

REVISED AGENDA  
FOR REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL  
**GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY**  
**11300 GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD**  
**BATON ROUGE, LA 70814**  
**MEETING ROOMS 1 AND 2**  
JANUARY 30, 2007  
1:30 P.M.

- I. ROLL CALL
- II. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 21, 2006
- III. ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS FOR THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
- IV. DISCUSSION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY OF THE LIBRARY'S 10-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN BY CYNTRENIKS, LLC
- V. COMMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT

**ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Revised Minutes of the Meeting of the  
East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control

January 30, 2007

The regular monthly meeting of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control was held at the Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library on Tuesday, January 30, 2007. Mrs. Georgia Brown, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m. Members of the Board present were Mrs. Katherine Auer, Mr. Stephen Moret, Mr. Dan Reed, and Ms. Dorothy Stepteau. Also in attendance were Mrs. Lydia M. Acosta, Library Director; Mrs. Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director of Administration; Mrs. Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director of Branch Services; Mrs. Brenda Lovett, Library Business Manager; and Ms. Nikki Essix of the Parish Attorney's Office. Also present were Mr. Brace Godfrey, Jr. and Mr. John Schneider, both of Cyntreniks, LLC; 30 members of the community; and Mr. Scott Dyer of *The Advocate*.

Mrs. Brown asked for a motion by the Library Board to adopt the agenda for the meeting. Ms. Stepteau made a motion that the agenda be adopted, and Mr. Reed seconded the motion. The minutes of the regular meeting on December 21, 2006 were approved on a motion by Mrs. Auer, and seconded by Mr. Reed.

### **Election of Officers for the Library Board of Control**

Mrs. Brown opened the floor for the nomination of officers for the Library Board of Control for 2007. Mrs. Auer moved that the Library Board of Control retain the same officers as in the previous year. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stepteau and was unanimously passed by the Board. Mrs. Georgia Brown will continue to serve as President; Mr. Dan Reed as Vice President; and Ms. Dorothy Stepteau as Treasurer.

Following the election of officers the Board members engaged in a workshop for the discussion of the implementation of the recommendations of the study of the Library's 10-Year Strategic Plan by Cyntreniks, LLC.

### **Transcription of Discussion by the Library Board of Control**

#### **Georgia Brown**

Now we will state what the purpose of today's meeting is. It is considered a workshop for the Board. The purpose today is to look in depth at the study and come up with some means of dealing with that, some recommendations as to how we are going to go forward with it or whatever the case might be. One thing I would like to suggest to the Board is that we look at our original plan prior to the study as to how we were planning to do the things that we are proposing to do with the idea at one time we had a plan of pay as you go. But knowing the things that we want to do we need to look at whether we are going to be able to continue in that mode, or if we need to look at a different way of doing things. Our original plan, we planned four libraries. As

it stands now and the study concerns we do not have the money to build all four libraries at this time. So the Board in the workshop today will attempt to decide what we want to do. We will try to set some parameters, some priorities as to how we are going to proceed. It could be that we come up with the idea that we want to proceed with the four and prioritize them or if we want to go with the central and we want to do that. This is the purpose for which we are here today. It's for the Board to look at the study and see which direction would be most feasible for us to go. And you know that's an east branch purchase, [sic] Bluebonnet, Goodwood, and a central library. We're going to try to set some parameters on how we will go about that. We will proceed with the workshop and we hope that you will pay attention to what goes on. And at the end of our workshop, of our deliberations today, we're not sure what we will accomplish or how far we will go. But at the end of our session twenty minutes will be allocated for you to address any issues that you would like to address in terms of how we are proceeding. And I would like to remind you again, if you have any cell phones to either put them on silence or vibrate. Thank you so very much.

Okay, I think the first thing we need to look at in terms of what we want in terms of the library. What do we want in it? Do we want to proceed as we planned before with the four libraries or do we want to look at what was proposed? Maybe we need some help to come in as a consultant to tell us what we need.

### **Dan Reed**

What I would suggest is that we sort of lay out, I think we've already done some of this. But we may want to lay out some of the pros and cons in some of the differences before anyone makes any statement about what they want to do. Lay out some of the pros and cons of various positions we can take and how they might be analyzed so that we're clear about what is possible and what's not possible. And, for example, I think that the study has indicated that the cost for a library that we want to build as a main is not feasible in the way we originally planned as you said. So what options does that leave us? What are the possibilities? You know I think one of the things we've got to wrestle with is, and I think one of the desires about deciding in advance that we favored a downtown location was that we had the opportunity then to say if we are going to build this library downtown, let's find a spot for it. That's what we hired Cyntreniks to do. And then we'll know that there's going to be a downtown site, a downtown location, and then proceed with the renovation of Goodwood which we otherwise couldn't do, you know, for example. So now if you say we're not going to build a library downtown, well then we hold up the idea of Goodwood because if there's still a possibility that the library could be in or near the Goodwood location then we can't do anything with Goodwood. I think if we made some comments of what the trade-offs are, then maybe we'd be better able to analyze a decision here.

### **Georgia Brown**

I'd like to point out as the study has pointed out, that at this point we can't do anything because we don't have the funding in place. Now, if we decide we want to go with a central building and we know what we want in it, could we then ask for proposals from various persons who once we give them what we want, what we need, what should be in the library? Then we could find out the cost and persons could submit proposals as to where we could get the funding, where it would come from. Maybe there's someone out there who would purchase the property for us or would donate so much money to wherever we decide to go.

**Lydia Acosta**

That sounds somewhat like the public/private partnership that was described in the study where it is suggested that the public and the governmental entity work together. So perhaps you're suggesting an RFP to those developers who would be interested in helping us whether with one location or another, correct?

**Georgia Brown**

Yeah, we're not discussing where it would be located. We're trying to find out how we can go about getting it and how we can go about funding it. And, of course, we are not making that decision today. But I think we need to look again at our policy in terms of the naming; that if someone decides to build a library for us how do we address that? That's something else that needs to be put on the table.

**Katherine Auer**

Would this be out of order? For example, I've looked at property, but I have no financial information about the cost downtown. (poor audio quality) Now some of the properties there were buildings that need to be torn down. All of that would affect the price. And back when we voted on this, I said that I would be in favor of downtown if everything panned out. But the cost is one of the things we will be looking at. So I think we need to see if the property is suitable. If one cost \$50 million dollars more in one place than another, I think that's something else we need to address. So I don't think I have enough financial background to know.

**Georgia Brown**

It has been suggested, and of course I have not spoken with him about it, our Vice President could head up a committee to look into

**Dan Reed**

(poor audio quality). Humorous comment by Mr. Reed (in my spare time). Laughter by the Board.

**Georgia Brown**

I apologize that I'm springing this on you now. But your name had been dropped that with your background and the degree that you have, that you could serve as chairperson to look into some of these alternatives.

**Dan Reed**

I think that kind of thing is going to be a good idea. But what we need to do today is to try to figure out what sort of parameters the Board can give to that committee to say, for example, and this is my own personal thought, and I've said this all along, I'm not sure we should limit ourselves to downtown as defined by the Downtown Development District versus Goodwood in the specific site where we are currently. Perhaps there are other sites maybe near downtown maybe near Goodwood maybe not near either one of them, that would be, as you say, someone make a proposal to put a library in some other location. Because that's something, if that came up in the course of the committee's deal that the Board would entertain. We found this other location that perhaps is as good as the ones that we've seen before.

**Katherine Auer**

We had looked at the old Goudchaux's building.

**Dan Reed**

That's a good example.

**Katherine Auer**

So we have looked at other places. So it's not just written in stone that this is where we want a library, and the public should know that. We have on our own looked at other places.

**Lydia Acosta**

We even looked at the BREC property on Florida Boulevard adjacent to where their headquarters that's recently opened because there was a large tract of land. Before Mark Thornton left we looked at that and we even had the planning on the site. I think we did this at a Board meeting to see how something as large as we were considering could be constructed on that land adjacent to the BREC facility.

**Dorothy Steptean**

Madam President, I like the idea about the possible proposal site. I've chatted with private citizens who have suggested something very similar. So I really like that idea. And I wish we could get to the point of saying to the persons, perhaps with Dan's spearheading that committee, as you said, "Well, bring us the proposals, show us where you think we can build this library since you have definite ideas about what will work in this community". And give them a timeline and we'll set some criteria for them, as was suggested by another citizen, and let them go forth. But then there are some things that I as a Board member would like more information on in this workshop today. For instance, the private public partnerships, and that about liability and that would be something very important to me. Who gets the, whose responsible for what and what does a private partner get out of it other than being paid for constructing the building or whatever. And who are the private donors who will participate and all of that and all of this is addressed in the report. So that would go in keeping with what you said about the RFPs that Lydia mentioned and we talked about.

