide", and for younger readers to reinforce their skills. It is enjoyable to watch children have fun at the Library. All of the effort it takes to provide our programs and services are well worth it as one watches our young patrons.

Mr. Watts reported that another window failure in the curtain wall has occurred at the Main Library. Mr. Jim Frey, architect with City-Parish Architectural Services is working on getting an independent consultant to assess the problem and suggest solutions. We really do not believe that something is striking the window. It appears to be caused by another issue. Mr. Jacob asked if Mr. Watts is referring to the cracked glass at the entrance near the large meeting room. Mr. Watts said that cracked glass is a result of gravel from the green roof being thrown to the ground, and then picked up by a lawn mower or weed whacker. The glass pane he described is on the second floor in the Reference area. He noted that during the budget work session the staff will propose the removal of the gravel on the green roof because too much of it is being thrown to the ground.

Mr. Watts concluded his report and asked if there were additional questions. Mr. Jacob asked for any other public comments. Their being none, he read Item A under New Business.

## **V. New Business**

### **A. Setting a Date for Special 2018 Budget Work Session – Mr. Jason Jacob**

Mr. Jacob said we selected Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. in the third floor Board Room for the special 2018 budget work session. He said he hopes to see everyone there. Everyone could make that date except Mr. Leger. He apologized that one day could not be found when all could attend. He added that Mr. Leger can meet with Mr. Watts at a convenient time to review the budget.

Mr. Jacob asked for any comments. There being none, he read Item A under Old Business.

## **VI. Old Business**

### **A. Update on River Center Branch Library Construction – Mr. Spencer Watts**

Mr. Watts discussed the River Center Branch project. He said work is proceeding at a good pace. The building is very striking and large, but will look somewhat smaller once it is closed in. The wet weather pattern of the last several weeks has been a concern, especially when the site is just about dry for work to continue, and another rain storm occurs. Some of the fireproofing has been impacted by the weather. So far there have been no requests for additional construction days.

Mr. Watts reported that the steel work has been topped out, and the decking for the third floor is finished. The third floor concrete pour was completed yesterday. The pile caps for the City's Green Project have been completed, and shoring has been put in place for our site. Infrastructure such as drain pipes are being moved to the site.

We have received many submittals and shop drawings from the architect over the last month. Mr. Watts mentioned a submittal regarding the dimensions of the pantry sink. We have requested a wider, deeper sink to better accommodate large serving units such as punch bowls, and platters used during a public event. It makes a real difference when the facility is occupied if many of these small items have been corrected during the construction phase.

The light fixtures and finishes and the specifications for their heights and trims have been confirmed, and coordinated for the installation. The intrusion detection system is being reviewed by the Library's Computer Services Division and Facilities Maintenance Division. Composite wall panels, and the details regarding mounting and attachment have been reviewed. The amended keying schedule has been issued, and the Library staff, the architects and the vendor are conducting a final review. Details for wall and corner guards, and color guides for toilet partitions have been issued.

Cabinet locks including those for fire extinguishers are under review. A question arose about locking the cabinets containing the fire extinguishers. Mr. Watts said he feels the cabinets containing the fire extinguishers should not be locked because when they are needed, they should be readily available. An extinguisher may not be needed for many years in which time a key for a locked cabinet could be lost or misplaced. On the other hand we don't want the extinguishers missing when they are needed because the cabinet was unlocked. There are valid concerns on both sides of this issue. Additional product detail has been provided for the Access Control Master Panel and the door answering system which grants entry into the building and into specific areas.

A preliminary list of wall coverings has been issued. Ms. Husband has the original samples of the wall coverings that were selected. Unfortunately, as is often the case, some products have been discontinued. Reasonable alternates will need to be chosen. We have also resolved a conflict about the placement of electrical/data floor boxes for possible future use in the teen area.

Mr. Watts concluded his remarks, and asked for questions. Ms. Johnson asked if the project is on schedule. Mr. Watts replied affirmatively. He added that we lost a few days early in the project

when the drilling of the shafts for the pilings resulted in broken drill bits as obstructions were hit. Whenever a project of this size is undertaken, one can expect some delays. Even with the 5-day stretch of rain we had, we are still on schedule. At times a little rain at the wrong time can cause a delay. Needing a lift on-site after a rain, may require additional time so that the lift does not sink into the ground.

