

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
JULY 21, 2022
4:00 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – Jason Jacob, Board President (4:05 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Donald Luther, Jr.

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 (4:07 p.m.)

Donald Luther, Jr. – Present

Kathy Wascom – Present (4:13 p.m.)

Nicole Allmon-Learson – Present (4:27 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, Assistant Library Business Manager; Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director; Daniel Dearing, Network Technician I; Adam St. Pierre, Librarian II, and Wesley Morgan, Librarian I.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 16, 2022 – A motion to approve was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Martha Guarisco. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

II. SPECIAL ORDERS – There were no Special Orders.

III. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:06 p.m.)

- For 2022, operating expenditures through June 30th are 40.84% of the operating budget. Through June, we should have spent no more than 50% of the budget.
- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2022 remain slightly ahead of those collected in 2021, as we are approximately 0.45% ahead of the same seven months last year.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:08 p.m.)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
- Mary Stein showed the Board pages from The Advocate newspaper that featured programs occurring at the Main Library.
- Over 1,000 patrons have registered for the summer reading program through the Beanstack app; the adult program has the highest number of registrants that it has ever had; the children’s program has logged over 650,000 minutes read by participants and acquiring over 40,000 badges.
- Summer feeding was held at most branches; the Library system has been busy engaging children with both virtual and in-person programs and events, including the installation of new AWE computers.
- The Carver Branch Library hosted Carver Cubs Kids Camp, which partners with the LSU Department of Education Home Scholars that includes teachers promoting reading and literacy; this year’s camp featured players from the LSU football team who read books to participants on the final day of camp.
- The Library is now circulating new games and activity kits; patrons are donating gently used and new games for the collection.
- The Wi-Fi 2 Geaux pilot project has been very successful, especially at the Pride-Chaneyville Branch Library; two additional library branches were added to the circulation; over 520 circulations have been logged since the program’s inception on June 7, 2022.

- The Main Library hosted an author talk for Mary Manhein, also known as, “The Bone Lady”, as she debuts her new book, *Cities of the Dead*.
- The Library’s Career Center is hosting “Cool Careers,” a series aimed toward teens that highlights different types of careers, such as healthcare, construction and forensic science.
- In partnership with the Library, the Baton Rouge Parents Magazine rededicated their sponsored “family room” space at the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport to reflect a learning lab; Children’s Services staff attended the rededication ceremony.
- The Library hosted several public meetings over the past month, such as Unity Fest, Summer of Hope, Heal the Block, and MOVEBR: Old Hammond Hwy.
- The Virtual Author Series with the Library Speakers Consortium continues to be successful; includes both fiction and non-fiction authors.
- Author Jon Gordon was this month’s speaker for the Business Forum webinar; next month’s guest will be author Whitney Johnson.
- The Library’s annual Micro-Con event will be held the first weekend of August at the Main Library.

C. OTHER REPORTS

1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:25 p.m.)

- The waiting period for the cooling coil for Central Branch Library’s HVAC system is now 4 to 6 weeks, (instead of 10 to 14 as previously predicted); dehumidifiers have been placed in the building to assist with high levels of humidity.
- The Outreach Services building received error codes on the rooftop HVAC units; the issue is being resolved by the installation company, per the preventative maintenance contract.
- Issues arose with the air conditioning unit at Jones Creek Regional Library, but were resolved by cooperation between Facilities staff, the manufacturer, and the installer.
- A build-up of condensation on chilled waterlines at Pride-Chaneyville Branch Library was reported and will be closely monitored; the branch is scheduled to have the chiller replaced later this year.
- Roof leaks occurred at Zachary Branch Library in the compact shelving area, which is a continuing problem area; patches were installed to stop the leaks; Eden Park Branch Library also sustained a few minor roof leaks after a recent rain event.
- Library staff met with a landscaper on July 15th to plan and discuss a new project for planting options on the rooftop terrace at the Main Library; the current agave plants are not surviving well, due to lacking the right amount of soil; a new plan was created in hopes to begin the project before the end of the year.
- The vendor repaired the large vehicular gate in the shipping yard area at the Main Library; the parts for the access control system should be arriving within a few months of the predicted delivery timeframe.
- The Main Library’s concierge elevator is now working again; it was out of service while awaiting parts needed for repair; the preventative maintenance contract for the elevators will be revised.
- The contractor for the Jones Creek Regional Library renovation project continues to work on outstanding punch list items; the final two items include installation of the plaque and adjusting the heavy study room doors.
- Phase 2 of the Outreach Services renovation project will include new cooling units for the reflective server room, as well as resurfacing the parking lot and fence repairs; will go out to bid within the next month.
- A pre-construction meeting was held June 20th for the multi-branch roofing and exterior restoration project; it was agreed that a pre-mobilization meeting will be held at each project location two weeks prior to beginning work; the first meeting will be held July 27th at Zachary Branch Library, with work to begin on or around August 15th.

2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts, Adam St. Pierre and Wesley Morgan (4:33 p.m.)

- Adam St. Pierre and Wesley Morgan demonstrated to the Board a virtual reality simulation of the Library’s circulating headset and software that provides skilled trades training; the Library is seeking to purchase eight new headsets that will provide a more integrated user experience for the SkillMill virtual training; the East Baton Rouge Parish Library system is only the second library in the nation to begin circulating this type of virtual training; discussion on what other skilled industry trainings could be added to the programming and eligibility for trade certification.
- Update on COVID-19: Over the past month, 14 new infections among staff at branches and 14 cases at the Main Library; staffing levels remain thin, and the recent infections have caused additional stress in maintaining adequate coverage.
- The Fairwood Branch Library will not be affected by the widening of Old Hammond Road; the branch’s setbacks and buffers will be sufficient; some patrons may be impacted by the closure of the Flannery Road

bridge for several months; a roundabout will be built at the intersection with Flannery Road, along with a median strip in the highway.