**Georgia Brown**

Another idea was also advanced that might be a win-win situation. That we develop Goodwood Boulevard as part of a central and add wherever we went with another one if it was downtown that it would be developed and they would be compatible with each other in terms of the size, that one would be our electronic library that brings us into maybe the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. And that Goodwood would have the format and the things that the people there are comfortable with. So that's another scenario that comes from a private citizen. Perhaps it would be a win-win situation that if we got someone who would fund us to do what we needed to do in terms of providing a total electronic library in the downtown area that would help those persons who are interested in that. And then we could do something in Goodwood. We could either build a brand new facility in the park or in the neighboring surrounding area. So that was advanced too. Dan, you could look at that.

**Dan Reed**

Well, I guess that's what I'd like to know from the committee's standpoint. Are all those things on the table? Because if we're talking about a decentralized library system, that's what we saw in Raleigh, for those of us that went up on that trip, they have a decentralized library system. They really don't have a big main library. And maybe that's not what we want. My personal view is that we do want a big main library, and that we don't want a decentralized system, but I don't know whether the Board wants to defer that to a committee and find out what the committee determines about that. I mean that's okay, but it's just that if you put too much off on the committee, you're...

**Georgia Brown**

I would like Dan along the lines that you're talking about at this time because we are limited in our knowledge of what goes on in the library scene. And I've been away from it for a while. I want to permit our staff to have input because they are a valuable asset to us for those things we may not necessarily be familiar with. So those of you who are on the staff, with your permission, Director, and of course you would know who to address certain issues.

**Lydia Acosta**

I'll be happy to take that on. However, I'd just like to kind of continue and not specifically. You suggested an alternative that's not been part of this discussion. And I feel strongly that we need to focus on the study and the questions raised in the study before we go to another tangent or another alternative. If we rule out the options in the study, that's fine. But we're not ready to rule them out or rule them in. You know the question is what do you want the central library to be? And that's what you're saying with staff input. We have spent a good deal of time and some resources to develop a building program begun by us now two years ago we started with the optimum size of about 200,000 square feet. I want that said because that's a number that came from John Richard. And that number probably best represented the standard that they give of one square foot per resident formula for best practices in library space in Louisiana and in other parts of the country. We worked very hard to try to put that into our financial proforma when we were starting to do the spreadsheets for the tax election. And we saw that it was impossible to fund a library of that size given what the income was going to be over the next ten years from the tax coming in.

**Dan Reed**

And that was even before Katrina.

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes, sir. Then we went down to 175,000 square feet and we had models of how many volumes to put and floors and features, the different ideas that people had been suggesting for years and years that they wanted to see in a new facility. All excellent ideas I'm sure no one would quarrel with. Then we saw that that was 175,000 square feet and we could nicely do the things we wanted to do with that. That was about the spring of May of 2005. We had not been able to address the request from Councilman Walker to build a branch in his district. He made a presentation to the Board in January of that year or February explaining why he felt it was important to have a branch in that area. And we were not able to address that within the limitations of 11.1 mils. So a recommendation that I made was to address the need for a branch

on the eastern side of the parish which then took away another 25,000 square feet from a main or central library regardless of where it is built. So now we have what's in this document is the budgeting for a facility that's x-size that has been reduced twice and costs more because of all the things that you know particularly Katrina. But the question is what size should it really be if we are needing to support a population that is growing, that has grown overnight because of two disasters. And so I believe the consultants are correct. You know, what do we want it to be, what features do we have and then when we come to that, and determine the size that it should be, then the question is how are we going to find the resources to build a building that size. If we find that it is impossible, and I don't believe that that's the case, then I think it's time to look at other alternatives. But I hate to see us move off and look at alternatives before we have fully analyzed these questions. And I will, the staff and I will work up models on the community grows like this because all of this is projections and we won't know until the 2010 census, and we won't know the results of that until even later, so we have to make some assumptions based on what the Chamber knows. And, Stephen, would you like to address that?

**Stephen Moret**

Just a quick comment, The U.S. Census is actually going to do a preliminary (poor sound quality) study of Baton Rouge and its surrounding area, so I think we'll even have some better estimates (poor sound quality) next year.

**Lydia Acosta**

That's wonderful. So we'll be better able to. So we'll work on models. We will then show what should be done, and say, if our population in the next 20 years is going to be half a million or 550,000 people and if we want to try from the outset to make the mark, make the best practice, then a total library space needs to be x. And that means building a branch in the southern part of the parish, and the eastern part of the parish, perhaps another branch some other place. We'll come up with those numbers so at least we can answer these questions. And we do know what the costs are because the consultants have done that for us.

**Georgia Brown**

And whatever figures that you can provide to the committee in addition to once you ascertain the square footage that we would need according to the standards then some sort of projection about the increased cost.

**Lydia Acosta**

The operational costs. That is really all there. If we just take the central or main library and we increase it by 25,000 square feet, probably what it would mean in terms of staff is not much additional staff because what we are talking about is making the departments bigger than we've anticipated. You know we've wanted to place some serious emphasis on local history, on genealogy. We want to collect in the culture and the music of Louisiana. So we know we need more space at Main. That's not going to directly impact the staff so much. What will impact the operational costs as the consultants rightly noted is that you accelerate the construction of the facilities which saves you money in the long run, you do increase the operational costs because you bring the staff in a year or two earlier if you open up Building A two years before you had planned. And so most of the information, Ladies and Gentlemen, is right here. (holds up the Cyntreniks report)

**Dan Reed**

They've done an excellent job.

**Georgia Brown**

And as we said before the study was done, it was designed to help us if we were going in a particular direction, not to tell us to go in that direction, so I want to make that very clear. Anything else? Anything that we want to tell Dan what his charge is going to be?

**Lydia Acosta**

We didn't answer Dorothy's question.

**Georgia Brown**

Oh, I'm sorry, Dorothy.

**Dorothy Steptean**

Well, that's alright. Lydia, do you want to repeat what I said?

**Lydia Acosta**

I'll try. Dorothy, like all of us, this is not our field of expertise like our consultants who have financial expertise. We look at the public/private partnership model which is very interesting and has with it advantages and disadvantages. And some of the questions that Dorothy asked were about the legal responsibilities and, you know, who's responsible for what and so on and so forth, if I can just characterize what you said. From what I know, all of this is developed in a contractual agreement between the public entity and the governmental entity with loads of lawyers like Nikki Essix. Because as you say, Dorothy, and I should shut up and let our consultants talk about this because they're the ones that know about this. But Ladies and Gentlemen, I would remind you that this public/private partnership that Dorothy mentioned is in fact what we will be pursuing should we pursue the site on Perkins Road with Mr. Spinosa and his colleagues. And that's something that I hope we don't lose sight of because the funding for that branch was part of the last tax election. The money is in the bank there and I feel some sense of urgency to get some of these things going that are within our wherewithal today.

**Georgia Brown**

Are we going to give Mr. Spinosa a timeline, you know, give him the things that we want and a timeline for letting us know so that we're just not dangling, waiting?

**Lydia Acosta**

Well, you know the last proposal that we got answered every one of the questions that we asked. He's taking financial responsibility for the parking garage, and the grounds. He agreed to take care of that. He has made a proposal just briefly that gives us the land, allows us to build a building that would be a two-story facility that we would design internally, that would be designed in accordance with the theme of the area he wishes to develop in what I saw was quite lovely. And what he is expecting from this group is a non-binding letter of agreement that we are interested in pursuing that course of action so that then he can move forward with the Planning Commission because he has his own issues. He's got to get permission from the

Planning Commission and then from the Metro Council to build what he is looking to build in that particular area. Because presently it is zoned A1, as you know single family. So I think the last letter that we got from him, you know, I mean I'm not an attorney, but it did answer the questions. And Nikki and you'll got it. We got the last letter before we were going to have the study meeting in October. So we kind of put it aside. So I felt that we would be discussing that proposal along with the study. (poor audio quality)

**Georgia Brown**

So all the legal issues have been resolved?

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes, they've been resolved.

**Nikki Essix**

Just some minor issues need to be resolved.

