

TENTATIVE AGENDA
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
August 15, 2024
4:07 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – Candace Temple, Board President - (4:07 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Donald Luther, Jr. - (4:08 p.m.)

I. ROLL CALL – Antoinette Poland, Executive Assistant to the Library Director – (4:08 p.m.)

Candace Temple, Board President – *Present*

Donald Luther, Jr, Board Vice President – *Present*

Kathy Wascom, Board Treasurer – *Present*

Delores Watts, Board Member – *Absent*

Nicole Allmon-Learson, Board Member – *Absent*

Daryl Hurst, Board Member – *Present*

Ronnie Pierce, Board Member – *Present*

A quorum was present

STAFF PRESENT – Katrina Stokes, Library Director; Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director; Lori Juge, Assistant Library Director; Rhonda Pinsonat, Library Business Manager; Tanya Allison, Assistant 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.

OTHERS PRESENT: Roblyn Honeysuckle, Carver Branch Manager; Allison Cooper, River Center Branch Manager; Dr. Amber Alexis, Geaux Learn; Mr. Eric Lewis, BR Stem; Tameka Roby, Outreach and Community Programming; Brandon Reilly, Outreach/ Special Projects and Community Programming; and Leila Reilly, Branch Services.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF August 15, 2024 – MS. CANDACE TEMPLE – (4:08 p.m.)

III. SPECIAL ORDERS – There were no Special Orders. (4:08 p.m.)

IV. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR – (4:09 p.m.)

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – MRS. RHONDA PINSONAT

- For 2024, as of July 31st, expenditures are 34.28% of the operating budget. Through July we should have spent no more than 58% of the budget.
- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2024 remain ahead of those collected in 2023, as we are approximately 3.89% ahead of the same period last year.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – MS. MARY STEIN

“Around the Parish” – Discuss slideshows and descriptions of Library programs.

- The Summer Reading Program activity recorded in the Beanstack app totaled 14,000 participants.
- As a personal challenge, the Linder family visited all 14 library locations in one day; they checked out books; visited the Children’s and Teens’ spaces and had library staff at each location verify their passport during this blitz. As a result, the Library will create a library passport challenge in Beanstack.
- At the Teen Film Premiere on July 30, local film maker and puppeteer Clay Achee showed off the work produced by teens attending the summer filmmaking camps held through the Library.
- The Library’s box truck with lift gate has arrived; it will used to transport book gondolas and library equipment.
- On Saturday August 3, the Library hosted the Cat Café where over 400 visitors and patrons adopted and learned about cats.
- “Pet” Programming continued at Main on Monday, August 5 where patrons spent time with canine therapy dogs from Bayou Buddies Pet Therapy.

- “Symphony Week” at the Library was August 2-6 with free pop-up concerts performed by the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra; they will return in October.
- Alka Joshi, author of *The Henna Artist*, discussed her writing process and answered questions from the audience at the Main Library on Goodwood on Saturday, August 14.
- During the Library’s Special Collections Lecture Series on Wednesday, August 21, Archivist, Melissa Eastin delved into the Library’s digital archives, highlighting images of important moments in Baton Rouge history.
- The 47th Annual Author Illustrator Program on September 26-27 will feature Jerry Pallotta, author of the book series “Who Would Win.” He will Zoom in to local schools and present live programming for families at night, followed by a live workshop for teachers and librarians.
- The Library has partnered with Mayor-President Sharon Weston-Broome’s Office to host the Connecting East Baton Rouge Neighborhood Convention 2024 on Saturday September 14, 2024. The event aims to engage the community in thinking about their ideal neighborhood.
- In October, the Library features a 5-part series on *The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens* by Richard Haas. This series is a moderated discussion on the obligations of citizens to preserve democracy.
- The 11th Baton Rouge Maker Faire theme is “Music.” A call for Makers is now open; you can sign up at ebrpl.com/makers. The Maker Faire will take place on Saturday, October 19th from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.
- Libraries Change Lives featured artist and teacher, Evelina Lundqvist, who used the library Makerspace to hone in on her crafting skills; learn and earn badges in software application like Canva; and try new methods like button making and sublimation.
- The Library continued its Virtual Author talk series with, Dr. Levasseur, author of *Behind the Scenes at the Space Station*; Irena Smith, PhD author of the *Golden Ticket*; and Shelby Van Pelt author of *Remarkably Bright Creatures*.
- The Strictly Business online seminar continued its monthly web cast with Will Green, president and CEO of the Louisiana Association of Business & Industry and Trey Godfrey, vice president of policy for the Baton Rouge Area Chamber. To view episodes, you can register at strictlybusiness.businessreport.com.

