

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
DATE: March 21, 2024
4:00 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – Candace Temple, Board President (4:06 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Kathy Wascom, Board Treasurer (4:06 p.m.)

I. ROLL CALL – Antoinette Poland, Executive Assistant to the Library Director (4:06 p.m.)

Candace Temple, Board President - Present
Donald Luther, Jr., Board Vice President – Present
Kathy E. Wascom, Board Treasurer - Present
Delores Watts – Present
Darryl Hurst – Present
Ronnie Pierce – Present
Nicole Allmon-Learson – Absent

A quorum was present

STAFF PRESENT – Katrina Stokes, Library Director; Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director; Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director; Rhonda Pinsonat, Library Business Manager; Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director; Antoinette Poland, Executive Assistant to the Library Director; Daniel Dearing, Computer Services; Frank Hillyard, Videographer.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF – A motion to approve was made by Mr. Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Darryl Hurst. **The motion was carried unanimously (4:07 p.m.)**

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

IV. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:08)

- For 2023 operating expenditures rose to 87.8% of the operating budget. This number is not final though, as adjustments and charges will continue to be recorded for another 1-2 months. For 2024, because year-end work in 2023 continues, very few expenditures have been recorded. As of February 29th, expenditures are 11.51% of the operating budget. Through February, we should have spent no more than 16.67% of the budget.
- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2024 are slightly ahead of the same period last year. Cash collections for 2023 will be finalized when 4th quarter interest earnings are posted, which again may take another 1-2 months. (4:08 p.m.)

Rhonda Pinsonat asked questions about the financial report? No one has questions.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:10)

“Around the Parish” - Discuss and describes slideshows of Library programs and events.

- Mrs. Mary Stein shared the library’s return on investment for 2023 was twenty-six million dollars adding the cost of all books checked out by patrons, excluding all other programs hosted by the library.
- On March 10-12, staff Librarians attended the Louisiana Library Association Annual Conference 2024 in Shreveport, where they presented new books and programs for adults and children, such as LYRC

(Louisiana Young Readers Choice Program) books, which is a program the library has been a part of since 1999; for kids from kindergarten to second grade that was organized to help students develop a love for reading.

- In addition, our STEM Librarian demonstrated how to use Skill Mill, an immersive learning solution that helps train patrons for skilled trades.

Ms. Kathy Wascom asked if the library was connected to the Community College System with Skill Mill programming.

Mrs. Mary Stein responded: They do not but the Dean of Libraries, Jackie Jones, is aware and has been referring students to the library.

Ms. Kathy Wascom replied: It would be an excellent program for the students at the Community College.

Mrs. Mary Stein replied in agreement acknowledging her excitement for the library partnership with CTEC (Career and Technical Education Center) (EBR Career and Technical Education Center), which provides training by master trainers and technicians in the fields of manufacturing, construction, crafts, healthcare, and information technology.

- In observance of National Library Week, Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser and the State Library has invited the library staff to “Breakfast at the Barracks” on Tuesday, April 9 from 8 a.m. -9a.m. and lunch from 11:30a.m.-1:30p.m., with guest speaker Dr. Tommy Karam, LSU Marketing Professor
- On March 8, the Main Library will host the kick-off party for the 2024 One Book, One Community series and the 3rd Annual Edible Book Festival. Features author of there was music by RJ & Zydeco Smooth, food, and activities for children. The guest series also included Exploring Floodways Chef Phillippe Parola.
- On April 20th at 10a.m., Max Miller will be signing and discussing his book “Tasting History” at the Main Library on Goodwood.
- In addition, the library hosted the 7th Annual International Taste Fair on Sunday, March 24th, with celebrity Chef and Baton Rouge Native Valarie Lomas.
- The Main library collaborated with The Advocate Food Editor Jan Risher who presented recipes from Max Miller’s book “Tasting History” in an article and a video on The Advocates You-Tube Channel.
- Louisiana Poet Laureate and Dillard’s Professor Mona Lisa Savoy read a collection of her poems from “Red Beans and Ricely Yours.” In addition, Anne Millneck, Chef, Tea Owner of Red Stick Spice Company will be discussing teas inspired by classic literary plots.
- The Red Stick Farmer’s Market has returned to the Main Library on Tuesdays from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- On April 2nd, the Virtual Author Talks series continued, featuring Curator Paula Johnson as she discussed “The Smithsonian American Table.”
- 1,000 Books before Kindergarten with Will Hillenbrand celebrated milestones of children and their families who have read 1,000 books before kindergarten.
- Baton Rouge Kennel Association’s Meet the Breeds introduced 53 different breeds demonstrating various skills for the patrons.
- In honor of March 17th, Celtic with Lady Chops and Madame Dulcimer performed, as well as several high school choirs like University Lab School.
- The library continues to host community programs with the Baton Rouge Area Foundation whose recent study, Geographic Opportunity, discussed how geography influences access to social and economic opportunities; in addition, the Public Safety Round Table discusses ways to get the community involved in public safety processes.
- The Business and Career Center hosts Small Business Matchmaking Sessions at the River Center Branch, where our staff help companies and people with similar interests connect to create more business opportunities.
- In addition, on March 9th the Main Library hosted the 4th “Annual Suits for Success,” Suit Drive, and on March 25th ExxonMobil Operations and Career Center offered sessions on job interviewing; how to navigate the job fair and how to dress for an interview.