**Georgia Brown**

But there are some more details?

**Nikki Essix**

Just some minor.

**Lydia Acosta**

But the document when Dorothy was asking about the public/private partnerships, all of that has to be written and agreed upon by the principals before we can pick it up. We can say yes, we're interested in pursuing this with you, but it still has to go to the Zoning Commission to see if they'll give him the variance and then if that's the case, we have to go to the Council. And we have to explain to the Council why we want to build there instead of building on Burbank because we have accepted property there. But that's another issue we have to talk about.

**Georgia Brown**

Are we going to take the Burbank issue off the table or just how are we going to handle that?

**John Schneider**

Mrs. Brown, if I may. We had a conversation with JTS. There were two issues in regard to the architect. They're going to pick up all of the fees in regard to the architect. What you'll be doing is using their architect for the project. The second thing is in regard to the parking. They have agreed that they will provide parking, surface parking and that they will pick up the maintenance on that parking. That was one of the issues as to whether or not it would be the responsibility. But they're going to provide that from that standpoint.

**Lydia Acosta**

And landscaping.

**John Schneider**

And landscaping also. So essentially outside of the Library Board paying for the cost of the building, and the maintenance of that and its attorney's fees for the most part, everything else would be paid by the developer.

**Lydia Acosta**

You asked about Burbank.

**Georgia Brown**

Well, since we're talking about that issue, I need a response from the Board as to whether or not they want to proceed and that would take that off the table and we could proceed with the Burbank deal.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

There was a time when some persons who lived in the area had problems with what was going on, what was being proposed. Has anybody heard their latest point of view regarding our building in that complex?

**Dan Reed**

I don't think there's been a big change in the way those folks think about that library. I think their primary, they'd like to have a library in that location, but their primary objection is not really with respect to the library but with respect to the project.

**Georgia Brown**

The other elements in the project.

**Dan Reed**

Yes.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Alcohol being close to the facility and.

**Dan Reed**

And non-single family dwellings.

**Georgia Brown**

Non-single family dwellings is the main thing in my mind.

**Lydia Acosta**

Light commercial, residential in townhouses and condos which some of the community expressed serious opposition to, issues of traffic, issues of drainage. If you recall, I guess it was Mr. Spinosa, shared or maybe it was the three presidents of the property owners, shared their letter to Mr. Spinosa regarding all their concerns about the development. If we go forward to make a recommendation, it's on the assumption that may or may not happen. You know we can't guarantee.

**Georgia Brown**

It's non-binding.

**Lydia Acosta**

It's non-binding on us. It's attractive, it's a beautiful location, it's in the middle of a very busy community, but anything could change. And so until it's totally approved, it's tentative, I believe.

**Dan Reed**

But I don't think, I guess in response to Dorothy's thing about the neighborhood, I don't think there was any real opposition in the neighborhood about the library.

**Georgia Brown**

No, there's no library opposition.

**Lydia Acosta**

No opposition.

**Georgia Brown**

They want the library. In fact they thought it was a gift to us.

**Lydia Acosta**

Totally.

**Georgia Brown**

A total gift to us.

**Lydia Acosta**

Not part of a package.

**Georgia Brown**

And they were very excited about it. What they don't like is (poor audio quality), the restaurants and things there. And, of course, the subdivision across Perkins Road is concerned about the plan for using Congress Boulevard as a conduit for the traffic coming out of that area. So that's a major concern in Concord and Strafford.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Well, my not being a resident of the area, my major concern would be the traffic. I think it's horrendous out there. You know I do have to travel that route occasionally and I try to avoid it as much as possible. But, if they don't have a major problem with the site, if that's not the problem, I would like to see us move forward.

**Georgia Brown**

We can. We can make that recommendation. However, as you might recall, I asked him if his project did not go through, would we still be able to build a library there. The answer at that time was no. So I don't know if he has changed his mind or whether he will change his mind.

But I think it's worthy of our looking into.

**Lydia Acosta**

I believe that if there's no development there, there's no library.

**Georgia Brown**

She's simply saying no development, no library.

**Lydia Acosta**

So we go forward with the idea that this is a non-binding agreement.

**Georgia Brown**

Yes.

**Lydia Acosta**

Allowing Mr. Spinosa, or JTS to go forward with their financing and see where it ends up. I believe we still need to get permission from the Metropolitan Council to sign a non-binding letter agreement with Mr. Spinosa, is that right?

**Nikki Essix**

Yes.

**Lydia Acosta**

Because if that's the case, we will have to address some of the issues that you have raised and that others will raise. So what are we going to do with the other property and how is that going to impact us? And until a decision is final, I believe we just need to hold on to Burbank and wait and talk to the developer, talk to the gentlemen that gave us the property. So what's the Board saying?

**Dan Reed**

The Board's already voted on the question of the non-binding agreement.

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes, we have. It's already gone.

**Georgia Brown**

(poor audio quality) We'll move on to the issue of public/private partnership.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

The significant question of public/private partnerships (poor audio quality) and the advantages and disadvantages, and I think she (Dorothy Stepteau) wanted to know about the nuts and bolts of how they work. Fortunately, there are many models out there including now some in Baton Rouge. These are used across the country. There one of kind generic group of approaches to construction and government projects these days. The one exception that is probably the only one decreases the need for capital on the part of the public entity. And you can think of such things as design/build and construction. And other models do not decrease the capital on the part

of the public entity. I think if you plot those things out, it's roughly somewhere between 79 and forward. In terms of the nuts and bolts as long as you fine with the state and local ordinances, it really gives the entity the opportunity to start with a blank sheet of paper if you will; and to talk about sharing, and number one, responsibilities, and two, which is huge in terms of who will be responsible for what. We have a couple of models in Baton Rouge and in one for instance, the only responsibility of City government had to do with the landscape architect, a portion of a given project. The City is into the project and is in an equitable interest, if you will. Those can really vary, as we mentioned it requires lawyers for all sides sitting down and representatives from all sides talking about what responsibilities they want to have for which part. And then also the documenting really drives what happens from that point on. I listened attentively when we talked about in one instance you would have had the right to build the library on that spot and that would have been your limited right. The land would have been given, you would build the library, but the other things would become part of the project and your responsibility would stop right there. And those are the kind of things people would do at that table. And it's really clearly defined the rights and interests of the parties, and ultimately where it goes from there which is very important in terms of what is the responsibility of going forward. And you have all those things: management, maintenance, security, parking and so forth, everybody's rights and responsibilities to the going forward of the actual operation. In many instances it would be a situation where that would be separated based on the segments of the project. In other words if the Library portion in its clearly definable way would be maintained, and involve janitorial, management and security outside and separate from pieces that would be totally private. For instance if somebody had a separate book store, and Ill just throw out Barnes & Noble and a coffee house, you would have no responsibility at all. The ongoing responsibility for the balance of the financial lack of the entire project would be something else that would be carefully tailored by the lawyers. Because if there was one financial responsibility how do you take care of that responsibility in terms of your portion or do you have a portion at all. Those are the things that would be negotiable. I'm talking about the senior loan that would be the case in most projects like that, there might be one note from the master or senior loan for the entire project, and do you have responsibility for that. But that starts at the beginning and is not left for now we have done it and where do we all stand. It's all very clear from the beginning. So what I am saying is it starts with a blank sheet of paper, defined by state law and any local ordinances which would be essential. It starts with a blank sheet of paper, and everybody brings something to the table usually in those kinds of situations both in interests, and in challenges that they want to solve, and something that will make it work better. So it could be revenue, a piece of land, but generally everybody brings something to the table; in one, something they want to solve, and secondly, something that they can contribute to all to make it work because nobody is even going to let you in one of those just because they like you. (Mr. Reed raised hand) Yes?

**Dan Reed**

I was going to ask you to help me to understand, if those kinds of partnerships would be difficult to do if we stay with the pay-as-you-go plan for building a library.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Yes.

**Dan Reed**

Somebody is not going to what to enter a partnership with us for building something five to seven years from now.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

It would be virtually impossible to do one of those with your pay-as-you-go policy and we analyzed your pay-as-you-go policy very carefully and we say from the start we really commend the history of it and where it has gotten this parish over the years. The question is now can it take you, and it's not just this Library Board of Control, it's the question of it's not going to take anybody where they want to go and still say to the public, you're being responsible for their money. And so, for instance, when you look at what we would pay for things under that system, it would be difficult to stand up and say to the public we're responsibly handling your money when there are ways to do that that represent a tremendous saving, and a much quicker (poor audio quality) access to the public with what you are trying to do for them. The history of it is commendable, but whether it can get you or any agency to where you need to go in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is (poor audio quality) the answer is no.