C. DISCUSSION OF A NEIGHBORHOOD LITERACY PILOT IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES. - MR. DARRYL HURST, LBOC MEMBER; AMBER ALEXIS, PhD OF GEAUX LEARN AND MR. ERIC LEWIS OF BR STEM.

Darryl Hurst, Board Member discussed a neighborhood literacy pilot in underserved communities, stressing the importance of reading and early literacy.

- The goal is to spark a lifelong interest in reading by providing engaging and relevant reading material.
- The program will showcase the benefits of libraries.
- The program includes exposure to various community programs, as well as activities in schools and neighborhoods.
- The program will target third to sixth graders in North Baton Rouge high-crime areas, offering incentives and food resources in exchange for book reports or reading engagement activities.
- The program aims to engage the student and parents with tools and resources to support learning and academic success to help break generational cycles of low literacy, poverty, and economic hardships.
- Introduced incentives for program participation and parental involvement; challenges and solutions for program implementation.

Amber Alexis, PhD discussed an overview of the Geaux Learn Literacy Program.

- The program emphasizes the importance of foundational reading skills and the use of technology for assessment and learning.
- The program includes a twice-weekly tutoring session, diagnostic assessments, and progress monitoring, with a focus on individualized learning plans and consistent attendance.
- The program aims to create a culture of reading at home and encourage parental involvement in their children's education.
- Incentives are designed to motivate students and parents, with rewards based on attendance and participation.
- Discussed concerns about program participation rates and the need for incentives to encourage students to attend tutoring sessions.
- Explained that the previous pilot program lacked incentives, leading to low participation; this emphasizes the importance of rewarding effort and progress.

Ms. Tameka Roby, Outreach and Community Programming discussed Bookmobile availability and Community Outreach.

- Explained the bookmobile's schedule and the challenges of fitting the program into the existing routine.
- In addition to the regular day-time route visiting pre-schools, day care centers, schools and learning centers, bookmobiles often operate from 4:30 to 7:30 PM, and staff work long hours to provide services to various community sites.
- Bookmobiles also visit nursing homes, rehab hospitals, and other community sites, providing library services to a broad spectrum of the population.

- Discussed the possibility of using library vans to provide services inside the facility if bookmobiles are unavailable.
- Regarding parental engagement and library card access, Ms. Roby explained that the library system has allowed children at housing sites to get temporary library cards, and staff follow up with parents to ensure authorization.
- Ms. Roby commented on the library system's commitment to being a partner in the program and providing necessary resources.

Mr. Eric Lewis of BR STEM

- Discussed the benefits of libraries, emphasizing that many children do not have access due to transportation issues.
- Libraries in schools and pop-up events are highlighted as ways to expose children to various programs and activities that they may never have access to.

D. OTHER REPORTS

1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – MS. LORI JUGE

Maintenance Report for August 2024

Main: Facilities staff had dead trees removed from the east parking area. They are also having the seat walls around the perimeter washed and painted.

RCB: A brief storm caused damage to the front doors on Saturday, August 3. The branch had to close to the public until the afternoon of Monday, August 5, to allow Facilities staff to get the door vendor out to assess the damage and provide an estimate for repairs. Temporary access for patrons was provided through the staff entrance. By Wednesday afternoon, the vendor was able to re-program the controls for the doors to enable patrons to have access through one side of the front entrance.

ZAC: Facilities staff had a vendor to replace the motor on an air handler.

Miscellaneous Improvement Projects

1. Outreach
 - a. The project date has been extended and we are awaiting inspection by the Fire Marshall.
2. Multibranch Project
 - a. All branches except Delmont Gardens are complete. A contractor was hired to lower the landscaping, clear the downspouts, and other minor improvements on the south exterior of Delmont. There is still some minor work to complete on the exterior before environmental remediation can be done.
3. Roofing Project
 - a. There is nothing new to report.
4. Boilers for EDE and GSR
 - b. The RFP went out for design proposals. Architectural Services has received one proposal so far and is expecting at least 2 more.
5. BBR Reno
 - c. Library staff are meeting with Architectural Services and the Architect on Friday. We still anticipate going out to bid in September.