C. OTHER REPORTS – Patricia Husband (4:37)

1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Patricia Husband (4:37 p.m.)

- **Maintenance:**
Architectural Services is working on an RFP for boiler replacement for Eden Park and Greenwell Springs.

The elevators at River Center are all functioning properly.

The boiler has been working at Delmont; they got a manufacturers' representative to look at it and do assessments.

At Carver, the waterline has been fixed but we are waiting for them to pour the concrete to finish the last of that project.

- **Miscellaneous Capital Improvements:**

Outreach Improvements:

- As a reminder the AC units are scheduled to arrive in March. They were trying to get confirmation to start installing the AC units on Sunday, March 24.
- The Change Order submitted to the council has been approved, and a contractor has been notified, so work should proceed shortly.

Roofing Replacement Update:

- At the roofing replacement, the contractor demolished the limestone around the cupola at Jones Creek and framed it. When talking to Architectural Services, the person on that contract said that the sheeting and the building wrap may be up for water sealing, but we do not have a date for the window installation. So, they may re-wrap it with stucco and on the inside replace the windows. Because that area is high up, it will be roped off, but Jones Creek will remain open.
- A meeting has been scheduled for next week to review the progress on this and on other items in this project.
- Transitions have been installed in the meeting rooms at Jones Creek where tile was placed at the door entrance. We are waiting for the Architecture review and approval of it.
- We had some roof leaks last week at Delmont and Bluebonnet that the contractor will address.
- The handrails at Bluebonnet still need to be installed.
- The contractors are still repairing leaks either on the roofs or the gutters.
- Again, we appreciate Architectural Services' help with this and other projects as we work through them.

Miscellaneous Multi-Branch Improvements Update:

- The Change Order has been signed and will go before the council at the end of this month. This is the credit for:
 - One light at Pride
 - Window replacements at Delmont and replacing of the flooring in the computer area.
 - Repair of a countertop at Carver.
- My Bluebonnet colleagues and I went over the floor plans to see what had and had not been updated to submit comments to Architectural Services. After they submit their comments to the Architect, we hope to move forward on the bidding process.

Mrs. Patricia Husband asked questions. No one had questions.

Mrs. Candace Temple asked for public comments. No public comments were made.

2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Katrina Stokes (4:41p.m.)

- Ms. Katrina Stokes thanked Mrs. Stein and Mrs. Husband for the 7 weeks of assistance in navigating her on-boarding processes, training, and meetings within the library system and City Parish Offices.
- Ms. Katrina Stokes shared: The library staff participated and completed a City Parish wide job study. HR and the Management Advisory Group may issue the results in July. If the study result suggests salary increases and if the City Parish approves; then the library is prepared to adjust the budget for salary increases.

Mr. Darryl Hurst commented: The pay study was put in place to determine if the benefit package (401K model) could be restructured to adjust employee take-home pay.

