

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
APRIL 19, 2018
4:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I. ROLL CALL

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 15, 2018

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. CASE WORKERS – MR. SPENCER WATTS AND MS. PATRICIA HUSBAND
- B. TO VOTE TO SEND COMMENTS TO CITY-PARISH ADMINISTRATION CONCERNING TAX ABATEMENT PROPOSAL - MR. SPENCER WATTS
- C. ESTABLISH A CONVENIENCE FEE LEVEL FOR CREDIT AND DEBIT CARDS – MR. SPENCER WATTS AND MR. BRYCE TOMLIN

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A. UPDATE ON RIVER CENTER BRANCH LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION – MR. SPENCER WATTS
- B. UPDATE ON RENOVATION OF GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY - MR. SPENCER WATTS AND MS. PATRICIA HUSBAND
- C. UPDATE ON JONES CREEK REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY – MR. SPENCER WATTS AND MS. PATRICIA HUSBAND
- D. SOUTH BRANCH DISCUSSION AND VOTE TO OBTAIN AN APPRAISAL FOR POSSIBLE PROPERTY ACQUISITION – 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

April 19, 2018

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, April 19, 2018. Mr. Jason Jacob, President of the Board called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. Members of the Board present were Mrs. Martha Guarisco, Mr. Logan Leger, Mr. Donald Luther, Jr., Ms. Candace Temple, and Ms. Kathy Wascom. Absent from the meeting was Ms. Terrie Johnson. 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. Brian Thornhill, Library LAN Administrator; Ms. Kayla Perkins, Library Public Relations Coordinator; Mr. Bryce Tomlin, Librarian Coordinator of Technical Services; and Captain Blair Nicholson of the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office. Also in attendance were Ms. Eboness Black, Division Director of Baton Rouge Volunteers of America; Ms. Kelly Collins and Ms. Melissa Peeler, Case Workers with Volunteers of America; Mr. Frank Hillyard, videographer for Metro 21; Ms. Andrea Gallo, reporter with *The Advocate*; and one member of the public.

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 March 15, 2018. Mr. Luther made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Temple, and approved unanimously.

Mr. Jacob read Item A under Reports by the Director.

III. Reports by the Director

A. Financial Reports

Mr. Jacob asked Mr. Watts to present the reports. Mr. Watts asked Ms. Pinsonat to give the financial report.

For 2018, operating expenditures through March 31st are \$4,887,713.08, or 11.23% of the operating budget. Through March, we should have spent no more than 25% of the budget. Again, as stated previously, there has been a delay in recording 2018 expenditures due to the Finance Department working to close 2017. Finance did successfully close 2017 over the weekend of April

14th & 15th, so pending approval by outside auditors, all 2017 revenues and expenditures should be final.

Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2018 are still ahead of those collected in 2017, as we are approximately \$3 million dollars, and 7.28% ahead of the same date last year. As we predicted last month when collections were up 10.4%, the percentage we are ahead compared to 2017 is continuing to drop, and should continue to do so until it eventually settles at 3% - 4% ahead of last year.

Ms. Pinsonat asked if there were any questions. Mr. Watts commented that the 7.2% increase in cash collections over last year at this same time is to be expected. It is a result of current data and historical trends. We would expect it to be at 3% - 4% ahead of last year. As a result of the Flood of 2016, the lower amount of taxes collected, and the extension of time given for payment of taxes, it appears that this year's collection is very robust. However, it will level off to the expected increase of 3% - 4% ahead of last year.

Mr. Jacob thanked Ms. Pinsonat and then read Item B under System Reports.

B. System Reports

Mr. Watts asked Ms. Stein to give the systems report. Ms. Stein said the One Book One Community Read program for the book *Hidden Figures* is coming to its conclusion. She then gave the *Around the Parish* report.

- On March 24th at 7:00 p.m. British author Ms. Kate Moore gave an After Hours book talk on *The Radium Girls The Dark Story of America's Shining Women*.
- Ms. Moore held the attention of the entire audience including students with her description of her research and the writing of *The Radium Girls*. The way she told the story was exceptional.
- Dr. Renee Horton, a Lead Metallic Weld Engineer at NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans spoke at the Main Library on April 7th. She related to her audience who ranged in ages from 93 to 3 years old. A mechanical engineer, Mr. Patrick Giles who drew the illustrations for Dr. Horton's series of children's books, was present for the event.
- Dr. Horton's book, *Dr. H Explores the Universe* is inspiring. The Library is purchasing many volumes to take on the bookmobiles for visiting daycares and preschools. Her books on concepts and shapes are ready for publication, and will also be available in our Library's collection.
- *100 Years of Flight* featuring former ABC-TV Correspondent Mr. Jim Slade and Chautauquan actress, Ms. Betty Darst-Geiger portraying Katherine Wright, sister of Orville and Wilbur Wright will make their presentation on Sunday, April 22nd at the Main Library.

- Mr. Slade who worked in NASA's Mission Control reporting the news of the U.S. space program will talk about his experiences. Ms. Darst-Geiger as Katharine Wright will discuss her brothers' experiences with early flight.
- Patrons have overwhelmingly enjoyed the *Hidden Figures* program as evidenced by approximately 3,500 checkouts of the printed book. Not included in this number are the checkouts of the ebooks, the audiobooks, and the DVDs of the movie. Patrons have also enjoyed watching the movie at several branches of the Library.
- Dr. Darius Spieth, Professor of Art History at LSU's School of Art, College of Art & Design discussed the history of the Perkins Road Historic Merchants' District. His presentation was part of a series given by the Library's Baton Rouge Room staff.
- The Library is offering a new financial database, *Weiss Financial Ratings Online*. This database will assist patrons of all levels of financial expertise. Offerings such as stock ratings, white papers on how to find elder care, how to make a budget, how to get out of debt, and financial planning tools are just a few of the many topics. The site is very user-friendly.
- The Library is also subscribing to a new auto repair and maintenance database, *AutoMate*. This database is accessible inside and outside the library. It contains information such as technical services bulletins, pricing, location diagrams, and wiring diagrams.
- The week of April 8 – 14th was National Library Week. Our Library staff strives to make every day National Library Day.

Ms. Stein invited the Board to several upcoming events. The Summer Reading Program will begin next month. On May 12th from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., BREC and their various partners will hold a dedication ceremony and activities to celebrate the completion of the renovation of the Botanic Gardens in Independence Park. Later in the month BREC's Botanic Garden Foundation will sponsor a Plein Air Event for area artists.

Ms. Stein also announced that on Saturday, April 28th the Main Library will host the Red Stick International Festival with activities for children from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. A few makers and demonstrators will be located throughout the Library until 5:00 p.m. She noted that the Library's Annual Mini-Maker Fair will be held in the fall.