The completion date is still listed as late summer or early fall of 2018. He also pointed out that the substantial completion date is not the opening date. The final acceptance needs to occur first. Mr. Watts noted that in the Main Library there were some questions about the monumental staircase that persisted even after we agreed to the final acceptance. This concern delayed the opening by two weeks. There was also a furniture issue with a vendor. We did not cause the problem, but it still impacted the opening by 4-6 weeks. At this point, however, only about 10 days have been added to the schedule.

Mr. Jacob asked for any other comments on this item. There being none, he read Item B.

**B. Update on Renovation of Greenwell Springs Road Regional and Jones Creek Regional Branch Libraries – Mr. Spencer Watts and Ms. Patricia Husband**

Mr. Watts said we had an excellent meeting last week with the architects and the mechanical engineers for the Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library renovation project. One of the primary discussions was about what type of chiller system would be best, either air cooled or water cooled. Engineers were initially recommending an air cooled system, but we eventually agreed on a water cooled system. It requires more space, but over time the Library's Facilities Maintenance staff feel that the water cooled system will perform better and have fewer maintenance issues. The architects can accommodate this system within the space and budget parameters of the project.

When the cooling system needs to be replaced during the construction phase, we prefer not to close the building completely. However, we realize for safety concerns, we may not be able to keep the building open. We have suggested from the very beginning that possibly we may need to have one or two days of closure, but not more than five or six in total. The architects think this could take seven to ten days. During this time there would be no climate control in the building. The architects are considering what other work they could also complete while the HVAC system is being installed. The architectural team is very flexible and innovative. We have worked in other buildings where the HVAC system had to be replaced. We worked in a building for four days with no air conditioning. If we choose the right time of year, we can manage to get by with no air conditioning. Mr. Watts said he had a situation in July in another library system when the air conditioning unit needed to be rebuilt. They rented industrial air handlers and coolers for a six-week period. There are a variety of options to consider.

He noted that at this meeting they discussed the additions to the building and where they would be placed to integrate with the roof line and façade of the building. He showed a very unrefined schematic drawing of the teen addition. It looks like a glass box attached to the building and appears like an isolated add-on. In another schematic drawing the teen area is integrated with the

façade. Gables are added with glazing which gives the building a more finished character. Mr. Watts pointed out the other addition to the building on the east side. This design is a natural outgrowth of the current building. It will open up the front and east side of the building. It's not a dramatic change, but it does make a difference in the overall appearance of the branch.

Mr. Watts then discussed the Jones Creek Regional Branch renovation project. One of the main issues in this building is the collection capacity. Because of the lot size of this branch, and the configuration of the building, there is not much room to expand it. Trying to add collaborative and study rooms, and opening up the building so it does not look as crowded has been a challenge. We had problems about where we would thin our collection. Our staff did an excellent job of finding more vertical space by using 66-inch shelving in place of a current group of 48-inch shelving. We may also install taller shelving at the back. These methods will provide more capacity.

Mr. Watts said we have asked the architects to find us 600-800 square feet of space for high density shelving for low demand print items. The need to access this area would not be frequent. Using this method we could probably house another 12,000 items that only circulate every 3 or 4 years, but still have value such as a book in a series. We could also store some items in a remote location. Prime candidates would be items for which demand does not generally come from patrons at Jones Creek, but from other branches.

The architects are going to study the back of the building. Mr. Watts pointed out how close the property line is to the building. He also pointed out an area in the front of the facility which will be the location of additional space for the branch.

Mr. Watts noted that we also discussed furniture and types of furniture we would like to use in this renovation. We said we would like the teen room to be more inviting and comfortable.

Mr. Leger asked what is located on the south side of the property. Mr. Watts replied that a massive apartment complex is within five feet of the library's property line.

Mr. Watts noted that the widening of Jones Creek Road was much needed, but it has been a major disruption for residents and traffic. When completed this project will improve the flow of vehicles in the area. He wondered if it would have been better for the community if we could have done the renovation of the branch simultaneously with the roadwork. At about the time the roadwork is completed, we will begin our project. The citizens of the area will deserve praise for enduring these two construction projects.

