

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
July 16, 2020
4:00 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – Board President Jason Jacob (4:04 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Board member Nicole Allmon-Learson (4:04 p.m.)

I. ROLL CALL – Assistant to the Deputy Library Director Rosana Sotile (4:04 p.m.)

Jason Jacob, Board President – Present

Candace Temple, Board Vice President – Absent (Present at 4:34 p.m.)

Martha Guarisco, Board Treasurer – Absent

Delores Watts – Present

Donald Luther, Jr. – Present

Kathy Wascom – Present

Nicole Allmon-Learson - Present

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 “Jay” Fagan, Network Technician.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 18, 2020 – A motion to approve was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Nicole Allmon-Learson. **The motion was carried unanimously.** (4:05 p.m.)

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

IV. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:05 p.m.)

- Operating expenditures through June 30th are 34.14% of the operating budget, and no more than 50% of the budget should be spent.
- Cash collections from property taxes are approximately \$1.87 million; 4.03% ahead of 2019.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:06 p.m.)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of ongoing Library programs.
- Statistics on library usage has increased over the past month since re-opening to the public.

C. OTHER REPORTS

1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:16 p.m.)

- Work order maintenance reports now contain more information in their new format; additional improvements to the reports are expected next month.
- Preventative maintenance was completed on cooling towers and chillers.
- Recent storm caused roof leaks at several branches and a power outage at Main Library.
- Window washing at all branches continues.
- Irrigation repair and system upgrades has begun at Zachary and Bluebonnet Branch Libraries.
- The pre-bid conference for a new landscaping contract was held.
- Mechanical improvements for Main Library have to be re-bid; bids due on August 20th.
- Architectural plans are being drawn for repairs at Carver Branch Library.
- Upgrades for the energy management system at Central Branch Library were completed on July 10th.

- Cooling coil needs to be replaced in air handler unit at Jones Creek Branch Library; waiting on purchase order.
 - A bid document is being drafted for annual coil cleaning, quarterly preventative maintenance and repairs of all library air handler units.
 - Minor electrical work was completed at River Center Branch Library.
 - A change order was issued for roofing replacement at Outreach Services.
 - Boiler and chiller replacement contracts have been awarded for Delmont Gardens and Eden Park Branch Libraries.
 - Landscaping work at Greenwell Springs Branch Library is being put on hold until the contract is awarded to the new vendor.
 - Comment by Kathy Wascom regarding the layout and details of the new maintenance report format.
2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts (4:27 p.m.)
- Update on Covid-19 and Library response: Library is following guidelines from City-Parish regarding requiring the use of masks and will offer accommodations to those who have difficulty wearing masks; Library will maintain 72-hour quarantine on returned materials based on results from the Battelle Lab Studies REALM Report.
 - New format of Library Board meeting minutes is not as detailed but more streamlined, still providing a lot of information.
 - There was a legal review of the architectural services contract for the design of the new South Branch Library; contract was returned to the architectural firm for review.
 - The EBR Library system received a \$6,775 CARES Grant from IMLS, distributed through the State Library; it will be used to purchase five iPads for online programming and possibly additional new laptops for staff remote work.
 - OverDrive and RBDigital have merged content onto one platform; the Library is waiting to see if there will be new subscription pricing.
 - Carver Branch Library will be a participating site for the Making Spaces Initiative, sponsored by Knock Knock Children’s Museum and underwritten by Dow Chemical; will focus on professional leadership development, maker-centered learning, and early STEM education.
 - Acknowledgment of outstanding efforts by Computer Services staff to prepare the River Center Branch Library for official opening; they are also setting up quarterly security training for staff, and implementing a new digitized inventory software.
 - Last month’s report on the impact of Covid-19 will serve as a substitute for the mid-year report; the annual report will be given in October.
 - The Library remains aware of issues concerning social and racial equity; will prepare a formal statement from the Library Administration and Library Director but the Library Board will review it.
 - Discussion on CARES Grant: it was a one-time payment and the Library will have to show proof that the money was spent on appropriate items, as listed in the agreement.
 - Discussion on budget costs for masks and other PPE supplies: there will be further discussion on these budget items during next month’s budget work session; all Library buildings are being fogged with disinfectant regularly and extensive cleaning of HVAC systems and filters.
 - Discussion on South Branch construction: technical and legal issues are resolved so that the design contract can go back to the architectural firm; once the contract is finalized, a preliminary timeline for design, development and construction should be released.

Board President Jason Jacob asked for public comments. No public comments were made.

