

MINUTES FOR 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**  
**SEPTEMBER 16, 2021**  
**4:00 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER – Jason Jacob, Board President (4:08 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Donald Luther, Jr.

- I. ROLL CALL – Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director  
Jason Jacob, Board President – Present  
Candace Temple, Board Vice President – Present  
Martha Guarisco, Board Treasurer – Present  
Delores Watts – Present (4:16 p.m.)  
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.

- II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 22, 2021 AND SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING OF JULY 15, 2021 – 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 special orders
- IV. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR
- A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:09 p.m.)
- For 2021, operating expenditures through August 31st are 53.07% of the operating budget; through August, we should have spent no more than 66% of the budget.
  - Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2021 remain slightly ahead of those collected in 2020, as we are approximately 0.34% ahead of the same 9 months last year.
- B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:11 p.m.)
- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
  - The Main Library at Goodwood replaced light bulbs with LED lights; the building is seven years old.
  - After Hurricane Ida, the Main Library at Goodwood served as a recharging station for the public, providing air conditioning and charging stations for electronics; the building ran on generator power from its 5,000-gallon diesel generator; an additional 917 gallons were provided by the City-Parish; the Library’s bookmobiles deployed to Jones Creek and Greenwell Springs Regional Branches to provide power stations, mobile hot spots, computers and books; over 100 patrons were served at each location on the first day.
  - The Main Library at Goodwood is also hosting FEMA’s Mobile Registration Intake centers, until September 29<sup>th</sup>, to assist citizens with filing disaster recovery documents.
  - The Library will be receiving a new Sprinter van bookmobile to be used primarily for visits to retirement centers; the bid to replace the larger bookmobile was issued today, with bid openings scheduled for mid-October.

- The open house charrettes for the Delmont Gardens Library renovation project will be held September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>; the public is welcome to attend and view poster boards of proposed plans, as well as obtain information on the Plank Road Revitalization Master Plan.
- The River Center Branch Library was featured in this month's American Libraries magazine as a spotlight in the 2021 Library Design Showcase section.
- The Dollar Shave Club founder and CEO, Michael Dubin, will be the next speaker for the Business Report's Business Forum October webcast.
- The Baton Rouge Mini Maker Faire will be held October 18-23; small maker workshops will be held at each branch during the week, leading up to the weekend events; the Main Library will host a robot-building event and a robot fashion show.
- The Author-Illustrator program, featuring Salina Yoon, on October 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, will now be virtual; a virtual live stream will be available to every school in the parish, including home-schools and charter schools; a teacher workshop will be live streamed on October 8<sup>th</sup>, and the replay will be available for two weeks afterward.

## C. OTHER REPORTS

### 1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:24 p.m.)

- Hurricane Ida Update:
  - Several trees fell at Central, Baker and Pride-Chaneyville Branch Libraries, as well as Jones Creek and Bluebonnet Regional Libraries; a large limb was damaged in the courtyard at the Main Library.
  - Roof leaks occurred at Zachary and Delmont Gardens Branch Libraries, and Jones Creek and Bluebonnet Regional Libraries; the leaks were in the same areas of the roof that had previously leaked; these libraries will soon be undergoing roof replacement projects.
  - Baker Branch Library closed early on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, due to several power issues; the chiller was manually restarted; the branch was able to resume normal operating hours the next day.
  - The new boiler at Delmont Gardens Branch Library was damaged from power surges during the storm; collaboration efforts between the installer, the manufacturer and engineering enabled the boiler to be fixed.
  - Computers on the second floor of the Main Library were not wired to the building's generator; the issue was resolved quickly by Alvin Rattle, the library's Facilities Manager; the building temperature dropped significantly since the water pumps for the boilers were not connected to the generator; plans are underway to permanently connect the boiler water pumps and computers to the generator.
  - Three agave plants on the public terrace at the Main Library were lost due to the storm; the landscaper is scheduled to repair the irrigation system and replant the terrace next year; a meeting is scheduled tomorrow with the landscaper regarding interim replanting, as the terrace's current landscape is sparse.
- Painting of the pony walls in the plaza and along the back of the building at the Main Library has been completed; painting of the loading dock is also complete.
- A major water leak occurred at the River Center Branch Library on August 26<sup>th</sup> due to a plumbing issue with two of the single stall restrooms on the third floor; the library delayed its opening that morning; a large blockage in the plumbing line caused the toilets to overflow with clean water; the water leaked to the second and first floors through the ceiling; the plumbing contractor has recommended replacing all four toilets with larger flush capacity units.
- A kick-off meeting was held August 23<sup>rd</sup> for the Carver Branch roof replacement project; the project timeline is 180 days from the Notice to Proceed, which is longer than usual due to exceptionally long lead times for receiving materials for this type of metal roof.
- Several edits were made to the construction documents for Phase II of the Outreach Services improvement project; the documents were submitted to the architect, and the Library is waiting to receive the revisions.
- A kick-off meeting for the Main Library boiler replacement project was held September 10<sup>th</sup>; the boilers were ordered and should arrive the week of September 20<sup>th</sup>, which is when the work should begin; the project is scheduled to take 2 weeks for completion; an additional 2 –

4 weeks for testing and balancing is expected; the library will continue to run at least one boiler during the project, replacing one at a time.

- Discussion on the Emergency Connectivity Fund and collaboration between the Library system and the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board; the School Board has the opportunity to apply for its own funding.