Mr. Watts said at this branch that we are encountering outdated systems that are old in terms of standards and safety features. The mechanical, electrical, and plumbing requirements for this building were sufficient to meet the regulations that were in place when the library was built, but with today's standards many of the systems may need to be replaced. These types of concerns are slowing the progress of the architects. However, we are committed to upgrade this branch with some of the new features that are popular with our patrons at the Fairwood, and Bluebonnet Regional Branches and at the Main Library.

Mr. Watts asked if there were any questions about either of the renovation projects. Ms. Wascom asked if any special drainage was recommended for the Greenwell Springs Road Regional in light of the flooding at that branch. He replied that here was some discussion about elevating around the building, but drainage was not mentioned. There is a drainage review occurring which addresses multiple properties and not just the branch library. Ms. Wascom wondered if any underground drainage system was discussed. Mr. Watts said underground detention is a good method, especially here where we get heavy downpours. It keeps parking lots clear. If many commercial buildings in an area install these systems, they can hold back thousands of gallons of water. But only one or two built in an area will not help alleviate flooding. He noted that one of the fortunate things was that around that branch the flooding was not as bad as at other adjacent properties. If appropriate measures are taken now, possibly we will not have any water in the building. Our hope is that we will never have another flood like last August.

Mr. Jacob asked if there were any other comments. There being none, Mr. Jacob read Item C.

### **C. Update on Search for a Site for a South Branch Library – Mr. Spencer Watts**

Mr. Watts said there is very little to report. He said an article in yesterday's *Daily Report A.M.* summed up the search for a south branch site.

Mr. Watts said from reports we are getting, the Quail Drive property is not going to be placed back on the market for quite some time. It is somewhat of a fluid situation, but it won't be available in the immediate future.

Ms. Stephanie Riegel, Editor of the *Business Report*, had asked Mr. Watts if a library branch in the southern part of the parish was necessary considering the number of years the search has taken. Mr. Watts said we do need a branch in that part of the parish, because we do not have enough libraries based on our population size and the distribution of facilities. A branch in the southern section of the parish would be extremely helpful. He added that we probably also need a couple of smaller branches in the next few years to fill in some gaps in service. The south branch is one that we have made a commitment to build, so we should not abandon this project unless the Board directs us to do so. Mr. Watts noted that according to our records Library Administration has been looking for a location for 15-20 years. Mr. John Richard, former Library Director, had looked at the Ford property, the Bennett property, and several others that have been discussed recently. So much of the land in this area is not for sale, or is already committed to someone and never goes on the market.

Mr. Watts told the Board that Ms. Kathryn Juneau, realtor with Sperry Van Ness/Graham, Langlois & Legendre, LLC, sent him information about several residential lots within the service area for a south branch. The lots are in a subdivision off Highland Road, but unfortunately they are in the middle of a residential area. It would not be an ideal location for the branch because it would not be visible from a main thoroughfare or be easily found. There could also be some questions and concerns from the residents surrounding the lots. At least one of the lots contains a large residential structure which would need to be demolished. Mr. Watts said he has a flyer that the Board members can look at after the meeting. He added he will look at the lots this coming weekend.

Mr. Watts asked if there are any questions. Ms. Johnson asked how often we get updates from the realtors. She said initially they came to our Board meetings and gave us new information frequently. It has been a while since they came to our meetings. He replied Ms. Juneau contacts the Administration when she has a possible site. If there are no new properties to discuss, she does not need to come to our meeting. Mr. Watts said he usually speaks to Ms. Juneau a week before the Board meeting. Ms. Johnson wondered if not reporting to us regularly about properties was causing them to search less for the Library.

Mr. Watts said he has had some independent realtors contact him about properties. He reminded the Board about a realtor who had a building that might have had potential, but it was located on Burbank Drive near Nicholson Drive. This location was too far to the southwest of our target area. The good news about working with Ms. Juneau is that other realtors are informed that we are actively searching for property. Even if we can't consider a particular listing, we are in the minds of the real estate community.