- Computer Services Update: The VDI project is in its final stages with installation of additional terminals; Kristen Edson will meet with community center directors for implementing the more robust Wi-Fi hotspots; self-checkout usage continues to hover around 24% to 25%; staff continue to record all issues related to RFID equipment.
- The Baker Branch Library renovation project will likely appear on the Board meeting agenda beginning in August or September; Library staff met with the architects and Architectural Services on July 7th, and they discussed the following:
 - Two schematic options presented by the architect exceeded the amount of square footage to be allowed for expansion; the plans will have to be modified by the architect.
 - The architect presented a useful site plan that included a second entrance at the Jefferson Street side of the property; will present the option to Baker officials to consider.
 - Library staff did not approve the proposed layout of interior spaces; there were a number of issues, including the failure to make the best use of the existing space.
 - The next meeting with the architect is scheduled for July 27th.
- A patron pulled the fire alarm at the Main Library on July 19th, causing the evacuation of the building; the individual was identified through security footage and will be suspended from the library for one year.
- The Main Library was eliminated as a possible location for installation of the hearing loop technology, mainly due to the terrazzo flooring and high cost; will be easier to include the technology as new spaces are built.
- Baker Branch Library was closed on July 1st due to lack of water service and HVAC; Central Branch Library will be closed July 22nd for a planned power outage by Demco.

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

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

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY – Spencer Watts and Patricia Husband (5:19 p.m.)

- Construction documents were delivered via Dropbox on July 18th; printed copies were ordered on July 20th; the specifications and manual have not yet been completed or delivered.
- The Board was shown a photo of the parking and landscaping site plan; the library will have 70 off-street parking spaces and 14 on-street spaces; discussion on the closest building entrance near the parking spaces.
- A furniture meeting was held July 5th and covered the following topics:
 - Review of laminates for display cases, finish options for end panels, and upholstery choices
 - Type of lectern has yet to be selected; also reviewing Teen Services computer and lounge chairs.
 - The configuration of the conference room has yet to be finalized
 - Animal-shaped seats will be added to the Children Services area; the wall treatments for Teens and Children's will be moved to their corresponding south wall
 - The proposed sliding barn door for the story time room entrance is too big; Library staff have proposed use of a smaller sliding door
 - Library staff are requesting the delayed egress for the emergency exit from the courtyard to be a 15 second delay with a buzzer notification at the Children's, Teen's and Circulation desks, as well as a loud signal at the exit.

B. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY – Spencer Watts and Patricia Husband (5:30 p.m.)

- Meetings were held June 30th and July 5th with library staff, the architects, the interior designer, and Architectural Services.
- The June 30th meeting included the following topics:
 - Fence and gate replacement along the south perimeter of the property
 - Construction phasing and adapting the Archives building for public use as a temporary library during renovations; a ramp will need to be installed
 - General design items, such as use of gutters at the entrance
 - Discussion on lighting selection and use of LED lights; recessed lights and colored trim lighting to include red, copper, orange and blue

- Review of millwork in the staff workroom, Children Services, Teen Services, meeting rooms, and Black Heritage; storage options will be replicated from the Jones Creek Regional Library configurations; library staff are reviewing the architect's revised drawings and will submit comments
- The architects suggested vertical vinyl signage due to low ceiling heights, similar to ones used at Greenwell Springs Regional Library; will also provide some color
- Paint and flooring finishes were also reviewed; splashes of color will be placed strategically throughout the building; some flooring will also contain color
- Library staff received a set of 80% complete construction documents; prioritization was given to sheets that need review at this time.
- The July 13th meeting was held to introduce the technology consultant to the architects and electrical engineer; intention is to standardize the library's AV equipment to make it easier for patrons and staff to use; a power and data meeting was held today, and another one is scheduled for next week.

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. VOTE TO ADOPT PROPOSED 2023 LIBRARY BUDGET – Jason Jacob (5:36 p.m.)

- Jason Jacob thanked the Board and library staff for their hard work and dedication to putting together the proposed budget.
- Spencer Watts also thanked the Board for their work at last month's budget work session; additional information was received by Architectural Services to clarify their guidance for construction costs to allow for a 20% increase for this year alone, based on last year's estimate; the budget was adjusted for an additional \$2.2 million to be distributed among the following projects: the new South Branch Library, Scotlandville, Baker and Central Branch renovations, and the Outreach Services/Disaster Recovery building; adjustments would be transferred from the fund balance, as part of the capital pay-as-you-go plan.
- Spencer Watts also announced the Mayor-President's proposal for a 5% increase in employee pay; will have to be approved by the Metro Council; if passed, the budget will need to be readjusted; a resolution was drafted for the Board to approve the proposed budget while allowing for library staff to make any needed adjustments for funding a new compensation plan.
- Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to approve the 2023 proposed budget; a motion was made by Nicole Allmon-Learson and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously.**
- Donald Luther, Jr. read aloud the resolution and made a motion to amend the proposed budget to include the language of the resolution; Martha Guarisco seconded the motion. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

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

VII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

- Donald Luther, Jr. thanked Adam St. Pierre and Wesley Morgan for their demonstration of the new virtual reality programming.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Delores Watts. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m. by unanimous vote.**

Mr. Jason Jacob, President

Mr. Spencer Watts, Library Director