**John Schneider**

Let me say something. It was mentioned earlier, the JTS project on Perkins Road. That is a perfect example of a public/private partnership coming about. Their proposal is we provide everything, you pay for the building, you maintain it, and operate it. They could have gone to the other extent of saying we're going to pay for the building, we're going to own it. What we're going to do is enter into a 25-year lease, you pay a million dollars a year, and we'll handle the note on it and we'll handle the maintenance, and at the end of 25 years, we'll sell it back to you. And this is the thing in dealing with the central library, you could even go to Goodwood if it's worked out where you have the property, you have everything, you may say we'll put out an RFP. Somebody comes in and builds the Main Library and lease it back to us for 25 years. The same thing could happen downtown. Somebody comes forward and you tell them we want a 150,000 square foot library, we want to build it, own it, and we maintain it. Tell us what it is going to cost. So there are varying ways as Brace was saying to structure it. But what the Board has is a situation if you want to go ahead with the four projects you have, there's \$87,000,000 projected between now and the end of 2015, taking into consideration what you have in the bank as of December, 2006. But your project costs, and your operational costs for those four projects exceeds \$100,000,000. Now whether it's \$100,000,000 or \$115,000,000 depends a lot upon the time frame. But the Board has to figure out if they want to go with these four projects, and then they have to look at the funding sources, and the various vehicles available to do it. And public and private partnership is one of them.

**Lydia Acosta**

Let me ask a question. Brace, you said that a public/private partnership was the one option that could decrease our costs. I guess I'd like you to speak a little more about that. I may answer my own question by using the JTS offer that he has offered the cost of the land, architectural and engineer fees which represent as much as ten percent of the cost of the project. So, in essence, he's offering us something that has a value of money that will decrease our costs. And what you suggested was the benefit. Is that an example? Are there other examples that say a developer may come to us with another idea? I just don't know.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

That's an example and there are many others. And, again, regardless of which one you might be offered, it still starts with one sheet of paper with your ability to do some things. But let me give you an example because I said to you that usually when we start off everybody at the table has a challenge that they are trying to address and they bring something at the same time. And, I hate to use a downtown example, but let me use one. Look at the rapidly developing parking garages downtown, a lot of them are examples. People, some folks want parking spaces and if they were to look at a situation where they said I'm going to go out and build a five story garage themselves, that could be cost prohibitive, but I want some spaces and there's some private entities that want some spaces, too. And, not only the State, but the City is looking for some spaces, too. So all of a sudden you've got private industry, you've got the State and the City all looking at one challenge, and then all of a sudden there are some private people who say you know what I want some retail space in that same corridor. And so then you say what if we made the bottom of that entire block retail space. So now you have private industry and two levels of government all looking at challenges and all finding a way to do it. But you, at the beginning, simply wanted a multi-level parking garage and the cost was prohibitive. Now you're in the situation where you can answer your need, other people are answering their needs, and your costs have gone down tremendously. That's why I say that's the only model that decreases your need for capital. All the others models, design/build, you name them, you are still putting up the capital. With design/build you may be able to do it faster and those kinds of things but you're still the one putting up the money. And so under a public/private partnership situation, that's why your capital can be reduced because everybody who comes to that table brings something. It could be the cost of the land, it could be the guarantee on the ultimate senior loan or the senior note I mentioned to you to you before, it could be the contribution of the capital by one of the entities in order to be a player. And all of that would decrease your need for the amount of capital you would need to build the project.

**Lydia Acosta**

That example could fit for the way to finance our garage.

**John Schneider**

Yes, and carrying it further the best example that we are all familiar with, is a shopping mall. The big boys, the anchor tenants get the best deals, what they want to do is anchor that shopping mall with a hundred or two hundred small stores that pay significant square footage. Under the scenario here, you could say why would a developer want to build a central library? If he has the property, he anchors it with a library which makes it a conducive spot to put multi-apartments, condos around it, and have retail stores, etc. And you know, the Board may say look we have \$35,000,000 to spend, we want a 150,000 square foot library, here's the specification, and then it's up to the developer to come in and arrange the financing to make up the difference. And like Brace was saying, what's in it for the developer is that he's looking for a library just like Mr. Spinosa is. He recognizes that having that library within the traditional neighborhood development enhances the sale of lots. And, so as Brace said, everyone looks for something and from the standpoint of the Board, if the total cost of the central library is \$60,000,000, and you've got \$40,000,000 to spend, you're looking to make up the gap. And does public/private partnership offer a way to narrow the financial gap. That's what the Board would be looking for.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

I have a question. I'd like you to specifically address economic return because a lot of our citizens are concerned about economic return and fattening the pockets of somebody downtown. Now we paid over \$300,000 for property for Zachary for the library. Nobody said anything about who got the \$300,000.

**Dan Reed**

Or who else was going to be fattened by the library.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Or who else was going to be fattened by the library, thank you. But it's a major concern now, so I'd like you to address that because maybe there's something we don't see. And tell us about the New Market Tax Credits, and where that would apply. According to your report, it applies to downtown because of the make-up of the citizens down there. And tell us about the GOZONE and how that would figure into it.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

We're going to break that down, and we're going to talk about GOZONE which is specifically a creation from the disaster of Katrina, and East Baton Rouge Parish is indeed in what we call the Gulf Opportunity Zone which has tremendous economic development implications. We'll talk about the new markets as well. But to start with your first point, if you're going to build a building that has absolutely no impact on anybody, I really don't know where you're going to build it. You'd have to go pretty deep out into the hinter land because somebody owns everything and anything you get ready to do anywhere is going to impact somebody. Now when developers come to the table to try to be a party to, it's kind of like the scenario I answered earlier. Usually when you have the public/private partnership, everybody at that table is answering a challenge that they have. And they believe that doing this together is better than doing it apart. The benefit in terms of a person who might be looking to get fat, and I've got to tell you that is probably a misunderstood thing when it comes to developers because development is an immensely terrible risk type pursuit. And if whoever is getting into it, does not have an interesting whatever the element is and in this case, the Library, then they are absolutely fooling themselves. This is not the pig at the sty, the trough kind of thing. It simply does not happen that way. I'm not going to go into any personal testimonies or personal properties, but to simply say to you that when you talk about what happens to an adjoining property or other people who are involved you have an opportunity at the beginning of the process to deal with the people you want to deal with. Again, as I mentioned starting with the plain sheet of paper, there's somebody who's coming to you simply drooling over I'm going to make a mint. You can see them coming. And that is the choice of this Board to do due diligence. And due diligence would assure you of what party you're dealing with, the history is, is there anything shady about the history, and you have to do that because it's the decision of this Board is who the Board is going to deal with. And so that can be dealt with at the very top of the analysis as to whether the Board does business with anybody based that due diligence. And so I think you can see those people coming and if you can't see them coming, then simply your due diligence process will help you answer that question. And so I think there's protection from anybody who is just coming to the table and trying to get you to make a decision that's going to

make them rich people. Your lawyers and the parties you would bring to this project will be pretty savvy about analyzing those deals and seeing exactly what all the parts are. The minimum risk should be on this entity because you start with money and you are also a public body with an answer to everybody. (poor audio quality) And so the least amount of risk should be on this body. When they come to your table, and merely benefit because you're going to do something, and you look at the situation and they have no risk, that's a dead giveaway right there. And so everybody who is at that table and not of a public interest is taking a significant risk, and putting up significant dollars in order to take that risk, and in the final analysis, giving up something because that's where the amount of your responsibility goes down. Giving up something, or making something more doable about the project for you, if they meet those standards, you're dealing with a pretty good deal. If they don't then it's a reason to look up and (poor audio quality).

### **John Schneider**

In regards to the GOZONE incentives, which are primarily two, principally it's bonds as well as accelerated depreciation, is that if the Board without a public/private partnership undertook it they wouldn't be able to benefit from what goes on in those incentives. This is something that is more applicable to investors and in a public/private partnership, is that the project may lend itself to selling bonds. The developer would sell bonds and given a lower interest rate, go through the process of being approved or the investors that are involved in the deal may be able to benefit from what they call the accelerated depreciation. Normally, a building depreciates over a 39 year period, so you have a basis of \$3,900,000 in the building, you would depreciate \$100,000 a year. The way the accelerated depreciation benefit works, it allows you in the first year to take a depreciation of \$1,900,000 and the remainder over 39 years. But that's a benefit for investors.