Ms. Stein then asked for questions. Ms. Wascom asked if there is an update on when the vendor for the BREC Café will open for business. Ms. Stein replied that Socially Yours is the vendor. She said we have seen construction activity in and around the BREC building, and so are hopeful that they will open soon.

Mr. Jacob thanked Ms. Stein. He asked for comments by the Board, and any public comments. There were none. He then 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 that the City-Parish Purchasing Department has awarded the bid for the end panel package for the adult and children's areas at the Bluebonnet Regional Branch Library. As soon as the vendor provides some required information to Purchasing, the installation can begin.

On April 4th a lightning strike damaged the compressors at the Eden Park Branch Library. Replacement parts were ordered and will be installed once they are delivered.

The storm that occurred this past Saturday caused some minor issues. The Library Facilities staff responded as each one was reported. They continued to complete repairs this week. At the Eden Park Branch one of the windows in Children's Services began to leak. At the Jones Creek Regional Branch, two leaks occurred, one in the atrium roof and one in Children's Services. At the Zachary Branch an exterior light was blown over, but remained lit. It was repaired. The Main Library experienced a power outage. The generator worked for a time, but then stopped running. As a result of the power outage, the boiler also stopped working. The Facilities staff repaired the boiler and generator.

Ms. Husband then reported on the RFID project. This has been a very large project that has required cooperation of all library staff. Our Facilities staff and Computer Services staff deserve much praise for their tireless work and patience. Our Facilities staff have coordinated work with the contractors, including movers, electrical contractors, and contracted labor, to ensure that preparations were correctly completed in a timely manner. They have been on hand at Outreach Services and at the locations where installation was occurring, to assist with the delivery, installation, and setup of the equipment and of the power and data connections. In addition, our Computer Services staff has been needed to ensure that data connections are working properly. Mr. Bryce Tomlin, Library Coordinator of Technical Services has been working with the mk Solutions technicians to configure the sorting systems and the exterior intelligent returns, and to resolve any programming issues that have arisen.

During the first week of April, the Facilities staff delivered all the equipment to the appropriate locations using the bookmobile and working through the weekend to accomplish this. The Computer Services and Facilities staff verified that power and data were installed and active at all locations. Both departments were available to assist mk Solutions technicians with the installation.

Ms. Husband also reported that the gates for the RFID system have been installed and are working at most of the branches. Most of the kiosks have also been installed. Once all of the kiosks have been installed some online adjustments will need to be made.

Ms. Husband asked if there were any questions. There being none, Mr. Jacob thanked Ms. Husband and asked Mr. Watts to give the Miscellaneous Reports under Item B.

B. Miscellaneous Reports

Mr. Watts said he would like to emphasize what Ms. Husband said regarding the assistance of our Library staff in the installation of the RFID system. Both the Facilities and Computer Services staffs deserve much praise and thanks for their efforts. He added that the bookmobile staff also deserves credit for their assistance. He said the installation has been challenging in regard to the scheduling of when and where installations would occur. Mr. Watts added it is said that installing a new ILS system in a library is the most difficult and challenging process. He noted that a close rival to an ILS installation is an RFID installation. He said the staff is relieved that this work is almost finished. They have shown their ability to be flexible and positive throughout this major project.

Mr. Watts then said that an internal audit by the City-Parish Finance Department of the Library's purchase cards usage is nearing completion. When the final report is issued, he will share the results with the Library Board. Through this auditing process we have noted some areas in which we can make improvements. There is a rule that each City-Parish department should maintain an inventory of items that cost less than \$5,000. We have a list, but we are working on making it more detailed. In regard to miscellaneous items that we buy such as replacement chairs and tables, or stand-up desks because the staff member needs that accommodation, we are ensuring that we have a more detailed inventory control of these items.

A great deal of discussion has revolved around programming. Some of the craft supplies, and incentives we use, have been reviewed regarding which items are acceptable. We have been made aware of the Cabela Three Prong Test which comes from a State ruling. As we have reviewed these, generally, we think that the Library has been in compliance with these requirements.

Mr. Watts then discussed the upcoming appointment of two new Library Board members. The first appointment is scheduled for the April 25th Metropolitan Council meeting. He noted that in discussing Board member attendance with other people, he has found that several departments were unaware of this rule requiring attendance at 75% of the regularly scheduled Board meetings. It is being enforced this year. However, it would have been helpful to have some advance warning before enforcement.

The Library has been informed about an upcoming change in the payroll process requiring the work week to begin on Saturday and end on Friday starting in October, as opposed to the current process of a Sunday through Saturday work week. The payroll functions will be switched to the new Munis accounting system in October. The switch will provide some automated features which will be very helpful. However, the system can only accommodate a Saturday through Friday week. This change is not significant for departments that work Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It will be a huge adjustment for the Library because we are open seven days per week. We also employ part-time workers, so we have a process for scheduling working weekends. At first we thought we might have an overtime issue that would occur in this new system. This can be managed as long as employees can work more than seven days consecutively. If we shift when staff work, the result is that we will have more coverage on a Friday which has traditionally been our least busy day in terms of service demand. We would give employees Mondays and Tuesdays off which are our busiest days. To accommodate this situation, we might need to hire additional

part-time workers. There will be a cost involved along with disruption of a long standing Library scheduling system created in 1987 that has served us well. The Library is working on this issue and has had a meeting with the Head of City-Parish Human Resources and the City-Parish Finance Department this week. The Baton Rouge Police and the Baton Rouge Fire Departments also work seven days a week, but federal regulations govern their employment schedules. However, they are also having concerns with this new system. We are still analyzing various scenarios, and will also talk with the schedulers in the various branches to obtain feedback.

Mr. Watts announced that the East Baton Rouge Parish Library has been selected as one of twelve libraries nationwide to participate in the Urban Libraries Council's (ULC) program, Entrepreneurship Learning Cohort. The purpose of the program is to find new ways to encourage entrepreneurship through the library. He said he was asked to participate, but since the meeting was scheduled for today in Kansas City, and there was a scheduled Library Board meeting, he sent two Reference Librarians, Mr. Andrew Tadman, Library Coordinator for Reference Services and Ms. Natalie Denby, Librarian II at the Main Library who specializes in Business Reference. He noted that he had an hour long conference call with the Executive Director of ULC and her staff to explain what we wished to accomplish in order to assist entrepreneurs at our Library. The ULC staff were impressed by our plans to provide assistance to those who fall outside of the traditional entrepreneurial profile, and have difficulty obtaining financial assistance for their ideas. They may have a viable idea, but are uncertain about how to translate the idea into a business model, and how to write a business plan. ULC was intrigued by our idea because the other libraries' ideas were traditional, whereas ours was a very different approach. He added that the ideas and concepts for our plan came from our staff in the Reference Department. They saw the need of our patrons and were able to translate that need into a compelling plan of action. We hope the participation in the ULC program, will enable our Library to receive some extra assistance to accomplish our plan.