## 2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts (4:35 p.m.)

- Hurricane Ida Recap:
  - The Library system remained open the Saturday before the storm; closed on Sunday; essential personnel returned on Tuesday; buildings reopened Thursday on a modified schedule as an essential service to the public before the reopening of the rest of City-Parish offices; power at all sites was restored on Saturday.
  - Library staff performed outstanding jobs assembling information and developing an online disaster recovery guide; provided temporary library cards for first responders and evacuees.
  - The Main Library is hosting a FEMA Mobile Registration Intake Center, beginning today.
- Covid-19 Update:
  - The Library remains hopeful that the overall infection rate has reached a plateau and could soon see a decline.
  - Over the past month, Library staff have had several exposures that tested negative; two contract employees at different sites tested positive but did not pose a significant exposure risk to others; one full-time employee tested positive; infection rates among library staff remain low.
  - The Library continues to follow protocols; no concrete development on the possibility of a vaccine requirement for City-Parish employees.
- The Mayor-President granted an additional day of administrative leave with pay to all library staff who worked on essential duty the Thursday and Friday after Hurricane Ida.
- The Delmont Gardens Branch Library open-house events will enable insight from the public; discussion continues on if it's best to renovate the current site or build a new library that could be incorporated into the Plank Road Revitalization Plan; renovating the current site could possibly incur the same costs, or cost more, than building a new one, and would also include demolishing a portion of the building.
- Computer Services Update:
  - The Library is nearing its finalization for PCI compliance; this is for patron credit card use at kiosk stations; staff training will be scheduled soon; online credit card payments are at a total of 1,400 and over \$100,000 collected so far this year; it is likely that more will be collected with the finalization of PCI compliance.
  - Computer Services staff are working with the vendor at Jones Creek Regional Library for the installation of updated A/V devices; the vendor is also working with Samsung to resolve issues with the interior digital wall at River Center Branch Library.
  - Library staff are reviewing a vendor to assist in meeting security recommendations from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency assessment, as well as other projects.
  - Self-checkouts are at 21.8% of library loans, which is slightly lower than previous, possibly due to hesitancy of patrons to use touch-screens during the pandemic.
  - The American Rescue Plan Act grant is slated for approval from the Metro Council; a public hearing will be held next week.
- The Greenwell Springs Regional Library flooring issue was scheduled to be repaired this week, but the vendor is located in an area heavily impacted from Hurricane Ida; will be rescheduled for next week.
- Discussion regarding recognition of the efforts by Library staff during the hurricane recovery and re-opening; Board members commended the dedicated service of Library staff.

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 SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY – Spencer Watts and Patricia Husband (4:55 p.m.)

- A Design Development meeting was held September 7<sup>th</sup>; a follow-up meeting will be held in several weeks; the majority of the meeting was spent with the landscape architect, reviewing the proposed design which included the buffer space for the live oak tree, the courtyard area, and the plants for the greenbelt area facing Glasgow Avenue.
- Discussion also included accessibility and safety, including egress from the courtyard; sidewalk design was also reviewed.
- The bike racks currently provide 12 spaces; more space was located for an additional 9 to 12 racks.
- Furniture and door schedules were discussed; also considered traffic flow and basic technology placement, such as print stations and service desk configurations.
- Other details that still need to be covered include electrical plans, HVAC configurations, and drop-box locations.
- Technology floorplan drawings were received and included power and data locations.
- Some issues that were noted include the following:
  - Plans for water runoff from the roof and installation of gutters; the design has no parapets.
  - Wall mounted toilets that need to be floor mounted
  - Flooring transitions
  - Molding design issues
  - Types of chair rails
- Discussion on security features planned for the courtyard area; standard security features will be included; there is no access to the courtyard from outside the property line, only from inside the building; an emergency gate will automatically open during emergencies, such as a fire alarm.
- Discussion on integrating the Library into the Rouzan TND; the landscaping plans will need to be reviewed and approved by the development board; the library will be able to use the public spaces within the TND.

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

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

### A. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY – Spencer Watts, Patricia Husband, Mary Stein, Kristen Edson (5:20 p.m.)

- The meeting with Architectural Services and the design team was held on September 9<sup>th</sup>, rescheduled from August 31<sup>st</sup> due to Hurricane Ida; initial schematic documents were reviewed, and some major changes were made.
- The original site of the archival building was too far from the library facility; would prefer a proximity that will allow the buildings to be directly connected in the future.
- The archival building was also re-envisioned, such as including vertical lift modules; also reviewed adjacent space for a service yard for Facilities Services storage.
- The northeast corner of the existing building will be squared off; the vestibule may need to be larger; the public restrooms will be relocated, and one additional stall will be added to each.
- The Black Heritage Collection area and Teen Services will also be relocated.
- Children's Services will have low shelves on the floor and taller shelves on the walls; existing exterior door leading to the courtyard will remain; the room will balance open space for programs with shelving for collections, similar to Jones Creek and Greenwell Springs Regional Libraries.
- The programming room will be located in its current space but will be expanded in size; looking for a solution to possibly remove the stage.
- The roof will be replaced; sprinkler system will be brought up to code; a new chiller will be installed, and the existing boiler will remain; roof lines and drainage will be addressed.
- A generator hook-up will be included for the whole building; possibility of receiving a generator from the DPW contract; the archival building will require its own generator for preservation of collections and materials; the servers for the energy management system will also need to be on a generator.

- The building envelope will also be addressed; the upcoming roofing project for multiple library locations will also include inspections and possible updates to window and door sealing to prevent water intrusion.

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

VIII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL – No comments were made.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Delores Watts. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 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.**