2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – MS. KATRINA STOKES

- Announced new additions and promotions within branch services, including Jaleesa Delavallade's move to Branch Services and Latasha Williams' promotion to Branch Manager at Greenwell Springs Regional. Branch Managers introduced to the board this month were: Ms. Roblyn Honeysucker, Carver Branch and Ms. Allison Cooper, River Center Branch.
- Steven Holbrook was promoted to Librarian III in Circulation.
- The Facilities Master Plan summary for 2024 has been distributed to board members, and further details are expected by the end of October.
- The library system is addressing the need for clearer guidelines during branch closures to ensure consistent and safe operations.

3. LEGISLATION – DISCUSSION ON BILLS SB221/SCR39 TAX DISTRIBUTION – MS. MARY STEIN

- Financial updates included a potential redistribution of property tax revenues based on railroad tracks, which could impact entities like the Council on Aging and the School Board as well as the Library.
- The current system of collecting property taxes based on railroad tracks was explained.
- The potential redistribution of movable property tax revenues is being discussed by the Legislature.
- The proposal, led by Senator Cathey from Monroe, is under review, with a public hearing scheduled for September.
- The budgetary impact and further details will be shared as they become available.

V. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – There were no reports from committees. (5:43 p.m.)

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – (5:44 p.m.)

A. UPDATE ON SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY – MS. LORI JUGE AND MS. MARY STEIN

South Branch Update – August 2024

For the past month, the contractor has completed the following work:

- 100% of the transformer pad has been poured
- 100% of the east parallel parking area poured
- 90% of the curtain wall frames are installed with glass
- 100% of the gypsum drywall has been installed
- 85% of the drywall has been taped and floated
- 80% of all windows are installed & caulked
- 80% of the storefront glass has been installed
- 65% of the circulation desk has been installed
- 35% of the children’s wing has been painted with a first coat

Library staff have finalized the furniture package with the interior designer, and we are beginning the purchasing process. At this time, the completion date is still projected to be December 31st, though this could change.

B. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY – MS. LORI JUGE

Scotlandville Branch Update – August 2024

For the past month, the contractor has completed the following work:

- 100% of the insulation and sheetrock have been installed
- 100% of the interior glass and doors have been installed
- 100% of interior painted
- 100% of the restroom's tiles, fixtures and accessories have been installed
- 100% of the brick trim pieces have been installed
- 100% of the bollard covers have been installed
- Lights have been installed in the office & workroom areas
- All AC units are wired into disconnect panels
- Exterior roll up door installed

In order to complete the sewer and water line tie in, SCO was closed on Friday, August 9th.

Library staff still anticipate possibly going out to bid in late September or early October for Phase 2 of the renovation project.

The completion date for Phase 1 is still projected to be October 16, 2024. Again, this date may change.

VII. NEW BUSINESS – (5:51 p.m.)

- #### A. REQUEST TO AMEND THE 2025 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR THE SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY FROM AN ADDITIONAL \$478,960 TO \$8,300,000 TO REFLECT UPDATED ESTIMATES FROM THE ARCHITECTS. A motion to approve was made by Donald Luther, Jr., and seconded by Mr. Ronnie Pierce.

B. SHARE INSIGHTS FROM THE ALA CONVENTION IN SAN DIEGO – MR. RONNIE PIERCE

Mr. RONNIE PIERCE, Board Member discussed insights from sessions at the ALA (American Library Association) Convention. Topics covered included:

- The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Attracting and retaining academic librarians, noting that the information did not directly apply to public systems like EBRP Library System.
- Sessions included the importance of board service as a job; the need for board orientations; and the potential liability of board members in mismanagement.
- Trends in technology that protect the right to read.
- Digital audiobook production and pricing, emphasizing the importance of understanding the production process and cost.
- Conference expenses and future travel, explaining the inflated cost due to the unavailability of conference hotel rooms and the need for additional budget approval.
- Importance of professional development and networking and the value of the ALA Conference; and networking opportunities with other library systems.
- Mr. Pierce mentioned board member responsibilities and the high attendance of board members and trustees at the conference.
- Emphasized the importance of board members attending conferences to stay informed and engaged.

XI. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL – There were no comments from the board. (6:25 p.m.)

X. ADJOURNMENT – Board president Candace Temple requested a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Kathy Wascom. **This meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m. by unanimous vote.**