### **Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

And let me say, John, before we run off and somebody concludes that we're saying that there is no benefit that can ultimately come to anybody, I want to be clear on that. Because in this situation that John has described it is a tremendous benefit. What we have to understand is that, and you'll understand it more when we talk about New Markets, but these kinds of incentives are for developing and improving cities and is going on all over the country. A lot of it is basically federal tax dollars although there are some kinds of minor state programs (poor audio quality). But my point is that this is going on all over the country. Cities are growing and areas are just booming using these same creative financial approaches to things, and so I wouldn't want to sit here and say ultimately nobody benefits. If you are doing creative financing and using everything that the government has created, dual legislations for areas to be able to improve, then it would be a responsibility to the people because they pay taxes, all the taxes that we pay to go to Washington, that other states and cities are using to the hilt because they have gotten it. (poor audio quality) It's irresponsible on our parts to our people not to try to get and access those same benefits that are being accessed all over the country. For instance, John just mentioned when you stop and talk about things like he's going to talk about in just a minute, New Markets and so forth, those things our people have a right, and we almost have a responsibility, to try to get access to them for them because we pay taxes just like everybody else in this nation. (poor audio quality)

**Dan Reed**

The price that we're under is based on the tax election we have money that's going to come in over a period of time. We don't have the ability to convert that ourselves into a lump sum of money today without having another election with a bond issue or something like that. What I understand from your report is that that's one of the things that a public/private partnership would be able to do. It could convert that stream of money into a project that could be begun early saving the construction costs with, as you say, the certainty that this entity is going to have the money to pay it back.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Right.

**John Schneider**

But the developer is still going to have to work with the Board to fill the gap. It's like within the Library, the construction of the garage, is that you have multiple entities. You could have the East Baton Rouge Library system puts up x dollars, if BREC puts up the property, if there's Federal Transportation Association funding involved in the parking garage, if you got the private developer, you may have some State involvement, you may have Federal New Market Tax Credit. You may also have private fund raising. There are x amount of concentric circles that all need to come together and it has to start off with the Board has x. It needs y. How does it get the difference between x and y?

**Dan Reed**

My question really more deals with the stream. I mean, how does this help us with the idea that the money we're going to have isn't going to be had for a number of years?

**John Schneider**

You have about \$35,000,000 right now. I think that's the December, 2006 figure. You'll be adding a little bit over the next years. By the time the architectural process, construction starts you're probably going to have another \$10,000,000. And this is for all the projects. So the point is like with the developer if you say we're setting aside 35,000,000, it's also going to take him about two years to build the building, so there's additional monies. The point the Board has to say is the max we're going to spend on this central library, our part is going to be \$35,000,000. Whoever wants to come forward is going to have to figure out the ways to get the rest of the dollars funded. So you could do it within the 10-year period. That's the point.

**Lydia Acosta**

Is it possible to use the good offices of the City-Parish? Because if the Library Board had decided at the first of the year that we were going to bond it, we can't bond ourselves. But if the City-Parish had agreed to support those bonds that would go extend beyond the 10-year period. You've got to make good with the assumption that the impact flow would continue and that there would continue to be a revenue stream. (poor audio quality) Isn't that one possibility?

**John Schneider**

I think we had talked to the Mayor's Office. There was no commitment in regards to it. They're looking at the plan that would come forward. This is not to say that it's the Board's choice.

There's nothing wrong with introducing it. It's up to the people of the parish as to whether they approve it. Once you come up with a plan for the libraries, you can come up with a secondary bond issue that's just a part of the financials.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

If you try to leverage your own dollars, which is essentially what you're doing, and not worry about a public/private partnership, then that would be the primary vehicle you would use probably almost exclusively. If you looked at what you have now, what the stream is, and said I'm going to leverage that so that I can move now, then that's pretty much what you'd be looking at. Under that scenario you would not necessarily need a partnership because what you're saying is I've got my own dollars, and they're also coming, and what's coming I want to be able to use quickly and be out here on my own. That is another model. You could also hybrid that same model into a public/private partnership. I don't want to eliminate that.

**Lydia Acosta**

No, (poor audio quality)

**John Schneider**

There's a third one which we're talking about which is once you decide what you want, what you want the library to be, the size you want it to be, it would behoove retaining an architect to give a sketch design as well as a price cost. And then you figure out what the cost is, the money is and what the financial gap is, and you undertake the fund raising campaign at the front end to bridge that gap even before construction starts. So there are multiple ways that the Board can approach the situation. The critical thing is what was talked about earlier, is what do you want it to be, how large do you want it to be, and what is that going to cost. And then you'll determine what your financial gap is and then you figure out ways to do it. Either it's going to be done by a public/private partnership, either it's going to be done by a fund raising campaign, a combination of those two or third a need for a secondary millage specifically for that purpose.

**Dan Reed**

I don't think we would have the bonding issue. That can't be done without another election.

**Lydia Acosta**

Brenda (Library Business Manager, Brenda Lovett) and I talked to the bond attorney for the City. If you go beyond the 2015 period, requires a tax election. If we were considering bonding the gap, and could pull it off in the seven years that are left, isn't that what Richard (Bond Attorney, Richard Liebowitz) said? (referring question to Brenda Lovett)

**Brenda Lovett**

You can't go beyond your ten years of funding.

**Dan Reed**

You can bond the tax that's been passed.

**Brenda Lovett**

If you could come up with a funding to pay for the bond issue, the initial bond issue, the (poor

audio quality) sinking fund that is required of a bond issue and the bond payments and interest every year, you could. With the money we have coming in we cannot. We looked at various bond issues.

**Lydia Acosta**

We didn't look at any of the things they suggested.

**Dan Reed**

I think that's an important constraint for us to recognize, and that is based upon what's being projected in respect to the construction costs, there's no way for us to build what we want to build on our own. That's basically the deal. We've got to have help or it cannot be done, based upon the tax election that's already been passed.

**Lydia Acosta**

Regardless of where you put it.

**Dan Reed**

It doesn't matter where it is.

**Dorothy Steptau**

And let me just say this to Mr. Godfrey and it's not pertinent to this, but in the past, when this Board, well not everyone was on this Board, you came to us later. We were looking for a sight for a library, and we looked at, at least twelve different sites. And on one we could not build because there was a fault, another we could not build because the people would not sell their properties, even though, I'll just leave it at that. In one instance we were looking at a site where an ugly school was and somebody quickly bought that and thought we're going to make a killing because they're going to build a library here. Well, the building had asbestos (laughter), so we couldn't. This is the United States. Capitalism is alive and well, so that's how we operate. That's the bottom line. So I can't fault them for doing that. (poor audio quality) That's what this country's about.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

If there was a rumor out of this room today that the Library might be in a certain place, you will have economic activity, and by economic activity I mean people who can make a difference who can buy and sell and all that will look at that. Can we hold that against them? Absolutely not like you mentioned. But your due diligence can spot the person who runs over there and buys that asbestos building.

**Dan Reed**

As you point out, Brace, it doesn't matter as far as the surrounding. If we say today we're going to put a new Main Library at the location of the existing Goodwood Library that has an effect on all the people up and down Goodwood Boulevard, the value of their property, the value of property surrounding there.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Ms. Stepteau, I'll say this to you, sometimes people have said, you know Brace talks about race and sometimes I do. The models of what you're talking about can best be expressed in those terms. We have people who own significant land in significant places around Baton Rouge who were bought out because they didn't know. So maybe people ought to know. In my practice of law over the last twenty something years, I've had African-Americans come to me after the fact, because for whatever reason, it's not as bad as it was these days. We lived in times when African-Americans were the last to know things that were going on right next door to them. They were bought out and then they woke up to see, oh my God, I was bought out. (poor audio quality) So that's a very real model and it's going to continue to happen. I think we're in better shape these days, but the fact is people ought know, it should be a wide open process. And I'm not saying that you're suggesting that. We're trying to keep it at the table so that people don't do that. All that creates is a situation where few people know it and those few people benefit. So you're right. It ought to be a wide open process. If someone looks at it and wants to take the risk because they're a mile down the road, then that's what should happen. But I appreciate your comment. You're absolutely right. (poor audio quality)

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Along with that, when we were considering building the library in Zachary, I mentioned that I owned property on that same street. But I put that out on the table, but my property is in the lower end. And this was in the high rent district, and it's just about three miles up the road. But the prices are worlds apart for the land.