Mr. Watts told the Library Board that on April 4th, Ms. Husband, Ms. Stein, Mr. Rattle and he attended the first meeting of the City-Parish All-Hazards Recovery Plan and Resiliency Planning program. Under the direction of the Mayor's Office, City-Parish Departments will develop comprehensive plans for preparation, response and long-term resiliency and recovery in dealing with a variety of potential disaster events. It will include the processes needed to ensure that the community can recover from a wide range of disasters. It is a very good concept, and follows out of a meeting he attended earlier this year regarding a long-term community resiliency planning session.

Mr. Watts mentioned that the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference will be held in New Orleans in June. We have budgeted for any Board members that would like to attend under a one-day pass. June 23rd and June 24th which are on the weekend, are key days to attend. It is wonderful to see all of the exhibits and experience the Conference which is usually attended by approximately 18,000 people from across the U.S. This is a good opportunity since it is so close to Baton Rouge.

Mr. Watts reminded the Board that the budgeting process for 2019 has begun. The staff are beginning to determine their needs and are working on submitting their requests for 2019. The Board will need to approve the budget at their regular meeting on July 19th. Therefore, we will need to schedule the annual budget work session for the Board in June. The work session for the

2018 budget approval last year took approximately four to five hours. He said we will probably determine the date for the work session next month by polling the Board members and Administrative staff for their availability in June.

Mr. Watts said that yesterday was Legislative Day at the State Capitol. Ms. Husband, Ms. Stein and he attended. We had conflicts last year and could not attend, so it was good to be there yesterday. He then mentioned that HB 382 came up in committee for a vote earlier this month, but was pulled by the sponsor of the bill before any action occurred. City-Parish officials had expressed concerns about the passage of this bill as it would have caused an \$11 million loss of revenue for the City-Parish. The Library as a Department of the City-Parish would have lost approximately several hundred thousand dollars of revenue. It may come up again for consideration in the future. Mr. Watts said if they were to pass such a bill, he would like it phased in over several years so that the loss of revenue could be planned for in the budgeting process.

Mr. Watts said there were a couple of complaints about the Main Library. A patron noted that they felt the smooth walk-way on the western side outside of Room 102 is too narrow to comfortably accommodate both pedestrians and those using walkers or wheel chairs. We had asked for a wider sidewalk when we removed the pavers and installed the smooth sidewalk. However, the sidewalk could not be widened because of the conflict with the drains. To do this would have required a re-design of the drainage system, and thus delaying the removal of the pavers. He said we can revisit this issue, but it may not be possible to widen. He added that for most people the smooth sidewalk seems to be an improvement.

Mr. Watts noted that another patron expressed concern about the entrance to the Main Library parking lot, stating that as a vehicle enters at the monumental street sign, the view of the pedestrian walk is blocked by the sign. Both the motorist and any pedestrian on the sidewalk cannot see each other creating a potential hazard and possible injury to any pedestrian crossing while a vehicle is entering the parking lot. Mr. Watts said that no reported incidents have occurred. There is a slight blind spot there. The Library had asked for a crosswalk and extra signage several months ago. We will initiate a follow-up request.

Mr. Watts reminded the Board that the scheduled mid-year review of Library accomplishments will occur at next month's May Board meeting. After a discussion last year, it was decided that since the annual review in October occurs so close to the mid-year review, that the mid-year review will be brief in the form of 5 – 10 PowerPoint slides and discussion. This will allow for a longer review in October without repeating most of the information from the mid-year presentation.

Mr. Watts concluded his Miscellaneous Reports. Mr. Jacob asked for questions from the Board. Ms. Wascom asked about the Mayor's All-Hazards Recovery Plan and Resiliency Planning meeting. She asked if any guidance was given on what percentage of the budget should be set aside for emergencies. Mr. Watts replied that the meeting focused on a much broader overview. He said as they begin to discuss these issues in subcommittees there will be more opportunity for that type of planning. He said that this topic is important for us as a department funded by a dedicated tax. Departments funded under the City's general fund are covered under the City-Parish's budget and the plans of the Mayor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency

Preparedness (MOHSEP) Department. He said Ms. Wascom's question was a good one to keep in mind as the Library plans its budget.

Mr. Leger asked what is the width of the sidewalk outside of Room 102 at the Main Library. Ms. Husband replied 5 feet. Mr. Leger asked what is the width requirement to comply with best practices. Mr. Watts said everything that the architects designed was reviewed and exceeded all of the minimum requirements for safety and ADA guidelines. Overall the design met or exceeded the requirements. For example, however, the pavers met the requirements, yet our patrons expressed dissatisfaction with them when using walkers, wheel chairs and wheeled carts on the pavers. The Library attempts to exceed requirements when patrons experience problems with an approved design such as the sidewalk.

Mr. Jacob asked if there were any other comments from the Board. There being none, he asked for any public comments. There were none. Mr. Jacob thanked Mr. Watts, and then read Item A under New Business.

V. New Business

A. Case Workers – Mr. Spencer Watts and Ms. Patricia Husband

Mr. Watts said we are pleased to have Ms. Eboness Black with Volunteers of America at this meeting. He said the Library's case worker program has been wonderfully received. The Library Board expressed confidence by approving the program during a budget work session. We expanded the program this year to include more hours and more Library branches. Ms. Husband will make some remarks and then Ms. Black will discuss the case workers' activities.

Ms. Husband noted that the program began in 2016 in a few branches we thought would be good locations to start to offer this service. The branches had a case worker present for a few hours a few times per week, being very unobtrusive, but available to patrons. The case workers had tables set up and were welcoming and inviting. People came up and talked to them. The case workers helped with a variety of social service needs. She said she has met some of the case workers. They are welcoming, friendly, and have a true desire to help.

Ms. Husband introduced Ms. Black. Ms. Black said her case workers are the experts in assisting people. She noted that she was asked to speak today on behalf of the case workers. Ms. Black gave the Board a brief history of the Volunteers of America (VOA) and what services they offer. They were established in 1896 by Maud and Ballington Booth with the promise to go wherever and whenever a need was expressed. She said 120 years later VOA still keeps that promise, and is why they are here today.

The program at the Library began with a phone call by Ms. Stein to their CEO, Ms. Janet Pace, asking for a referral to an organization that could provide some outreach and case management. Ms. Pace replied that VOA could meet this need. They began their service at three branches, Carver, Delmont Gardens, and Eden Park. Ms. Black said they then added Scotlandville, and now four more libraries, Main, Baker, Delmont Gardens and Greenwell Springs Road Regional.

VOA is a human services faith-based, nationwide organization. They have case managers on staff. Their organization provides services to people with HIV/AIDS, to disabled veterans, in-home services for disabled adults, therapeutic foster care for youth, and assisted living services to the elderly.

