

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
May 18, 2023
4:00 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – Jason Jacob, Board President (4:06 pm)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Martha Stickle

ROLL CALL – Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director
Jason Jacob, Board President – Present
Candace Temple, Board Vice President – Present
Martha Stickle, Board Treasurer – Present
Delores Watts – Absent
Donald Luther, Jr. – Present
Kathy Wascom – Absent
Nicole Allmon-Learson – Present (4:18 pm)
A quorum was present

STAFF PRESENT – Kristen Edson, Interim 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; Bryce Tomlin, Technical Services Coordinator; Daniel Dearing, Network Technician I.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 20, 2023 – A motion to approve was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Donald Luther, Jr. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

II. SPECIAL ORDERS – PRESENTATION OF THE EARL K. LONG HOSPITAL SITE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

- The presenters of the project were not able to attend the board meeting; will reschedule for next month.

III. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

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

- For 2023, operating expenditures through April 30 are 28.00% of the operating budget. Through April, we should have spent no more than 33% of the budget.
- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2023 remain ahead of those collected in 2022, as we are approximately 4.19% ahead of the same period last year.
- Rhonda Pinsonat recognized Ronnie Pierce, Assistant Library Business Manager, on his upcoming retirement, and the Board congratulated him.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:09 pm)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
- Mary Stein showed the Board articles from recent news publications that mention various library programs and events.
- Kristen Edson and Mary Stein attended a meeting of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, for their announcement of the creation of the Center for Non-Profit Excellence; the Library has a long history of working with the Baton Rouge Area Foundation on many community projects and library programs; Library staff already have a meeting planned with staff from the new center.
- Statistics update: For the first quarter of 2023, household market penetration is at 37%; 74% of parish residents have library cards; new cardholder retention statistics are higher than five years ago.
- Questions from Martha Stickle regarding what is the population category and the budget category on the statistical chart at the Board members’ places; Mary Stein responded that the population category refers to the comparison of the Library’s peer libraries that serve around the same number of community population; the

budget category refers to what is the Library's operating budget compared to peer libraries with similar budgets; the Library leads both categories for the first quarter of 2023.

- The 15th Annual Community History Festival was held at the Pride-Chaneyville Branch on April 22; the theme was The Sportsman's Life.
- The Library completed its Blues series for the One Book One Community theme based on Chris Thomas King's book, *The Blues: The Authentic Narrative of My Music and Culture*, with a well-documented program featuring the author.
- The Library's children services also provided blues-themed children programs and activities; the Special Collections department is a repository for the Blues Foundation and highlighted part of its collections.
- The Library hosted a booth at the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren annual conference.
- April 23-26 was National Library Week; the Library provided free yard signs for residents to display their love for the Library; patrons posted reasons why they love the library at each branch.
- The Louisiana Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry, Mike Strain, received his new library card.
- Children's Services is highlighting its collection with two new social media promotions, "Throwback Thursday: Oldies but Goodies" and "TWOsday: Two New Books for You"; the Summer Reading Program "All Together Now" will begin next month.
- The "Write Time" program will be extended into the fall due to high engagement.
- Virtual Author Talks are ongoing.
- The Advocate featured the Library in a recent article on careers; the Library's Career Center was featured for its service to job fairs and expos.
- The Business Report's Strictly Business program continues on May 17 with Tim Barfield, President of CSRS.
- Summer Meals will be provided at eight library locations this summer; snack bags will also be provided through the St. James Episcopal Church outreach program.
- Movies on the Plaza will return this summer at the Main Library.

C. OTHER REPORTS

1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:26 pm)

- Upgrades to all LED light bulbs have been completed at Delmont Gardens and Eden Park Branch Libraries, as well as Jones Creek Regional Library.
- The hardware upgrade for the Brivo key card access system will begin May 30.
- A meeting for the rooftop terrace landscaping project at the Main Library was held this morning; project materials have been ordered.
- The chiller at Zachary Branch experienced sensor issues, and parts arrived today for repair; the chiller at Central Branch is experiencing alarm issues that require a manual reset; both chillers will soon be replaced.
- Excessive power surges at Main Library have caused the chillers to stop working properly, also requiring a manual reset; the squirrel cage bearings for air handling unit #8 need replacement, and parts are on order.
- Outreach Services experienced an internet outage and HVAC issues; the cause of the outage is still being determined by library staff and architects.
- The River Center Branch Library is experiencing roof leaks; Library staff and Architectural Services performed a walk-through with the manufacturer to determine where the water is coming from; question from Nicole Allmon-Learson if there has been any damage; Kristen Edson responded that there has been no damage to any collection items, only to ceiling tiles.
- Doors are still on order for the Jones Creek Regional main water repair project.
- Architectural Services received comments for the chiller replacement project; the engineer is incorporating them into the bid documents; the bid is scheduled to be advertised in mid-June; the project timeline is estimated to take around 32 weeks.
- The monthly meeting for the Outreach Services renovation project is set for tomorrow; a Request for Information has been issued regarding obtaining a bioswale on the Westmoreland side of the parking lot, as well as an island on the North Blvd side; both items are required by MOVEBR for their projects; the contractor will form the concrete for the island and the Library will use its landscaping contract to plant a tree; concrete at the rear of the building near Westmoreland has been removed, including the landing and stairs to make room for bookmobiles; other work for the project includes mill work, removal of old cooling units, installation of new ceiling grid and additional power poles, and framing for the new entryway roof.
- Library staff received samples of the new ceramic flooring tile for the Bluebonnet Regional renovation project; a comment review meeting was held May 17.
- Gutters were also installed at Bluebonnet Regional, as part of the multi-branch roof replacement project; there is still no word on the work at Jones Creek Regional; the Library is awaiting support from the City Parish Attorney's office to remove the project contractor.