**John Schneider**

Answering one last part of your question, in regard to New Market Tax Credits. New Market Tax Credits are incentive to develop urban areas that had undergone a drop down in value. Principally it was founded in 2000, and what it does is, if the Census tract qualifies, a lot of it is based upon the amount of income, I think it has to be the average per capita income, within that Census tract, is less than \$25,000, then that is an eligible Census tract which means that New Market Tax Credits are available to qualify projects that are undertaken within that area.. The way New Market Tax Credits work is that any of us, any private individual, any corporation could buy the New Market Tax Credits and what you do and the easiest way for every \$100 in New Market Tax Credits you get over a seven year period you get a 39% tax credit. You get 6% for the first four years, 3% for the next five years. So that means you put up \$100, you got \$39 of direct write-off during that period of time off your tax credit. That's the benefit to the New Market Tax Credits model. What the benefit is to the business is you have two options, you could get what they call a New Market Tax Credit loan which is usually at three percentage points below market. So if the market price of the loan is 8%, you get a 5% loan for seven years during that period of time. Or, number two, instead of taking the reduced interest rate, you could sell the New Market Tax Credits. And, so if you had a million dollars in New Market Tax Credits they sell at about 70 cents on a dollar. So what you would get up front is \$700,000. But you would still have a loan at the market rate of 8 %. Under the scenario applied to the Library, if the Library was built in a low income Census tract, and if it got an allocation of New Market Tax Credits, let's say a \$10,000,000 allocation. That \$10,00,000 would create 3.9 million dollars of New Market Tax Credit benefits sold at 70 cents that would generate 2.8 million dollars from there. Now if the Library got a \$50,000,000 allocation it could increase that

cash benefit to the Library could be \$12,000,000. The way it works is that since the year 2000 every year during the month of June there is an allocation of New Market Tax Credits. It's usually anywhere from \$600,000,000 to \$1 billion dollars. And you have entities that have to meet certain requirements and they apply for the Tax Credits. Last year 265 entities across the country applied. For example, one of them was the City of Phoenix. It has gotten the largest New Market Tax allocation. I think it was \$125,000,000. And they have a special New Market Tax Committee Board that allocates that \$125,000,000 to projects within downtown Phoenix to make it work. The premise would be the deadline for this coming year is February 28<sup>th</sup> and it's February 28<sup>th</sup> of every year with awards being in June. It is conceivable to call it the City of Baton Rouge or even the Friends of the Library Board, a non-profit entity, would apply for the Tax Credit allocation, and specifically for the purpose of building a library. If it's awarded an allocation it could sell the tax credits and get the cash benefits. The whole purpose of it is that in urban areas that have been ignored and have deteriorated the ability to convince an investor to come in and spend money, the economics don't work out when you put the proformas together, so what they do is the New Market Tax Credit doesn't make a bad investment good, but what it does is make a good investment financially (poor audio quality). And that's the purpose of the New Market Tax Credit. So that's why we listed it in there. The City of Phoenix, Charleston, in Baton Rouge Stonehenge Venture Capital is one of the largest. Consistently they have gotten an allocation every year. And Stonehenge is using it for projects within Louisiana and the South. So that's why it was put in there. By getting the allocation you get cash.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Maybe we need to say too just so nobody leaves again with our statement about benefits and public/private partnership, this laundry list that folks come in to the deal with you on this kind of thing could look at.(poor audio quality)..There is the property tax exemption program which is based upon job creation. And so you could have a private entity that is a part of the deal and enter into the property tax abatement program. It's based on job creation; so many thousand dollars \$2,500 per job because the federal government wants us to create jobs. The federal government says creating jobs is good. Putting people to work is good. We have the quality jobs program which is a separate one. I'm sorry I made a mistake. The property tax abatement program is based on property taxes. The quality job program is one that is also based on jobs. The enterprise zone program is a property tax credit based on the creation of jobs. Any of those developers could go to the Louisiana Department of Economic Development and file an advance notification that they want to take advantage of those programs. Now that's all part of this table, but I just want to be clear that we're saying to you, that out there in the government's interest in creating jobs, and bringing back areas and helping cities., there are some things out there that private businesses can take advantage of that could be brought to that very table where you might have instructions by a public/private partnership.

**Lydia Acosta**

(poor audio quality-could not hear the question or statement) Is the City of Baton Rouge, the Parish of East Baton Rouge eligible to apply for the New Market Tax Credit?

**John Schneider**

No, it could be that the Library Board could set up the Friends of the Library which is a non-profit could be the applying agency for it. In Phoenix I used that as an example. In Phoenix I

don't know the exact subsidiary, the City of Phoenix set up a New Market Tax Credit Board that made the application.

**Lydia Acosta**

We don't have one that you know of in our parish?

**John Schneider**

The point is if the Library said we would like to see the Patrons of the Library apply for a New Market Tax Credit allocation or we're going to set up x, y, z to apply for it, the key thing in the allocation, what they look at, is what the allocation would be used for. Some groups say we will only use our allocation for health related purposes. Some of them say we're going to use it for retail businesses within an area. You specify and then based on the quality of your report, like I said you got 200 or 300 entities that are all going after it. You specify yourself, I want \$75,000,000, some say I want \$125,000,000. And what the CDFI in Washington has is \$600,000,000 and out of those 265 entities they approve 65, and each year it's a new cycle. We didn't get into it nor was it mentioned within the report, but I don't know if the construction of the library would be eligible for Community Development Block Grants program.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

But here

**Brenda Lovett**

We checked on that with Community Development and they told us that they are having problems now retaining funding with the federal government. Lydia had me check on that. From what I was told by the City, no.

**John Schneider**

But if the State made an increase in the allocation?

**Brenda Lovett**

I didn't check with the State. I just checked with our local City Community Development people.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

But, Mrs. Acosta, let me be clear with you, on your question about the City and New Market allocations. We know of no effort on the part of the City to set any entity (poor audio quality) or any of its government subdivisions to qualify for loan payments. We know of none. That's as definitive as we can be because we don't know the City's plans or what may be in the future.

**Dan Reed**

What areas would qualify for that New Market Tax Credit?

**John Schneider**

It has to meet the Census tract income level.

**Dan Reed**

Is it by zip code?

**John Schneider**

It's by zip code.

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes, I think we checked on that when we were checking on those federal dollars. (looking at Brenda Lovett) And I think that clearly downtown came under that area.

**John Schneider**

And midtown.

**Lydia Acosta**

And I'm not sure if mid-city made it. There seemed to be less of a poverty issue in the mid-city area. But I can't remember now. Remember when we were talking to that fellow? (looking at Brenda Lovett)

**Brenda Lovett**

A lot of it is downtown because that's where CDG gets a lot of their money and Delmont Gardens got money for community development. So the Delmont area and your lower income areas.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

What happens in some situations is that you might have something that balances it off. You may have some pretty poor neighborhoods, but in that same zip code you have another neighborhood and, so it just skews it. So simply knowing that there are some poor areas within a certain area is not definitive as to whether they are defined as such based on the Census information.

**Dorothy Stepteu**

And we could set up a separate entity to make this application. We could say the citizens have formed this group and open it up to persons who might want to be part of it who are not currently Patrons of the Library? That's legal?

**John Schneider**

Well, what you are really doing is setting up a specific legal entity for the purpose of making the applications. It's not the individuals you are inviting them to the table. The Library Board is setting up that entity because over that seven year period there's a lot of monitoring, and accounting that has to be built into the whole thing.

**Dan Reed**

But easier would be the situation where the developer makes the application. If you have a multiple approach, the alphabet soup you guys are talking about, it sounds like something the Library Board would not want to get involved in trying to create it. That would be the way we would get involved in it is that one of these developers would use one or more of those vehicles

to enhance the project so that it would be doable. And they would make application for the New Market Tax Credits because it would help them make the project work.

**John Schneider**

That's what we were saying earlier. If the Board said we have \$35,000,000 and that's part of the RFP they put out. And we want this type library that's going to cost x, then the burden is placed on the developer to come back with a financial plan and that makes it work.

**Dan Reed**

How he makes it work is up to him.

**John Schneider**

Right. You have capped your involvement.

**Lydia Acosta**

We put it in our (poor audio quality).