Ms. Black noted that VOA has been in Baton Rouge since 1921. The local VOA staff know who the local providers are for a variety of needs. They know who to call if a client needs help with a shelter, food, rental assistance or clothing. At times the client is not sure what is needed, but the case workers have experience in determining the need. VOA begins the assistance process with a brief intake session to determine the need and the best referral to meet the need.

Ms. Black noted that as of March 2018, VOA had served 331 people in the three initial branches. Those numbers will increase tremendously with the addition of the other four branches.

Ms. Black asked the Board members if they had any questions. Ms. Guarisco asked if VOA is collecting data about what types of services they provide. Ms. Black answered affirmatively. She also asked what the typical conversation is about, and what do people really need. Ms. Black said the largest number of requests are for housing, rent and utility assistance. She said they have activity sheets that the case managers complete at the end of their work day. They document the client's name, if the client approves this, the services they have offered, and the referral provider given for assistance. At the end of the month Ms. Black collects all of the activity sheets and creates a spreadsheet with all of the data. It indicates how many were referred for each service.

Ms. Guarisco asked if some clients return for additional help. Ms. Black said yes and that it is common for people to return for follow-up assistance. However, they do not provide case management at the branches. For this service, VOA refers them to the Drop-In Center where the majority of the case workers are located for services with housing and homelessness. Ms. Black said that the two case workers who come to the Library branches, Ms. Kelly and Ms. Melissa are present at this meeting, and they wanted to share a couple of their stories.

Mr. Leger asked if there is a sense of why the people VOA are helping, are coming to the libraries for assistance. Ms. Black said that is a good question and that she was surprised when VOA got the call from the Library for case worker assistance. VOA was very familiar with the River Center Branch because they provide outreach to the downtown area through the Mayor's Challenge program. She said they were surprised that there are so many people who just do not know where to go for assistance. If one does not know who provides what services in the community, one would go to the place that stands out as a place with information. Through this process VOA has discovered that people look to the Library for information because libraries are open during the day, they are beautiful, welcoming and a place to get out of the elements.

Mr. Leger asked if the clients they work with are largely homeless or have mental health concerns. Ms. Black said they track which service clients are asking about. At times VOA knows if a client is homeless or has mental issues because of the history the client has with VOA. Ms. Black said they do not diagnose, or do a complete assessment of the client at that time. VOA refers them to a case manager who can do that.

Mr. Leger said he would like to learn where the Library stands in the hierarchy of places to go for help. He asked if the Library is the place of last resort because people do not know where else to go. Ms. Black said the Library is not the last place, and it's not the first place; it falls somewhere in the middle. She added that nine times out of ten, they have called the public services 211 phone number for information. They come to the Library because it stands out the most. They won't go to a drop-in center or shelter because they do not want to be stereotyped. These places may in fact be a good starting point for assistance, but they do not know that.

Mr. Leger replied that Ms. Black made some great points. He then asked what percentage of people are repeat versus new clients. Ms. Black said repeat clients are probably at the low end of the spectrum.

Ms. Kelly Collins, a case worker with VOA for four years, and the Housing Coordinator for Baton Rouge spoke. Ms. Collins agreed that the percentage of repeat clients is low. People do not want to be categorized, or stigmatized. They don't know where to go, but they know they can get resources at the Library. They don't know how many resources are available. Asking for help at the Library does not make them feel needy, or that they are being judged. Ms. Black added that the Library is a safe place, and Ms. Collins agreed.

Ms. Collins then said she has a success story to tell the Board. A parent was in a Section 8 home that was moldy, and had rodents. The client did not know where to go for help. She kept going to the Section 8 contact with no resolution. Ms. Collins was able to tell her where to go, with whom to speak, and what steps to take in order to move because that home should never have passed inspection. She was able to get out of that home and into a new environment. The client and her children were very pleased with the results. Mr. Leger said Ms. Collins' story is wonderful and he thanked her for sharing it.

Mr. Leger asked where in the Library do the VOA case workers go to talk to clients. Ms. Black said they are centrally located in an identified space. They have a sign stating who they are, what their schedule is at the Library and what they provide. If a client needs one-on-one or privacy, at each branch they have identified room where they can speak to the client in a private setting.

Mr. Leger asked based on the number of people the program is reaching, and the fact that the Library is a place that people consider when looking for help, is the Library's coverage sufficient to meet the need or are people missing the help due to inadequate service hours or locations at the Library. Ms. Black said from her experience one will always miss some people. Sometimes there is nothing that can be done to correct or change that. If the client is not comfortable acknowledging that help is needed, or is not comfortable approaching the table to ask for assistance, the client will not follow through with any help that could be offered. If the client wants help and VOA is at the Library at a certain time, the client will figure out a way to get to the Library or to call VOA. A number is available to call at any time to ask for assistance. She said they may want to help everyone, but those in need of help must be willing to come forward for assistance. Mr. Leger said Ms. Black made some very good points about helping people.

Mr. Leger said this program is one of his favorite programs offered at the Library. Seeing it expand is very exciting to him. What is so wonderful about it, is that the Library is transitioning from just a place for books. VOA is bringing a resource and service into a place that is very open. We have many branches throughout the parish. He said he looks forward to hearing more success stories, and other ways the Library can reach out to people.

Mr. Leger noted that he was in Washington, D.C. recently. He met some people who were with Volunteers of America in their national headquarters. He told them about the efforts in Baton Rouge between VOA and the Library. They were pleased to hear of our partnership with VOA. He added that he thinks they will begin to see this type of collaboration in other libraries across the nation. The problems we have discussed today can happen to anyone and they are complex. Having the expertise to address the concerns is wonderful. He ended his remarks by saying he is a big supporter of this program.

Ms. Black said she remembered a situation at the Eden Park Branch Library in which the VOA was able to assist. She said it was after hours and a staff member from the Eden Park Branch called to say that the mother of some children who had been interacting with the VOA case worker came to the branch. The Library staff asked if someone from VOA could find out why the children were at the branch every day for extensive hours. The case worker spoke with the mother and discovered that the mother had not been able to provide child-care for her children. The case worker was able to connect the mother with some day care centers and after school programs in order to place the children in a safe environment while the mother worked.

Ms. Guarisco asked what type of training the VOA workers receive, and is their background in social work, or crisis management. Ms. Black said they employ managers, master level social workers, human services personnel. Each year they provide training for all staff that includes crisis intervention, outreach and engagement, first aid, and other continuing education classes. They receive 20 – 40 hours of training per year. Ms. Guarisco asked if the VOA workers in the libraries are social workers to which Ms. Black replied their degrees are in social work. Two of their social workers are licensed.

Ms. Wascom thanked Ms. Black for all that the VOA does at the Library. She said when she worked at the Library, they had patrons who really needed assistance such as grief counseling because they were told they had a serious illness, or they had a family problem. These patrons would come to the Library to talk about their problems or to try to find some assistance. The staff was there to function as librarians; however, the staff did try to be as empathetic as possible. Ms. Wascom asked Ms. Black if people come to them in serious crisis situations. Ms. Black replied every day, that is the foundation of what they do.