- A punch-list walk-through for Pride-Chaneyville and Zachary Branches' painting and flooring replacement was held on May 11 for the miscellaneous branch repair project; a pre-mobilization meeting for work beginning at Delmont Gardens will be held Monday.

2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Kristen Edson and Bryce Tomlin (4:42 pm)

- Computer Services Update: a vendor has been selected to replace and redesign the Library's website, awaiting Metro Council approval; the new Cox contract for faster internet speeds has been signed, and a requisition was submitted to begin the process of obtaining the Mayor-President's signature; the Library received a purchase order for 225 additional Wi-Fi hot spots, and should arrive by Monday; a Bluetooth module was installed on the rooftop terrace at the Main Library to allow for audio to be played through the terrace speakers; the City-Parish's IS department recently reconfigured its network, and the Library's connection to financial and payroll systems was down, but has since been restored; IS continues to address Library staff's inability to access the MetroNet; staff training for the new PC management, print management and mobile printing solutions begins next week; the Library's Computer Services department received a new van; the Library's budgeting app has been debugged and is able to export data for the upcoming Library Board budget workshop.
- Statistical updates: As of April 30, 29.8% of checked out items were checked out at a kiosk this year, representing 101,901 items; as of April 30, there have been 623 credit card payments made this year by 593 patrons for a total of \$10,255.35; \$124.60 of this amount was convenience fees, and 13.25% of all payments made have been credit card payments; as of April 30, hotspots have circulated 1,570 times by 517 patrons this year; in April, 155 computer service tickets were created, and 150 tickets were resolved.
- Discussion regarding the Wi-Fi hotspots and how long patrons are checking them out and keeping them at home; service to the hotspot is disabled after the due date if it has not been returned.
- The Library attended a security meeting with the Downtown Development District, the Baton Rouge Police Department and the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office to discuss a few troubling incidents that have occurred at River Center Branch over the last two months; the Library now has a new Law Enforcement officer orientation document that covers their scope of duties.
- The Library will meet with the organizational review consultant to discuss and strategize what changes can possibly be implemented; the Board, Library staff, and City-Parish officials will receive copies of the final report in June.
- Library staff met with several Metro Council members to discuss various topics, including facility projects, and the Library's staff vacancy rate and low salary concerns, and how that has an impact on the search for the new Library Director; Library staff will continue reaching out to Metro Council members to set up meetings with the Library.
- A meeting with the Mayor-President and her Chief Administrative Officer is scheduled for June 13 for Library staff to present their strategy for raising the Library Director's salary.
- A meeting with City Parish Human Resources department is scheduled for May 26 to discuss the slow hiring rate for the Library; will also discuss a potential hiring event specifically for Library positions; the Library is also looking into streamlining its interview process so that it is less labor intensive.
- Forum 225 will present their plans for the community refrigerator at next month's regular Board meeting; they are working on a Memorandum of Understanding, and the Library provided a description of what will be provided for the project; once the Library receives the memorandum, it will be sent to the Parish Attorney's office for review.
- The Board was shown a rendering of a possible site plan for the new Delmont Gardens Branch Library; Library staff are working with members of Build Baton Rouge to determine the best possible layout of the building and parking lot, since the space will be shared with another business.

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 – Patricia Husband (5:05 pm)

- The Board was shown a rendering of the new South Branch Library building and site.
- The Notice to Contractors was published on April 14, April 21, and April 28.
- Library staff attended a pre-bid meeting on April 25, at the building site.

- The bid date was changed to today, May 18; bids were initially due May 11; Architectural Services and Purchasing will review the bid results and make a determination.
- Library staff continue to work on the furniture package with the interior designer.

B. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband (5:08 pm)

- The architects have submitted the construction documents.
- Library staff received The Notice to Contractors, which will be published May 19, May 26 and June 2, 2023.
- A pre-bid conference will be held on Tuesday, May 30, at the Scotlandville Branch Library.
- Bids are due Thursday, June 15, at 2:00 p.m.; staff are hoping to break ground this summer.
- Photos of rendered facades of the building were shown to the Board.

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. VOTE TO SEND COMMENTS TO CITY-PARISH ADMINISTRATION REGARDING TAX ABATEMENT PROPOSAL – Kristen Edson (5:09 pm)

- A motion to forward the abatement without comment was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Candace Temple. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

B. VOTE TO APPROVE UPDATED PATRON RULES OF BEHAVIOR – Kristen Edson (5:10 pm)

- The rules have been streamlined for better presentation when posted at library locations; the code of conduct contains more explanation and contents from the original document; will be posted on the website.
- Martha Stickle commented how she likes how the documents are phrased with positive terminology.
- Candace Temple asked for clarification on if anything is being replaced; Kristen Edson explained that the new code of conduct will replace the original rules of behavior for patrons.
- A motion to adopt the new Patron Rules of Behavior was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Martha Stickle. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

C. SETTING OF DATE FOR SPECIAL 2024 BUDGET WORK SESSION – Jason Jacob (5:14 pm)

- Jason Jacob asked the Board if Monday, June 12 at 4:00 pm will be satisfactory; most members responded yes; the board workshop has been set for that date.

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

VII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL – There were no comments.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Donald Luther, Jr. **The meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m. by unanimous vote.**

Mr. Jason Jacob, President

Ms. Kristen Edson, Interim Library Director