

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL  
**MAIN LIBRARY**  
**FIRST FLOOR LARGE MEETING ROOM**  
**7711 GOODWOOD BOULEVARD**  
**BATON ROUGE, LA 70806**  
**NOVEMBER 19, 2020**  
**4:00 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER – Board President Jason Jacob (4:06 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Board Vice President Candace Temple

- I. ROLL CALL – Assistant to the Deputy Library Director Rosana Sotile  
Jason Jacob, Board President – Present  
Candace Temple, Board Vice President – Present  
Martha Guarisco, Board Treasurer – Absent  
Delores Watts – Present  
Donald Luther, Jr. – Present  
Kathy Wascom – Present  
Nicole Allmon-Learson – Present (4:09 p.m.)  
*A quorum was present*

STAFF PRESENT – Spencer Watts, Library Director; Kristen Edson, Deputy Library Director; Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director; Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director; Rhonda Pinsonat, Library Business Manager; Ronnie Pierce, Library Assistant Business Manager; Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director; James Fagan, Network Technician I

- II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 15, 2020 – A motion to approve was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

III. SPECIAL ORDERS – There were no items to cover under Special Orders.

IV. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:07 p.m.)

- Operating expenditures through October 31<sup>st</sup> are 67.06% of the operating budget, and no more than 83% of the budget should be spent through October.
- Cash collections from property taxes were approximately 4.29% ahead of last year.
- Question from Donald Luther concerning the percentage of interest collected in prior years and where it is distributed: Rhonda Pinsonat responded that what is not spent on expenditures from revenue collected from property taxes and interest is distributed into a fund balance.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS (4:10 p.m.)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
- Early voting was held at Central and River Center Branch Libraries.
- The River Center Branch Library also hosted a televised mayoral debate.
- Thousands of voters turned out on election day to vote at Bluebonnet Regional Library, and Fairwood and Zachary Branch Libraries.
- The fourth floor of the River Center Branch Library also serves as a place for citizens to watch simulcast meetings of the Metro Council and other committee meetings; public input and questions are streamed live from the meeting room.
- The Baton Rouge Mini Maker Faire was held October 17<sup>th</sup>; 100% virtual event with 24 presenters and lasted for 7 hours; directed by Stuart Poulton, the Library’s Road Show director for Metro 21.
- Jay Ducote’s “Stir the Pot” was held virtually via FaceBook Live; over 750 people watched live and another 750 people viewed it by the next day.

- “Trunk-or-Treat” was held at Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library.
- “Attic Treasures” was an in-person event held at Main Library; pre-registration was required.
- GIS Day was held November 18<sup>th</sup> as a virtual event; the East Baton Rouge City-Parish was awarded as one of the top three Open Cities in the nation.
- Upcoming initiatives include working with Bridge to Hope and hosting training for the new Bridge Center staff; also hosting legal clinics either virtually or in-person.

## C. OTHER REPORTS

### 1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:20 p.m.)

- All library branches continue to receive preventative maintenance including clock changes this month for daylight savings time.
- A preventative maintenance contract for annual coil cleaning for all AHUs was executed; Jones Creek Regional Branch Library was completed this week, and Main Library will be completed next week.
- Roof repairs from Hurricane Delta were completed at the end of last month, with Scotlandville Branch Library being the last one; the skylight at Fairwood Branch Library was repaired, as well as roof sections at Bluebonnet Regional Branch and Zachary Branch Libraries.
- Four parking lot lights were repaired at Bluebonnet Regional Branch Library in time for election day; parts were covered under warranty; lights at Fairwood Branch Library will also be repaired.
- Landscaping and irrigation work was completed last week at Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library; waiting on sod to be replaced.
- Cooling towers at Main Library were cleaned of rust and debris, coated with a rust inhibitor metal primer, and coated with a metal enamel. (photos provided in a slide show)
- The fuel tank at Main was replaced on November 17<sup>th</sup>; all rented equipment was returned to vendors; the library’s shipping yard was closed for several days to allow the crane to set the tanks and generator; a one-year warranty was provided for the new fuel tank. (photos provided in a slide show)
- A meeting was held on Monday for Main’s mechanical improvements to the server room; the notice-to-proceed should be issued soon; the vendor indicated it should take two weeks to install the new HVAC system.
- A panel was replaced on the Vesda smoke detection system at Main; panel was purchased as refurbished to provide cost savings; a one-year warranty was provided.
- The contract for meeting room repairs at Carver Branch Library was submitted to Purchasing on November 6<sup>th</sup>; a pre-construction meeting will likely be scheduled by the end of November or early December.
- Final acceptance for the HVAC improvements at Outreach Services was approved on November 10<sup>th</sup> by the Metro Council; Facility Services staff received training for the new air conditioning units; still waiting to receive warranty manuals and drawings; a one-year warranty was provided for parts and a five-year warranty was provided for the compressors; a design contract is being constructed for the next phase of improvements which will be the disaster recovery site.
- The new boiler at Delmont Gardens Branch Library has been installed; the vent stack is expected to be shipped on November 25<sup>th</sup>; inspections will be scheduled soon.
- The new chiller for Eden Park Branch Library was delivered on Wednesday; the temporary chiller will arrive tomorrow; a crane will maneuver the chillers on Monday.