Ms. Black noted that VOA is a faith based organization, with ministers as part of their staff. They have ministers on staff. She added that VOA covers all of the situations that Ms. Wascom described. She also said they employ licensed counselors. If they feel that a patron at the Library who speaks to them needs ongoing assistance in a professional setting, they can refer them to their licensed counselors for a proper assessment and diagnosis if needed. She emphasized that they never force services on an individual. The person must be agreeable to further help because they want them to come back in the future.

Ms. Black told the Board if they notice a dire situation in which someone is asking for help, feel free to call VOA. They provide outreach services all day long. She said government officials do contact VOA when they need a quick response.

Mr. Luther asked what type of screening is done when VOA hires an employee who is not a licensed social worker, and what type of supervision is in place. Mr. Luther said he thought licensed social workers would be working in our branches. Ms. Black said all of their staff have completed their degrees, and they have the training required for the program in which they will work. VOA does not place anyone in a position who is not equipped and able to handle the work that is assigned. Mr. Luther asked if background checks are done to which Ms. Black said all those checks must have been done before an individual can work for VOA. Ms. Black noted that Ms. Collins has worked for VOA for four years and Ms. Black has been employed by them for eighteen years. She added that they have tenured staff that range between 10 – 15 years of service with VOA. Mr. Luther thanked Ms. Black.

Mr. Jacob asked if there were any other comments. Mr. Watts said when we first started this program, there were only a few libraries that were talking about employing counselors to assist patrons. There were only a couple of libraries that were actually engaged in using this type of service. Over the last year, that number has grown substantially. Just as Ms. Black and Ms. Wascom noted, the Library attracts people who come to us for help. Library school training traditionally does not prepare you very well to offer the type of help that the case workers provide. Our Library has been in the forefront for using this service, that other libraries are now involved in. Mr. Watts thanked the representatives from Volunteers of America who are making a positive difference in our Library. They do provide extra time to listen and offer help to a patron in need, whereas a Library employee at a service desk may have so many patrons to assist that the employee may not be able to spend sufficient time to fully grasp the level and depth of the concern.

Mr. Luther said he also is very thankful for the program and to Ms. Black and the staff who are providing this needed assistance. Librarians are not supposed to do this type of work. Ms. Black said they are happy to be part of the solution.

Mr. Jacob asked for any additional comments. He thanked Ms. Black for the presentation. He then read Item B under New Business.

B. To Vote to Send Comments to City-Parish Administration Concerning Tax Abatement Proposal – Mr. Spencer Watts

Mr. Watts said this is a tax abatement request by the Triumph Management Group under the Louisiana Restoration Tax Abatement Program which is administered by the local governing authority. Traditionally, when one of these requests is made, the Library Board has voted to submit no comments to the Metropolitan Council regarding the request. The Board has felt that they are not in a position to determine the merits of an abatement of taxes and the economic benefits of allowing an abatement. Therefore, they have chosen to defer to the decision of the Metropolitan Council. Mr. Leger made a motion that the Library Board not send any comments to the

Metropolitan Council regarding the tax abatement request by Triumph Management Group. Ms. Temple seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Jacob read Item C.

C. Establish a Convenience Fee Level for Credit and Debit Cards – Mr. Spencer Watts and Mr. Bryce Tomlin

Mr. Watts said patrons have asked us over the years to allow the use of credit and debit cards to pay for charges on their library cards. He noted that we said when we established self-checkout units, we would also institute a method for the public to use credit and debit cards. In order to offer the ability to use cards, one must work with a bank, and have certain types of equipment. GoVolution is the technology provider that the City-Parish uses to provide the security and encryption to safely complete these card transactions. Even though the Library collected \$180,000 last year in fines and fees, 82% of the payments are under \$5.00. There were some complicated issues that needed to be resolved. Mr. Bryce Tomlin worked through these, and he will discuss the options that are available.

Mr. Tomlin said under the current City-Parish contract, they established \$1.00 as the convenience fee to be added to all transactions under the amount of \$35.60. Most of the Library's transactions are under \$5.00, and 61% are \$1.00 or less. Adding a \$1.00 fee for these small charges did not seem feasible. He said we talked with the City-Parish Council Administrator/Treasurer, the bank, and GoVolution. We could be allowed to not charge the \$1.00 fee per transaction. However, we would incur other fees charged by the bank, and GoVolution. The bank would charge a 20¢ flat fee per transaction, and GoVolution would charge a 10¢ flat fee per transaction. In addition, there would be a 1.5% charge per transaction per the type of credit card used. The 1.5% charge is an average charge. Some credit cards may charge 1.75%, others may charge 1.25%. For each transaction the Library would be charged 30¢ plus 1.5%. The options to consider are does the Library pass this charge on to the patrons, and if so, how much do we charge them? We were considering either a 20¢ or 10¢ convenience fee per transaction which would reduce the total amount the Library would be required to pay.

Mr. Watts said 8% of the Library's transactions are in the \$20 - \$30 range. Almost all of those are for lost items. In this situation, the 1.5% charge is 40¢ - 50¢. The Library already charges a processing fee for lost items. We feel that the processing fee would cover the 1.5% charge. People, especially millennials, do not carry a lot of cash. If the patron would like to pay off their account, and we charge 20¢ per transaction, this fee will be less of an issue. With a 20¢ charge we would cover most of our transaction charges. Mr. Watts noted that we do not charge patrons a fee when they use cash. However, accepting cash incurs expense to the Library by way of cash registers, safes, secure transport of money, banking fees, and reconciliation of the cash. He said we would like to keep the convenience fee low. He noted that either 10¢ or 20¢ per transaction would be acceptable. We would recoup some of our costs, but would keep the fee reasonable for our patrons. It wouldn't be much of a deterrent to people wanting to pay a debt.

Mr. Watts asked the Board if they had any questions. Mr. Jacob asked what the difference would be in what the Library would absorb in charges between charging 10¢ versus 20¢. Mr. Watts said if we charge 10¢ per transaction, the Library would be responsible for \$7,500; if we charge 20¢ per transaction, the Library would be responsible for \$4,500. Mr. Tomlin noted that the statistics used to calculate these projections are based on activity recorded for 2017. Mr. Jacob asked for a clarification on what the Board is being asked to approve. Mr. Watts replied that he is asking the Board to establish the convenience fee level for using credit and debit cards to pay for Library charges.