Mr. Leger asked if it is time to re-examine the specifications we gave the realtors so that we can look for alternative sites. It's been almost two years since we started working with the realtors on a traditional site. He said what he is seeing is that what little land is available is being built on in very unique ways. The plots of land we have reviewed have been too small or have had an odd shape, etc. Those very sites are being purchased and built on. There is practically no land left based on our initial specifications. Mr. Watts agreed that we have discussed looking at alternative sites. In most cases we would end up building a smaller library. The question is, is it better to have a smaller library than no library. Mr. Leger replied the answer is probably yes because that area needs a library of some type. Mr. Watts said it would satisfy some of the citizens.

Mr. Leger asked if we are at the point of examining what the alternative specifications might be so our realtors can start looking for us. Mr. Watts said he would leave that decision up to the Board. He said the Library staff are working on several large projects such as the installation of the RFID equipment and tagging, the renovation of the two regional branches and the construction of the River Center Branch. He added that at some time soon we need to reassess what direction to take on the south branch. We will need to look at something different because the parameters we have used have not been successful.

Mr. Leger said he appreciates that we have these major projects and will now work on the budget for 2018. He asked what would an alternative type of branch look like and contain. He said he'd like an in depth national survey by the staff in order to see what an alternative branch would contain. Mr. Watts reminded the Board that they did see that in a slide presentation at a Board meeting. The gathering of this information involved a good amount of staff time. He said we could take part of that presentation and do more research.

Ms. Johnson said that maybe the first step is to look at our original plans and make note of where we believe we need to make changes. Mr. Jacob asked how much time and effort would it take to re-evaluate this project. He said he feels the staff should complete the renovations before working on the south branch. He asked the other Board members for their thoughts. Mr. Leger said he understands there are many projects in process, and he does not want to add to the workload.

However, he does not want the Board to continue on the current course for finding a south branch and not making any progress.

Mr. Jacob asked about the Library's contract with the realtors. Mr. Watts said that contract has expired. He said the Parish Attorney told him we can work with any realtor without a contract. We are not paying them anything. The realtor collects a fee from the seller when we purchase the property the realtor showed us. Our current realtors know what we are interested in, and what our challenges are, so they are helpful in this process. Keeping an open association with them is good. We do not necessarily need a contract any longer.

Mr. Leger said he feels the realtors have done a good job considering the constraints we have. He said he does not think we should change realtors. He said if we change our specifications, possibly they could find us a site. Mr. Luther agreed with Mr. Leger.

Ms. Johnson said she appreciates Mr. Jacob's thoughts about finishing the other projects. She wondered if we could look at the dates when these other projects are well underway to plan for discussions on the south branch. Mr. Jacob asked when the renovations would be completed. Mr. Watts said we probably can't wait until the end of the renovations. We will be lucky if we can ask for bids on Greenwell Springs this fall. Construction will not start until early next year. The Jones Creek renovation is further behind Greenwell Springs. Mr. Watts said he would like to get the RFID project underway to the point of rolling out the first stages of this new system. He noted that there will be times when the staff will be heavily involved in that project and then staff involvement will decrease. Mr. Jacob asked if we can address the south branch in the fall, or is that too late. Mr. Leger said he has some concerns about delaying. He wondered if Ms. Juneau could attend our next regular Board meeting to discuss the geographic boundaries. We could talk with her about the constraints we currently have, and if any of those can be eliminated. We can ask her to attend our Board meetings to keep this project active and open. He added that in the fall we can detail our changing specifications. Mr. Luther agreed with Mr. Leger. Mr. Luther said he like to see the slide show that Ms. Husband gave last year again. It showed libraries around the world in locations that were unique and unexpected.

Mrs. Guarisco asked about the geographical boundaries, and if they were still valid. Since we have been looking for 20 years in that area and there has been much growth in that part of the parish are the boundaries still valid. She wondered if we can expand the boundaries. Mr. Watts said if we move further to the east, we are getting closer to the Bluebonnet Branch. We already have patrons who live in the eastern portion of the service area who use the Bluebonnet facility. Some come to the Main Library and those in the northwest use the Carver Branch. Where we have been looking from Essen/Staring Lanes on the east, and Perkins Road as the northern boundary, and Stanford on the west have been the boundaries. We have been more fluid on the west side. There has been a real reluctance to go south of Highland Road. Mrs. Guarisco replied that she sees so much development south of Highland, so it seems to make sense to look in that area.