**Stephen Moret**

I'm just curious about how important the non-profit entity (poor audio quality)

**John Schneider**

It gets the allocation. Let's say it applies for \$50,000,000 and it's going to be for the purpose of building libraries within low income areas. It gets the allocation of \$50,000,000, and usually what it does is simultaneously it has arranged buyers of those New Market Tax Credits whether it's Exxon.

**Stephen Moret**

Question-poor audio quality

**John Schneider**

They have arranged buyers and they offer the allocation. They will get 39% and so they will be able to sell it at current value at 70% of that value. At \$50,000,000 of allocation it could generate about \$35,000,000.

**Stephen Moret**

What are the criteria (poor audio quality)

**John Schneider**

It's a competitive environment. It's like last year 265 entities

**Stephen Moret**

But what are their (poor audio quality)

**John Schneider**

They evaluate the ability of the entity to do what it says it wants to do. It's a subjective criterion

from the standpoint of they don't award x amount of points. It's just all of a sudden the first week of June they announce we have 265 entities that requested 6.5 million dollars of New Market Tax Credits. We have allocated \$600,000,000 over 65 different entities and they just announce who they are. Like Stonehenge got \$100,000,000 two years ago and they got another \$100,000,000 this year.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

To answer the question, but one of the things to look at is there's usually an attitude from Washington, as you know, they look at those Census tracts. But there's an attitude that whatever projects are going to get the money, we want it to impact those areas in these kinds of ways. We want it to create jobs, (poor audio quality) and all those kinds of things. They look at the application of Stonehenge or anybody, and what they're looking at is whether or not what they are saying on the application will have that impact. To be honest with you, the attitudes in Washington change from year to year. Some years they really want a lot of improvement in housing, some years they want creation of jobs. So they will analyze it based on what you're saying and will it have that impact. The reason we can say that is that we have been in a situation where the people who were responsible for making those decisions will say that's what we're trying to accomplish. So they're real glad that Stonehenge or anybody is entertaining those kind of (change of video tape, missing some of the comment)

**John Schneider**

We face the fact that here is a deficit. Short of passing another millage, it comes down to once you come down to the cost of a library will be \$40,000,000 or whatever it may be, we've got x amount of dollars, public fund raising is one route, New Markets may be another, public/private partnership, FTA funding for the parking garage, all these things are there. But I think it really gets back to the fact that, and Lydia, you alluded to it, it almost seems like in my mind, the Board needs to say what is the size of the library system that we want for the year 2020 and what are we going to build in the next nine years that will put us in the point. You know there's so many preliminary decisions that need to be made before you get to the point of figuring out how much it's going to cost. And it starts off with the size of your library system plus specifics here. (poor audio quality).

**Stephen Moret**

(poor audio quality) The Goodwood versus downtown. What cost did you assume for the parking garage downtown?

**John Schneider**

When the report was initially done in the initial assessments pre-Katrina, I think it was in there for \$12,000 per parking spot.

**Lydia Acosta**

I think it was \$7,000,000.

**John Schneider**

\$7.2 million. A 600 car garage was used.

**Stephen Moret**

(poor audio quality)

**John Schneider**

Within the numbers we used here we used \$15,000 per spot saying that it would probably be in two years now and based on Katrina we used the \$15,000 per spot. So it would be close to \$9,000,000 for a parking garage.

**Stephen Moret**

I guess I was thinking there would be a difference in the parking garage between downtown and Goodwood.

**John Schneider**

No, this was just on the pure cost of construction and land

**Lydia Acosta**

The land is another assumption. But the garage itself we talked about fund raising. If we used the model for downtown.

**Stephen Moret**

(poor audio quality) Is the need for a parking garage at Goodwood because of limited space?

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes, when we talked to BREC originally on an informal basis and we said we wanted a facility of x size which would necessitate having access to 600 parking spaces because we're mandated by the size of the facility for how many parking spaces we could provide, or must provide minimally, we were told right from the get go that the size of the land that (video cut off the rest of the statement)

**Stephen Moret**

I just want to be sure I understand this. When you're talking about the difference in the cost of building a main library downtown versus Goodwood you're talking primarily about land acquisition for downtown to potentially an increase in operating cost security downtown?

**Lydia Acosta**

No, security costs would be the same. To staff a garage would require a team of people that would be available in the library itself. If we build a multi-story facility in Goodwood we would have multiple staff of people patrolling the building because we have similar security issues that may not be acknowledged generally by the public. But there's crime in the Mid-City area, there's crime all over the City-Parish and we have a responsibility to provide staffing. And when we looked at our budget, we did have parking garage staffing and we did have increased security patrols. We now contract with the Sheriff's Department because that makes the most sense financially. And that's what we're envisioning or some other model similar to that. So security costs would not be less. The difference was the cost of the land. Except for the logistics I would suspect it would be easier to build in the park. When you're downtown, you've got cluttered streets, but excepting for the cost of the land before the hurricane we were pretty much even

Steven.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

I think we read quite a bit about the homeless population and what a problem it is for some of the citizens. And I went downtown and I looked for homeless people and I didn't find any. And I went downtown and I looked for this horrible traffic and I didn't find any. I'm near-sighted, but I know I can recognize traffic when I see it. And I went down at several times of the day. And I read something recently that there has been some concern about a homeless problem in the Independence Park area. Did you read anything like that?

**Lydia Acosta**

When you look at this community as a whole, the view of homelessness is one of the factors that we're all aware of, as we're aware of literacy issues, and economic job acquisition. I don't think that one area of town may be more difficult than the others, but we have to recognize something and that is the Library is for everyone. It is for the rich, for the poor, for the middle class, the lower class, for the students, for the grandmothers. We welcome folks. We see people that are homeless. We have people that come into Goodwood who are mentally challenged, who have emotional issues. We deal with them as we are able. We help them as long as they're not creating, if they're not breaking any of our policies, everyone is welcome. And that's the way we view all the people who come to the Library.

**Dan Reed**

Do you have any additional security in the downtown library now because of a homeless problem?

**Lydia Acosta**

No, sir, we don't. We have the same security details. They come in late afternoon and they're there until closing. Now we do close downtown early because when I came on board that's what we were doing, and the library is only open until 7:00. And that's something we'll have to re-evaluate if we build a central library at Goodwood, we'll need to give the people who live downtown the same operating hours as the other libraries.

**Dan Reed**

I guess my point is that there's the homeless population and I'm sure there are some homeless people downtown, First Methodist where I go to church, they may come there and that's what the church is for. But I would assume you have some in the library downtown from time to time?

**Lydia Acosta**

Sure you do. We have them at Delmont Gardens. They come in and they try to bathe in the bathrooms. It is an urban issue period. If you're a rural county or parish you don't see that. But you are a large city

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Not any more.

**Lydia Acosta**

I'm not familiar with the rural parish in Louisiana. But it's something that libraries have been dealing with for as long as we've been librarians.

**Dan Reed**

Then being downtown would not be a security problem?

**Lydia Acosta**

Folks that are homeless they come in to find a quiet place to be, maybe it's hot, it's summer, they come in for air conditioning. They can read a magazine and they'll sit in a chair. I've been here for three and a half years and I can't think of one issue specifically where there was a homeless individual that we had to pursue. Now if people are committing a crime, if they're stealing a book or they're insulting a patron, whether they're homeless or not, we're going to deal with them. And we deal with them. That's why we have the sheriffs with us in the evening. And during the day if our staff has a problem they know how to deal with them. We call the police when there's a problem, and they come and arrest them, or they guide them to a service agency if they have a problem. But I think you have to be very careful that you not be exclusive. The Library is about being inclusive. That's why we see access to public transportation as essential wherever the library is located.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

I'd just like to just say something about that. I am so glad that the idea of the homelessness has been put on the front burner because I had not thought about that as much as I should have as a concerned citizen. And I think as we prepare for our library system, going forward, we ought to think about what can we do to assist with this area? I talked to a friend of mine from Chicago. She said they have a special program for homeless people. And that library is downtown, and she said it works well. She went there to see. And she did that for me because I had talked about what was going on down here. And you said something about the bus. I went to the bus station. The first time I had been to the bus station in decades. But I went because citizens here put that on my mind. And I wanted to see what is wrong with the bus station. I went in there. Nobody was loud. People were seated, they were carrying on conversations. I looked around and I have to apologize because I had heard so much about the bus station that I wondered if I ought to take my purse with me. You know should I lock it up in my trunk? And then I said to myself, what is wrong with you? Take your purse into the bus station. And I did. I looked at our kiosk. You know we have a kiosk there. I took a picture of it. I asked permission if I could take a picture of it. They told me I could. And I said somebody had said something about a problem with the paper, that sometimes it runs out of paper and sometimes it has a problem with the kiosk itself. And I said I'm technologically challenged. It's working today. But I won't even attempt to use it because it may not be working when I finish. But it was clean, it was orderly, and it was the bus station that people are complaining about. And I wonder how many people have been to the bus station lately there on Florida and

**Dan Reed**

In front of Sacred Heart.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Yes. That's the only station we have.