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

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON RENOVATION OF GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband (4:49 p.m.)

- Paperwork has been prepared for final completion and acceptance; will be presented to the Metro Council soon.
- Staff met with architect and contractors to review Phase 3 punch-list; Computer Services reviewed remaining issues with power and data.
- Replacement door to the Children’s Room arrived damaged; another replacement has been ordered.
- Brody Study Units were installed in Adult Services.

- Computers were relocated back to their original positions; ends of tables will be ADA compliant.
 - Laptop tables and stools were delivered and set-up.
 - More furniture to be delivered next week; an open-line package is out to bid. Delays on delivery were due to manufacturer shutdown.
 - There was a slideshow presentation of updated project photos.
- B. UPDATE ON RENOVATION OF JONES CREEK REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY – Kristen Edson (4:54 p.m.)
- New project manager has been assigned; August 17, 2020 is projected date for substantial completion.
 - Light fixture installation is underway.
 - Painting is nearing completion.
 - Utility lines were discovered at rear of building; drawings for a retaining wall were approved.
 - PVC pipe was installed to resolve conflict with a downspout near the rear sidewalk.
 - RFID gate placement and installation plans have been finalized.
 - Storefront framing has been completed in Teen Services.
 - Tile work, fixtures and partitions have been installed in the restrooms.
 - Ceiling grid installation is complete; carpet install will begin next week.
 - Exterior limestone panel installation has begun.
 - There was a slideshow presentation of updated project photos.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. SETTING OF DATE FOR SPECIAL 2020 BUDGET WORK SESSION – Spencer Watts (4:58 p.m.)
- Tight deadline for completing work on the budget due to the pandemic.
 - Suggested week of work session is August 10th-15th; a poll will be emailed to Board members to decide and then announced to the public.
- B. REPORT ON THE OPENING OF THE RIVER CENTER BRANCH LIBRARY – Spencer Watts (5:03 p.m.)
- Recap on comments made by Mayor-President Sharon Broome, Library Board President Jason Jacob, Director of Downtown Development District Davis Rhorer, and Library Director Spencer Watts, at the soft opening on June 26th.
 - Ribbon cutting, tours of the building; 461 visitors that weekend.
 - The building is closing on July 18th and 19th due to generator work for the City-Parish central plant.
- C. DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON FINE FORGIVENESS, AND EXTENDING DUE DATES AND GRACE PERIODS – Spencer Watts (5:07 p.m.)
- Due to requirements of federal agencies, auditors and other reviewers of the Library’s fines and fees policies, it would be best to have a formal resolution approved by the Board.
 - Suggested resolution would include issues that arose during the pandemic to waive fines and fees, extend due dates and relax restrictions for library cards.
 - A formal resolution will be presented to the Board at next month’s meeting for a vote.
- D. INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PROCEDURES, PRACTICES AND STRUCTURE RELATED TO FINES AND FEES FOR LIBRARY MATERIALS – Spencer Watts (5:11 p.m.)
- Nationwide movement to abolish library fines in larger urban areas; fines can be a barrier to use for low income families; greater concern regarding impact of fees which can constitute a seemingly insurmountable barrier for many people.
 - Issues to consider for EBR Parish Library: review the “claim return” status; raising the dollar threshold for a blocked card; remove fines on all children’s items; issue special student cards to all students; a remote renewal option for senior citizen cards.
 - Library staff are working on putting together a proposal to present to the Board prior to the end of the year.

Board President Jason Jacob asked for public comments. No public comments were made.

VIII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL (5:17 p.m.)

- Nicole Allmon-Learson: Looking forward to continue working with everyone after recently being reappointed to the Board; asked if there is a timeline for availability for meeting rooms at River Center Branch Library.
 - Spencer Watts: Phasing in the meeting rooms will depend on availability of cleaning supplies and disinfecting, and restriction to the number of people gathering; supplies are harder to acquire now because the rate of virus spreading is increasing; there are still study spaces available.
 - Mary Stein: Trying to rearrange smaller groups to meet in larger meeting rooms would force other groups to cancel; there would be a disappointment of unmet expectations, so consistency is best.
- Donald Luther, Jr congratulated Nicole Allmon-Learson on her reappointment to the Board.
- Delores Watts thanked Mary Stein for the tour of the new River Center Branch Library.

IX. ADJOURNMENT (5:25 p.m.) – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by both Nicole Allmon-Learson and Delores Watts.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m. by unanimous vote.