Ms. Parker said she appreciates what the other Board members are saying. It is hard to stop a search and resume it again later because you may have missed some opportunities when you stopped looking. If it is hard for the staff to work on this project now, she suggested we continue to use the current parameters and ask the realtors to continue looking. When the staff is able, we

can then study changing the parameters. Mr. Luther said Ms. Juneau has tried to show us sites in the Burbank corridor. Mr. Watts reminded the Board that the study done by LEO, LLC noted that there is land surrounding the Burbank corridor. Since that study much of that land has been developed. He added that some have noted there is a lot of high density housing, but commercial development has not occurred there which would draw more traditional housing. The traffic flow does not move that way. People tend to visit a library while they are out running other errands such as grocery shopping. It is thought that retail establishments will move into this area. Our realtors recently showed us such a development on Lee Drive between Burbank and Nicholson Drives. Our core user group for the south branch has been resistant to this corridor because of how development has occurred there.

Mr. Jacob asked where the land was located that was donated to the Library prior to the Rouzan Development donation. Mr. Watts and Mr. Luther said it was on Burbank Drive near Ben Hur Road. Mr. Jacob said if the Library had not declined that property years ago, this site would be right in the Burbank corridor we are discussing. We have resisted going to this area. Mr. Watts said that property now has an apartment or townhouse complex on it. Mr. Watts noted that there was a huge mitigation cost associated with that land. Mr. Luther said it was tied into 100 acres surrounding it. Mr. Jacob said he knew there were environmental concerns. Ms. Wascom said it took one year to get the mitigation settled for that land because of the wetlands.

Ms. Johnson said she would like Ms. Juneau to attend the July Board meeting and provide an update which will answer many of our questions. Mr. Watts said Ms. Juneau does not need to discuss the properties that did not work out for us. She should be prepared to discuss what might be possible if many of the restrictions we have given her are removed. Mr. Watts asked the Board if this is what they want. Mr. Jacob and Mr. Luther said yes.

Ms. Wascom said we are forgetting a very important aspect of this search. The residents in Southdowns, Pollard Estates, and Stratford Place originally wanted that library in their community based on their traffic patterns. If we find a site, it is important to get these resident's insights and input on the facility and what they think is important.

Mr. Leger said he would love to hear comments from anyone living in that area at our meeting. Ms. Wascom said she is on the Board of the Southside Civic Association and she will ask them to come also. Mr. Watts said he would like to get some concrete ideas. We could take these ideas to the community. We could explain where we have investigated and the results. Unfortunately, we have had only two viable choices over the years. Mr. Leger said we could also have a special public meeting at another time to find out how the options we have will affect them.

Mr. Jacob asked Ms. Wascom if the residents have expressed a preference as far as the type of library they want such as a traditional versus a non-traditional one. He added that he has always felt the residents want a traditional branch. They also are not interested in a scaled down facility. Ms. Wascom said we have not had any discussions about that. She added this is only one neighborhood. Her Association's general meeting is in October. Maybe the Library could be an item on the agenda. She added that she did not think a non-traditional library would be a problem. There might need to be some non-traditional Library integration. Possibly the non-traditional library might not have a children's area, but we could partner with a school in the area for

programming. We would need to think of ways to provide service that have not been tried before. There are neighborhoods such as Poets Corner, Zeeland Place, and the Hundred Oaks area that would be interested in a library in this area of town. Maybe we could put a survey on our website to gather input on the library.

Mr. Leger said it goes back to Mr. Watts' comment of whether a small branch is better than no branch. That is a question of which we will be forced to get an answer. Mr. Leger added that he does not want this discussion to become overwhelming. He noted that we now have enough information to give us a direction for the next step.

Mr. Jacob asked for any more comments on the south branch. There being none, he asked for any public comments. There were no comments.

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

Mr. Jacob read Item VII. He said he hoped to see everyone on July 13<sup>th</sup> for the budget work session.

Mr. Luther asked how many employees are going to the American Library Association Annual Conference in Chicago. Mr. Watts replied he is going. There are approximately 8 employees going. Mr. Luther asked for their names as he is attending the conference. Ms. Stein said two of the employees who are attending, are going for the Association. Their expenses are being paid for by the Association.

There being no further comments, Mr. Jacob asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Leger made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Johnson. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m. by unanimous vote.

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Mr. Jason Jacob, President

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Mr. Spencer Watts, Library Director