### 2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts (4:30 p.m.)

- Early voting at Central Branch Library had a total of 11,615 voters; social distancing was maintained in the voting line.
- All library locations closed early on October 28<sup>th</sup> due to Hurricane Zeta changing its course; all locations reopened the next morning without any notable problems.
- Covid-19 update:
  - The Library continues to follow the guidance of local health officials, the State and the City-Parish; currently there has not been a surge in cases of infection among library staff.

- Indications at this time are that open-stack browsing poses a low risk of transmission; meeting room use remains low as some patrons are not interested due to capacity restrictions which only permit low attendance levels.
- Mask fatigue among patrons has increased; library staff are enforcing the mandate by being friendly but firm and offering other alternatives for protection.
- Recent analysis external experts regarding the Battelle Labs study now suggests shorter quarantine periods for library materials; the Library will continue to monitor the feedback over the next several weeks.
- Some Library staff raised concerns regarding new CDC warnings of increased exposure risk when engaging with infected persons, however it was based on a particular situation in a Vermont prison; the City-Parish health official, Dr. Goodbee, indicated that the Library's preventative measures currently in place are sufficient.
- South Branch Library update:
  - A meeting was held October 28<sup>th</sup> with the TND owner, the TND developer (Charles Landry), the architect (Mike Sullivan), library staff, and representatives from City-Parish Architectural Services and Post Architects; important topics discussed included site context and placement, a gateway intersection and entrance, a 40-foot easement required by the City-Parish, landscape requirements, preservation of a large live oak tree, and the TND's preference of the design having a more contemporary and urban aesthetic.
  - A meeting was held November 13<sup>th</sup> with the architects to discuss the arrangement of basic service and functional building areas, including parking lots; the next conceptual meeting will be held the first week of December.
  - Question from Kathy Wascom regarding the possibility of school children walking from nearby Glasgow Middle School to the new library: Spencer Watts responded that yes, there is a design element in place through the TND to have direct access for walking and riding bicycles from the school to the library.
  - Question from Kathy Wascom regarding the ditches that have to be crossed before getting to the TND site: Spencer Watts responded it has been discussed for the TND to look into covered drainage, but it will have to be through the City-Parish.
  - Question from Kathy Wascom regarding the timeline of when drawings will be available for the public to view: Spencer Watts responded that projected timelines are not always reliable, and it would be best to wait until the schematic design phase when basic rooms are drawn and enough building form has been designed to make it easier for people to visualize the final look.
  - Question from Kathy Wascom regarding the use of the proposed green space for Library programming: Spencer Watts responded that Charles Landry mentioned that since the Library will be a member of the Commercial Property Association, it would allow for use of certain amenities, such as common areas.
- Requests for Qualifications, in the search for architects, have been released for the Scotlandville and Baker Branch Libraries renovation projects; submission deadline is December 3<sup>rd</sup>; the Design and Planning Selection Board will meet virtually to rank the responding architect firms on December 17<sup>th</sup>.
- A budget hearing with the Metro Council was held November 17<sup>th</sup>; there was some discussion regarding the future possibility of constructing smaller, specially focused library branches for public access to technology or reading materials; other discussions included the Library's Computer Services department, infrastructure needs, and how the Library makes good use of the resources it has.
- Approval to move forward with repairs at Carver Branch Library has been issued; roof repairs have been delayed due to receiving only one quote for costs which were double the amount of the original estimate due to the onslaught of hurricanes along the Gulf Coast; the Library and City-Parish Architectural Services decided to wait for improvement in price competition before proceeding with roof repairs.
- The new VDI servers were installed on Monday; a purchase order has been issued for the new Aruba Wi-Fi system for Main Library and River Center Branch Library; demonstrations for the new Library staff intranet were held this week, and formal training will begin after Thanksgiving; Computer Services staff are working with RoundTower to produce a formalized Incident Response Plan for the Library's network, to better prepare for a cyber-security attack or breach, and to fulfill CPI compliance obligations.