- Ms. Stokes also shared: How excited she was to attend the Louisiana Library Association Conference and how she enjoyed the presentations and meeting former colleagues.
- Mr. Ronnie Pierce shared his interest in attending the American Library Association in San Diego and requests the library assist with the expenses, in which City Parish Finance Department has travel policy regulations regarding the purpose for travel; and authorization processes for non-payroll individuals and board members.

Mrs. Delores Watts asked: Does the same offer apply to other board members?

Mr. Ronnie Pierce shared: Reasons for attending the conference were for perspectives on recent technology, best practices, and the latest programs that may be available.

Ms. Katrina Stokes stated: Concerns on the authorization process as an appointing authority over a board member and documentation needed to forward to the Board President.

Mr. Ronnie Pierce commented that he thought the request was simple.

Mr. Darryl Hurts stated: He will email the Parish Attorney for a resolution and share how two other city departments attend conferences.

Mr. Ronnie Pierce commented: Money is not an issue for the library and shared his statistics on travel spending for The last 11 years, which averages 52% of the travel and training budget; excluding years 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid pandemic.

Ms. Katrina Stokes commented: She wants to be sure the right paperwork will be completed.

Mrs. Candace Temple: Thanks Ms. Stokes.

Ms. Katrina Stokes: Concludes her report.

Mr. Donald Luther, Jr. asked: Who will approve the paperwork; the President or Metro Council?

Mr. Darryl Hurst: Emailed the Parish Attorney for clarification.

Ms. Kathy Wascom shared: As a citizen she attended library board meetings, and when the president would attend various meetings, exhibit passes were issued to citizens who were interested.

Mrs. Mary Stein responded: The board and library are interested in budgeting for travel, because the opportunity should be accessible to everyone; but there needs to be some accountability to avoid media attention.

Mr. Donald Luther, Jr. shared: He has attended some meetings and discovered there are representatives at those meetings.

Mrs. Candace Temple asked for additional comments under Reports by the Director. There were no additional Comments.

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

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Patricia Husband (4:59 p.m.)

A. UPDATE ON SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY

- Over the past month, the contractor installed floor drain setting in key parts of the building. They started at the West side of the building and continued West with the installation and then East to West and then to the East side.
- Contractor has set form and the slab for the East West connector.
- Steel roof decking has been installed on the West side of the building and on the East West connector.
- Slab for the east west connector has been poured.
- Power for the east wing is to be installed for this week, weather permitting.
- Structural steel and joists are being installed.
- The North and South canopies have been framed up.
- Baton Rouge Water Company has moved the water line to the east side that was interfering with the foundation.
- The fire and domestic water have been run back to the back flow preventer.
- The tree was trimmed last week as part of the annual maintenance.
- On February 22 the library staff, Architectural Services and the architect made a site visit to approve brick and metal panels and spandrel glass selection; and walked the site to view the floor boxes being installed.
- The white spandrel glass was selected instead of the blue because you could not see the color in the dark blue glass.

Mrs. Patricia Husband asked questions. No one had questions.

B. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE LIBRARY

- In February, the contractor installed the domestic water line and fire lines for the fire suppression system on the west side of the building.
- The contract installed the drain line towards the courtyard area.
- He has formed up and poured the front pavement area.
- The contractor has formed the west side pavement area behind the Archives.
- The metal building is going to be delivered April 3rd and the installer will be on site to receive and start installation immediately.
- The project has a new completion date of October 25th of this year.

Mrs. Patricia Husband asked questions.

Mrs. Delores Watts asked for the start date for that project.

Mrs. Patricia Husband stated: she will forward the exact date to Ms. Watts.

Mrs. Candace Temple asked for more board comments under Unfinished Business. No more board comments were made.

Mrs. Candace Temple asked for public comments. No public comments were made.

VII. NEW BUSINESS - No public comments for New Business.

VIII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL – Candace Temple (5:08 p.m.)

Mrs. Candace Temple asked for public comments. No public comments were made.

Mrs. Candace Temple added: Thanking Mr. Pierce for his interest in the library and desire to contribute to making the library system better; and we appreciate his concern.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – Mrs. Candace Temple requested a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Ronnie Pierce and seconded by Delores Watts. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. by unanimous vote.**