Mr. Leger asked if it was correct that if the fee is 20¢ the Library would be responsible for \$4,500 to which Mr. Watts said yes. Mr. Watts added that if the fee is 10¢ the Library would be responsible for \$7,500. Mr. Leger said those fees are based on collecting \$180,000 using credit and debit cards. Mr. Watts and Mr. Tomlin noted that the fee is based on the assumption that 60% of the charges would be paid for with credit and debit cards. It is 60% of the \$180,000, or \$108,000. Mr. Leger said it seems reasonable to pay either \$4,500 or \$7,500 to collect \$108,000. He noted that generally he gets annoyed when he must pay a convenience fee, but he pays it because he never carries cash. He added that most people will accept the convenience fee. He also noted that everyone who uses credit or debit cards pays convenience fees. People don't see the fee because businesses roll the fee into their costs. He suggested that whenever someone is paying by a card the Library should make the convenience fee part of the charge. People will be more willing to pay it when it is part of the charge.

Mr. Tomlin explained that with this model for payment, anyone paying with a Visa card has the right to opt out of the whole transaction once they see that a convenience fee is being charged. The Library will be required to make that convenience fee very transparent.

Mr. Leger said he has no problem with charging a 20¢ convenience fee. Mr. Leger asked if the Board is being asked to vote to which Mr. Watts said yes. He would like some guidance on the fee. Mr. Jacob asked for a motion. Mr. Luther asked what the average charge for fines is. Mr. Tomlin replied \$4.00. Mr. Leger asked for a clarification about the fines. He wanted to know if the Library schedules times when patrons can work off their fines such as the Food for Fines drive in December. Mr. Watts said the Library also has the Teen Work Program in which teens can do volunteer work in the Library to work off their fines. Mr. Leger said he sees no problem with the convenience fee.

Mr. Leger made a motion to set the convenience fee for credit and debit cards at 20¢ per transaction. Ms. Temple seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Jacob asked for any additional comments from the Board. He then asked for any public comments on any item under New Business. 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 what he had planned to speak about has changed in light of what happened yesterday afternoon at about 4:40 p.m. at the construction

site. It seemed like there was a settlement issue or another problem occurring with the building. Library Administration began getting information about 5:30 p.m. It was incomplete information and difficult throughout the evening to know what was going on. Several people mentioned that the recent pedestrian bridge collapse in Miami and as well as some other things that have happened on construction sites, drove some of the decision making regarding the River Center Branch construction site. Everyone is very concerned about safety issues when there is a structural or possible structural problem going on. Steps were taken to ensure that they were as prudent, cautious and safe as possible, and that the analysis of what may have happened could proceed. At this point the analysis of what happened has not been completed.

Mr. Watts noted that he went to the site this morning. The structural engineer, Mr. Mark Shepherd of SCA Consulting Engineers, was on-site and did a very thorough inspection. Also present were several other engineers and officials, and representatives from the construction firm, the architect's office, and the design team. Once the scaffolding was in place, they began to investigate a couple of areas in which cracks appeared in the wall board at the connectors to the beams. Once they were able to open up the wall board, it appeared that there was some damage there. Mr. Watts said he does not have enough technical knowledge to comment further. He heard several different interpretations of what may have occurred. The first test that was done this morning was a deflection analysis test. This test was done to establish that there was no movement of the building or an increase in the crack where the problem began last night. Mr. Watts said several people at the site noted that the installed glass on the fourth floor was not cracked which he interprets as a good sign. He added that they did go to the fourth floor and he said he felt very safe while there.

Mr. Shepherd took the data he needed including a 3-D analysis of the data. He had a 3-D upload of the structure and his database. He determined what immediate steps could be taken this afternoon. Mr. Watts said he assumes these steps have been taken, but he has not had the opportunity to confirm that the actions have been completed. Some minor welding could be done at the connectors as a safeguard. Hopefully the workers could then return to the site tomorrow to begin further work.

Mr. Shepherd also got a better look at what was going on around the two areas with the cracks. His analysis will yield more information on the exact nature and extent of the problem, and what might need to be done beyond the initial safeguards taken today. This information was supposed to be available today at 4:00 p.m. Mr. Watts noted he had not had any updates since this morning. He said he hoped there would be an update by tomorrow morning. He also noted that he is not directly involved in this site analysis which is being handled by the professionals involved in the project.

Mr. Watts then said that a structural report will be released toward the end of next week. This report will contain more details of what was done today and of any long-term actions or corrective activities such as shoring up that will need to be done. In the meantime the contractor is going to survey the results of any deflection on all levels of the building. Mr. Watts did not see any obvious evidence on the first, second or third floors of deflection. They will inspect all floors including the fourth floor for any evidence of a problem. They will need to understand the impact on the plaster, the sheetrock, the floor, the glazed aluminum curtain wall, and all other surfaces. They'll

look at all aspects of the building to determine if there are any problems. This morning from a layman's point of view, nothing caught his attention as an obvious problem.

Ms. Guarisco asked Mr. Watts what deflection means. He said deflection is a shifting or movement. Sometimes deflection can occur when a pressure point changes. This can cause the angle to change or bow a bit. Deflection can be a minor change which can correct itself. Sometimes slight movements can cause a problem. They look at the deflection and consider whether it is putting stress on another part of the structure. They also analyze whether the deflection will cause a problem in the future.

Mr. Leger asked if the issue began as a crack. Mr. Watts replied affirmatively that one could see a crack in the plaster. Mr. Luther said he has heard rumors that the foundation had cracked. Mr. Luther asked if the crack was in the plaster on the fourth floor. Mr. Watts answered that it is on the fourth floor. Mr. Leger asked if the crack is on the interior of the building. Mr. Watts said on the interior, and also a corresponding crack on the outside. Mr. Leger then asked if the construction workers noticed the crack. Mr. Watts replied affirmatively that there was a sound when it happened. They reported it immediately. Mr. Leger asked if this is the result of the design of the cantilever. Mr. Watts said at this point nobody knows what the cause is, whether it is the design, a materials issue, or a workmanship issue. Nobody knows what caused the cracks now. He added that we don't want to speculate on what it could be. Ms. Temple then asked if they would have an answer by tomorrow, to which Mr. Watts replied by the end of next week. Tomorrow we might have a better idea of the stability of the structure. By the end of next week, we should have a better idea of the cause. Mr. Watts added that we never know how issues such as this one will be resolved. There might also be different opinions on the cause. He said we will wait and see what the report reveals. Mr. Leger asked if they think there are no more immediate safety concerns. Mr. Watts said those concerns were eased and the barricades across the street were removed. They are looking at removing more of the barricades tomorrow. Mr. Leger asked about remediation due to the cracks. He asked if they can repair the plaster and fix whatever caused the cracks. Mr. Watts said the cracks are very small and narrow. Mr. Leger confirmed that they were not gaping holes. Mr. Watts agreed. Mr. Leger said this was not clear from the various media reports he read. Mr. Watts noted that they removed the wall board at the section where the beams are connected.

Mr. Watts reminded the Board that the Owner of the building is the City-Parish. The Owner takes its construction, architectural and engineering professionals, and if need be, its legal professionals into the discussions to determine responsibilities in a situation such as this.