- The City-Parish has formed an IT Steering Committee that will review all projects costing more than \$15,000 or that impact more than 5 users; there is concern as to whether or not this will slow down projects for the Library.
- Management Partners continues to make progress with their Effectiveness Study and will schedule meetings with Library managers and division heads to obtain feedback on constructing an employee survey, followed by focus group sessions; the scope of work includes reviews of the development of the organizational structure, especially positions related to the customer experience, as well as an overview of compensation improvement; they will provide the Library with a template for improvements to the knowledge transfer component of succession planning.
- Kris Goranson, Purchasing Director for the City-Parish, and the procurement department are working on developing templates for Request for Proposals to streamline the bid process.
- Question from Candace Temple regarding if the Board members will be able to view results from Management Partner's Effectiveness Study: Spencer Watts responded that yes, part of the agreement includes a summary and an action plan that will be made available to the Library Board.

V. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – There were no reports of committees.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON RENOVATION OF JONES CREEK REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband and Kristen Edson (5:08 p.m.)

- Slideshow presentation of exterior photos of Jones Creek Branch Library.
- The contractor continues to work on the punch-list and is making progress; test and balance will be completed next week on exhaust fans.
- Covid-19 still has an effect on the delivery of furniture; the City-Parish Purchasing Department has issued all purchase orders; some furniture may be delivered in 6-8 weeks; some shelving should arrive by December 31<sup>st</sup>; some shelving from other library branches is being reused.
- Monitors are being installed in conference and study rooms; projectors are being installed in meeting rooms; the design for the exterior monumental sign should be completed soon.
- RFID equipment for the sorting machine was shipped back to the manufacturer for software reconfiguration.
- New landscaping will be installed soon; waiting on installation of new irrigation system before planting; trees will be replaced near the Shenandoah neighborhood entrance.
- Additional ADA parking spots have been added.

B. ANNOUNCE THE RESULTS OF THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF LIBRARY DIRECTOR – Jason Jacob (5:16 p.m.)

THE BOARD MAY GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE CHARACTER, PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY OR PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH OF MR. SPENCER WATTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH LA. R.S. 42: 17(A)(1). MR. WATTS MAY REQUIRE THAT SUCH DISCUSSION BE HELD IN OPEN SESSION.

- A motion to go into executive session was made by Nicole Allman-Learson and seconded by Delores Watts. **The motion was carried unanimously.** (5:16 p.m.)
- Discussion was held in the Library's board room on the third floor.
- A motion to return to open session was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously.** (5:58 p.m.)
- Jason Jacob commented that Spencer Watts had a very successful evaluation, and Board members thanked him for his service, leadership and dedication to his position as Library Director.
- Spencer Watts thanked the Board and commented that despite this year's challenges, the Library continues to move in the right direction.

Jason Jacob asked for any public comments. No public comments were made.

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

The Board agreed to switch items A. and B. on the agenda to discuss and vote on the Resolution before discussing the Technology Plan.

### A. DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON RESOLUTION FOR ADJUSTMENTS TO FINES, FEES, AND CIRCULATION PRACTICES, INCLUDING THE CLAIM RETURNED PERIOD, FINES ON CHILDREN'S MATERIALS, THE AMOUNT OF ACCUMULATED CHARGES FOR BLOCKED STATUS, AND SIMILAR MATTERS

- Spencer Watts: Around 800 to 1,000 patrons will probably be affected; will make it easier for them to settle their accounts and return to active status.
- Jason Jacob asked the Board if there were any questions or comments. No questions or comments were made.
- A motion to adopt the resolution was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously and the resolution was adopted.** (6:02 p.m.)

### B. TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2023 – Kristen Edson (6:03 p.m.)

- It is a “living” document and will undergo more changes; a three-year plan is a standard length of time.
- An initial SWOT analysis was performed by Library staff to identify the “strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats” of the Library’s information technology.
- Information Technology is the backbone of the Library system; a holistic approach is needed to redefine technology goals.
- The appendices will be available in January; will cover the rotational replacement plan and projected equipment needs; prevents equipment from outpacing its usefulness.
- The EBR Parish Library is ahead of several peer libraries in terms of technology; advice from peer libraries was also given as to how we can do some things better.

Jason Jacob asked for any public comments. No public comments were made.

## VIII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

- Jason Jacob asked Spencer Watts if the Board held a meeting last December: Spencer Watts responded that there was no Board meeting last December; he notified the City-Parish earlier this year that no Library Board of Control meeting would be held this December unless it was a specially called meeting.
- The Board briefly discussed if they would need to meet again in December; it was decided that they would not meet in December.
- Jason Jacob commented that Board officers will be elected in January for president, vice president and treasurer, and all board members are welcome to apply.

## IX. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Delores Watts. **The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m. by unanimous vote.**

### 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.**