Mr. Watts said the biggest concern this morning was how big was the safety concern. That seems to be under much better control now unless something were to change. All the indicators at this point are moving away from urgent safety concerns.

Ms. Wascom said it appears that it will take time to evaluate the problem and to do the repair. She said the Library has a budget for this project. She asked how much the Library will be responsible for in the solution of the problem. She noted that the Library went through all of the required reviews of the design and construction throughout this process. Mr. Watts replied it is too early to discuss the cost to the Library. It depends on what the issue is. However, the Library has not done anything that could have caused the problem. We probably will not be asked to bear the cost. It

is too early to know, and we shouldn't speculate. There are costs involved. For example, the cost of the structural engineer that has been called in is not the Library's responsibility. The design team asked for the structural engineer. There will be a thorough review by many parties who will then involve other parties. If there is a disagreement at some point as to the nature of something, or how the problem happened, the parties will need to discuss it and possibly bring in other experts. Mr. Watts said hopefully, this problem will be relatively easy to fix, but we will need to wait and see what happens. Mr. Watts noted that there is additional money in the budget for contingencies, but this situation is not a contingency.

Mr. Jacob said more will be known next week. Mr. Watts agreed. This issue will have some impact on the timeline. They have already lost one day, and there will be some restrictions on what they do. Then there will be the cost and time involved to repair the problem, and do any required remediation.

Mr. Watts said he wished they knew last night what they know now so that the perimeter of the restricted area may not have been so large. He added that he knows the nearby shop owners and the people who live downtown were inconvenienced, and in some cases, economically affected. We regret that, but public safety was the paramount concern for those who made the decision to barricade the area. It was the right decision.

Mr. Watts then discussed what activities were occurring at the construction site prior to yesterday afternoon's issue. The metal cladding installation is being done on the west side of the building, and much of the exterior is near completion. The installation of flashing for the balcony area seems to have gone well. Much of the interior wall board is completed along with floating and taping. Interior spaces and layouts have become apparent. The appearance will change when the finishes are applied. There was some bubbling and stain issues with the TPO roofing. A sample lettering graphic for the front window has been mocked up. It was suggested that a lighter color might be more attractive, but the Library staff is happy with the sample. Changing the graphic would have involved a change order. Some final color selections, including wall signs have been made, and white signs with dark lettering has been chosen. Tile in the restrooms is about 90% complete. Cladding samples for the foundation's exposed grade beam have been reviewed and a gray precast was selected. The HVAC system was not on during the April site visit. Millwork should also arrive near that date. There have been several submittals and requests for information regarding door access controls, switch locations for shades signage shop drawings and overhead coiling doors. Intumescent coating materials are on-site. They are a fire prevention material that swells when exposed to heat. Initial furnishings and equipment bid packages and state contract requests have been issued. Prior to yesterday's incident, the contractor felt the punch list work could begin by September 1st. Mr. Watts completed his report.

Mr. Jacob asked if there were any other questions. There being none, Mr. Jacob read Item B under Old Business.

B. Update on Renovation of Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library - Mr. Spencer Watts and Ms. Patricia Husband

Mr. Watts discussed the Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library renovation project. He said a pre-bid meeting was held on April 3rd and attendance was good. The bid due date was extended from last week because an addendum was issued to the bid package. An addendum is fairly common when contractors ask questions to clarify the information in the bid package, or when something is left out of the package. The bids were due today at 2:00 p.m. Seven contractors submitted bids; one was under budget, one was slightly over budget and two or three were somewhat over budget. City-Parish Architectural Services and the Library Administration will review the bids. Hopefully we will have a bid that we can accept.

Mr. Watts noted that an addendum was added regarding moving items in the building during Phase 1 of the project. He said we believe that if the contractor can move the items, the work will be done more smoothly. Trying to obtain a moving contract that can be used over several phases of a project is difficult. Moving companies use a very precise method for calculating their charges based on exact dates and timetables. Moving book shelves and keeping the collection in order calls for a different skillset than the average mover can provide. However, it appears that we may do some of the moving through a separate contract.

Mr. Watts said it looks like fairly good news for the Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch renovation. He said we are happy to be at this point in the renovation process, and once completed, the branch will look much nicer than it even did before the flood.

Mr. Watts asked the Board if they had any questions. Mr. Jacob asked for any comments. There being none, he read Item C under Old Business.

C. Update on Renovation of Jones Creek Regional Branch Library - Mr. Spencer Watts and Ms. Patricia Husband

Mr. Watts discussed the Jones Creek Regional Branch Library renovation project. He said on March 28th Library staff met with Mr. Jim Frey, of City-Parish Architectural Services to review the design development documents with the architects. The Library staff had told the architects that because of several critical projects such as the RFID implementation, we would not be able to complete the review until the end of April.

Mr. Watts said he has been very impressed with Ms. Husband. She has already reviewed several of the more complex sheets. She has also done a floor plan/furniture review sheet. Because our IT and Facilities Management staff are very busy with the RFID project, they have not had the opportunity to review that portion of the architectural design documents that pertain to their areas of expertise.

Mr. Watts noted that the brick mock-up logistics have been settled. Mr. Steve Jackson, architect with Cockfield-Jackson, has found an attractive floor base that will be used in areas where the

flooring and the wall are visible and not blocked by furniture. His choice gives the room more definition, and nicely frames the room when one enters the space.

Mr. Jacob asked when can they expect the Jones Creek renovation project to be at the construction phase. Mr. Watts asked Ms. Husband to comment with him. He said possibly in November or December. He noted that there are many details that need to be verified such as the electrical outlets. For example, in looking at the original drawings there appears to be a conflict in what was proposed in the drawings and the actual placement of outlets in the wall. Even though the architect feels his design development drawings are one step away from being converted into construction documents, we feel more work will be necessary to produce accurate construction documents. Our timeline is slightly different than the architect's. As mentioned previously, other pressing projects such as the RFID implementation have occupied key employees' time preventing them from reviewing Jones Creek design documents. Mr. Watts said it will probably be at the end of 2017 or early 2018. Mr. Watts asked Ms. Husband for her opinion. She agreed that it will not be as early as October. She said she spoke to Mr. Rattle about the plumbing, electrical and mechanical portions and Mr. Thornhill about the technology portions. She said she has floor plans that she will mark up for data. She would like Mr. Rattle and Mr. Thornhill to review all the plans before moving forward, and they agreed. Ms. Husband noted that as we are reviewing these documents we are aiming toward standardization of such items as toilets, door handles, and millwork. From a maintenance stand point, it makes it easier when ordering replacement parts and when renovating other facilities. With each project we are getting more refined in our requirements. Mr. Jacob thanked Ms. Husband.

Mr. Jacob asked the Board if there were any other comments. There being none, he read Item D under Old Business.

D. South Branch Discussion and Vote to Obtain an Appraisal for Possible Property Acquisition – Mr. Spencer Watts

Mr. Watts said once we received a legal description of the property located in the Engquist-Rouzan TND, we were able to contact several appraisers on the City-Parish Attorney's approved list. He noted that the Lakvold Group quoted the lowest bid at \$1,500. They can complete the appraisal in about three weeks after their contract is approved. We have begun the paperwork, and could request this appraisal administratively. However, Mr. Watts said it would be a good idea to get the approval of the Board to proceed with this appraisal. He asked the Board to approve the choice of the Lakvold Group to appraise the property being offered for sale to the Library by Engquist-Rouzan.

Mr. Leger made a motion to authorize an appraisal by the Lakvold Group of the property being offered for sale to the Library by Engquist-Rouzan. Ms. Wascom seconded the motion. Mr. Jacob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Watts thanked the Board. He said now we will need to wait until the appraisal is completed to determine how it will align with the sale price quoted by Engquist-Rouzan. They are now working on their TND requirements and taking the next steps to get ready for construction in the

commercial portion of their complex. Until the Library receives the completed appraisal by the Lakvold Group, we cannot take any further actions.

Mr. Watts asked if there were any comments that the Board would like to make. He added that the appraisal will probably be completed a couple of weeks after the May Board meeting. Mr. Jacob asked if there were any comments from the Board. There were none.

Mr. Jacob asked for any public comments on any items under Old Business. There being none, Mr. Jacob read Item VII.

VII. Comments by the Library Board of Control

Mr. Leger said unfortunately, since this is his last Board meeting, he has several things to say about serving with the fine members of the Library Board. This is a bitter-sweet moment. Moving on can be difficult, although there are always positive things on the horizon. He said he greatly enjoyed his time on the Board as he reflected on several things. Mr. Leger said he was first appointed to the Library Board at the young age of 23. Now looking back after five years, and as a wizened old man of 28, he is surprised that he was even appointed at such a young age. At 23 he said he had just completed college, and really did not know anything. He admitted that some would say he still does not know a lot. He knew that he wanted to give back to the city that he loved so much. He added that he grew up going to the Library, and it was an important part of his adolescence. The Library Board seemed like the organization that would allow him to give back.

Mr. Leger said when he began to serve, he was under the impression, as are many other people, that the Library is mostly a repository of books. He said he has been pleased to learn that this could not be further from the truth. He said his background is in technology, and libraries have been undergoing an interesting transition. We are in a technology age, and libraries are adapting to that. He noted that it has been exciting to be a part of turning the Library into this new age model and offering this technology to our patrons.

He also said that the Library is an important asset in our society. The Library democratizes these resources and services to our community. Books will always be an important part of the Library, but so much of the Library now is more than that. We just heard a wonderful presentation by the case workers who help our patrons. It is a brilliant innovation for the Library to offer. Many of these types of resources will continue to be offered by the Library. In the future access to more and more technology will be available, and having equal access will be very important.

Mr. Leger then spoke of Benjamin Franklin and the first public library. Mr. Franklin said that a well-informed constituency is foundational to a democracy and to a lasting democracy. Mr. Leger said in an age that is very polarizing, we are probably less informed at this point than we have ever been. He added he thinks the Library is crucial to our society functioning and it's crucial to the future stability of our democracy. Therefore, he is thankful that the Library is here for so many reasons.

He again emphasized that he has enjoyed being part of this organization. It is the crown jewel of the government in East Baton Rouge Parish, and our society. The taxpayers have decided to make a very healthy investment in the Library System. On the whole, the Library Board members have been good stewards of the faith the public has placed in the Board. The Board has used the taxpayers' dollars to produce what is undoubtedly a world class system. It has been proven time and time again by all of the awards the Library has won. All of the usage statistics that are collected indicate that people show up, use their Library, and they love their Library.

Mr. Leger said to summarize, over the time he has been on the Board, he has seen the number of members of the public attending the Board meetings, decline. This may be attributed to the approaching Library Tax Renewal in 2015. He urged the public to continue to come to these important Board meetings. He added he has enjoyed seeing the public at the meetings even when the citizens are coming to complain about something involving the Library. The meetings are an important part of the process of knowing what the public wants from the Library, so that the Board can build something that is responsive to the public, and meets their needs.

Mr. Leger said it is so easy for Boards and Commissions, and the lovers of government to be abstracted away from the public. Because of that abstraction, it is very easy to forget that there are human beings behind all of their decisions. He said the public should remember that there are hundreds of dedicated, very diligent, highly educated, skilled professionals in this Library, who stop at nothing and dedicate their lives to building their Library System.

Mr. Leger noted that the Boards and Commissions are voluntarily based. Members of these Boards and Commissions give their time to dedicate to this process because the Board members believe in this city, and want this city to be better as much as the citizens.

Mr. Leger then spoke to the Library staff. He said it has been an honor serving alongside the staff. He said he has been spoiled by this process because the staff are so dedicated. They are so forward thinking. He said he could say he was responsible for most of the technology innovations, but realistically, the ideas were not his. They came from the Library staff. He added that he is so in awe of the dedication of the staff. Even when he walks up to a service desk, and the staff does not know he is a Board member, he receives quality service that is impressive. He said thank you for allowing him to be part of this.

Mr. Leger addressed his colleagues on the Board. He told them it has been a lot of fun serving with them. Although someone used some choice words to describe the Board on Facebook, we have done a good job of being good stewards of taxpayer money. Although he has disagreed at times with what some Board members have expressed, he said that there is an important concept to remember. Always be advocates for the investment that taxpayers have given the Board, and continue the good work.

Mr. Leger said he promises to continue advocating for the Library forever. He said to the public, if it's been a long time since you have been to the Library, or even if you no longer have a Library card, come to the Library. Please stop by and he promises that the public will be surprised. Thank you.

Mr. Jacob told Mr. Leger that his comments were impressive and good. Mr. Jacob asked for any other comments.

Ms. Wascom thanked Mr. Leger for his remarks. She said she is very sorry that he is leaving the Board. She noted that she is on the older end of the spectrum, and Mr. Leger is on the younger end. Since the Library serves everyone, we need input from everyone, including the next generation coming up. The Board needed your expertise in technology. Our next generation of patrons are going to be your generation, your children and their children. The Board needs to understand that attitudes change, so when there is diversity on the Board, it is good. She thanked Mr. Leger for his input and service.

Mr. Luther thanked Mr. Leger for his service.

Mr. Jacob said it has been a pleasure serving with Mr. Leger. He wished him the best. He said he does not want to say good-bye because he could come back to the Board in the future. He thanked him for all of his contributions and comments. He appreciated Mr. Leger's honest assessment of matters discussed at the Board meetings. He said he knows Mr. Leger will be successful in his future endeavors.

Mr. Jacob asked for any further comments. There being no other comments, Mr. Jacob asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Leger made the motion and Mr. Luther seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m. by unanimous vote.

Mr. Jason Jacob, President

Mr. Spencer Watts, Library Director