**Lydia Acosta**

All the buses go there and you transfer. They also have their own security staff. CATS has its own security staff so should there be any problem there is somebody there to help. They're prepared as any agency should be.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

And, Madam President, we need to talk about what we want the library to be, and what size do we want it to be.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

We refer you to page 34 because we give you a number of questions we believe you would have to answer. Because even as you begin to discuss the whole issue of money, how much it's going to cost based on what it's going to be will be a crucial part of that discussion. You're not limited to these questions. They are ones we feel that you must answer. You can have many more in coming to the ultimate decision. We would simply refer you to that page.

**Lydia Acosta**

I'm proud to say for the most part we are actively engaged in all of those activities and seeing the libraries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and see our involvement in these activities to be increased.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Ms. Stepteau just raised something just now that's probably in one of these questions. I must admit it's not one we posted. We asked whether you thought the library could be part of an answer to some pressing social challenge today. She put it a little bit more vividly. Quite frankly, I did not know that there was a library in the nation that now rated homeless people needed to come in and read. That's implicit in some of these questions. What is it that you want to be? And do you want to be a source of and answer to some challenges of the area that you live in? That is a huge consideration now in places that just had new libraries open or several that have them in architectural and design stages. These are questions that all librarians are asking themselves whether we are essentially this or are we to be a resource, a different kind of resource than we have existed. That's for you all. If the answer is flat no, we just want to get some books and have people read them, and we understand that. But we just think you ought to simply ask yourself that question.

**Georgia Brown**

I think what she's saying is a worthwhile thing. (poor audio quality). But I think our pressing need is literacy. And I think we need to address that because if you read and watch TV and hear about the reports from our school system, I think the bottom line is we need to address literacy. And I think we need to plan a facility that will help us to address that.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

When we first put that question to you, the first example we used was literacy. We used it in the

context of how there are adults that didn't do what they were supposed to be doing when they should have. But now they're saying I want to be a better person. We have a couple of immensely successful programs here that need to be replicated. Another thing that's may be part of this is to look at what's happening because it's happening very quietly amazingly to me, but our school system's governance board is making changes in leaps and bounds in our school system, and we hardly seem to know it. We need to keep up with that as we talk about literacy and what's happening to our children. We have gone very quietly in this city to something called a zone within a district approach which is going to open in 2007. Several of our schools are going to be run by folks other than the traditional School Board and the principal they appoint through engagements we have gone to as a city because I was one of the ones who traveled to the city to look at how they are doing it better in other places. We looked at the zone district concept before we brought it here. And there's no doubt in my mind that those are going to be better schools. Parents are going to clamor for them as they clamor for them in other places. We probably need to keep up with what's going on in other government situations so that when we talk about being a part of the solution that that makes sense, because we also know what they're trying to bring to the table in terms of new approaches to things.

### **Georgia Brown**

Let me hasten to say that our library system is on board with this program and they're at the forefront and that's why I was saying that whatever facility we plan should enhance and undergird what they're currently doing. Because the project they have now and the other things this system was quick to establish itself in North Baton Rouge after Katrina and provide library services up there. So we are doing things. And I just want that whatever this facility will be, it will be enhanced.

### **Lydia Acosta**

I'd like to go on to say that most facilities that we have looked at in terms of planning whether it be the renovation of Goodwood should that be the decision and a new central library wherever that would be built, that it can be designed or at least planned with literacy training in mind. We talked to literacy coalition providers in the parish. We were part of the Rotary literacy discussions that the Chamber and the Rotary put together. And what we were told was, and we know this from our colleagues all over the country, that a lot of literacy training, one-on-one and in small groups, goes on in the libraries because libraries are not threatening places, that adults feel comfortable coming to, to get this assistance. So, for example, in the Goodwood renovation, there are multiple small two-person rooms and small seminar rooms, and larger meeting rooms that we asked Mr. Jackson to put into a floor plan to facilitate that literacy work. And we have done the same thing for a central library for literacy and, of course for what we hope to be the opportunities of business and because workforce groups come to use our facility as a training facility. Many small businesses and mid-size businesses don't have the physical space to do those sorts of things at their own facilities. We want to have the physical facility for the training for the developmental issues of literacy as well as for the upper end of training of the workforce and training within the building. Because we are a public entity, the Library operates as much as possible, all of our services are free. We're not talking about rooms that have to be rented. We're talking about rooms that would be made available and reserved at no cost because the tax dollars pay for it.

**John Schneider**

I would like to expand on one aspect of that literacy thing is that the recognition that East Baton Rouge Parish has a large at-risk population. There are students up to the age of 19 that are not in school for whatever the reason. Fortunately, there's a developing movement to specifically address the at-risk population, and this was part of the concept within this is recognizing how important education is. As much as we try to change the system to eliminate the growth of the at-risk population, we have to acknowledge that there is an at-risk population and cannot be ignored. And this was our thought within the central library and following up what you said, as far as the meeting rooms. There are various groups that are focusing on the at-risk that will need the facilities that a central library offers and all of that is part of that central goal. And until Louisiana and East Baton Rouge Parish addresses the education issue, we will never become the parish that we truly want to be. And when you get into that, that's when the whole public transportation thing ties in; that you need transportation to get there. That is one of the challenges of that particular group.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

And let me clarify something. Based on what my friend from Chicago said to me. They were focusing on illiteracy and I do applaud what we have done in the library. As some of you know, I volunteered with the Renaissance Village library that we had in Baker. And I put down Saturdays and enjoyed it quite a bit. And I recalled this kid in junior high who came to me and I was trying to help him with an assignment which he was doing on Martin Luther King just coincidentally. And he was afraid that he would use too much paper. He came to me and said, "Well, I don't know if I can print all of this." That brought tears to my eyes because he's part of that at-risk population who think that they don't deserve what other people come to take for granted because that's too much, because they haven't been getting anything. So, yes I applaud what we're doing for literacy and I think that can apply to our homeless at-risk population.

**Lydia Acosta**

Cities like New York and Chicago have been dealing with immigrant populations which we perhaps don't see so much here. But for those who do not have a permanent address, they encourage these immigrants to come and they find creative ways to register them as library patrons even though they may not own or rent an apartment. And they find that while they take a risk to check out books to people whose income may be non-existent and home life as well, that they get those books back because people who need those services appreciate what they're getting. And, so they tend to return them and come back and get more. And, of course as they do so they're improving their own ability and they're learning. So I don't think we need to fear you know a population that really demands and needs our services. I think that we can be creative even though we're a government agency and we, as Mrs. Lovett will say, we are responsible to the auditors, and we have to explain to the auditors where all these resources are going. I think we also have a role to play here.

**Dan Reed**

One of the things now I'll ask you to comment on. The comfortable thing about pay-as-you-go to me is when you have the money and then you need to build the library you don't have to do a lot of predicting of the future, you know. You say you're going to build this library, we're going

to get a contractor, you get an architect pretty quick, we're going to sign the contract and we're going to know where we want it pretty fast. When we go to something where we like we are with this project, we're talking about plans that are going to be way out in the future. As Brace was saying, any time you do a development you're talking about risk. And so we're trying to say in some respects is it going to be a better situation to put the library in this location for twenty years from now or is it going to be a better place to put the library for twenty years from now in this other location. That's really harder to do than the way we've done it in the past. And that's kind of adapting is what I'm hearing you say. We've got to figure out how to predict the future. (poor audio quality)

**John Schneider**

One of the things we were doing in the study is we were trying to focus on the enterprise plan that had been presented before. The exact question that you brought up is where the Board is right now. I think what the report shows is that there's no way that work can go like the past plan. Now that does not mean eliminating various projects. It just means the economics just don't work. What the Board needs to do right now in my view is say are we still going to pursue four libraries which are essentially the Perkins/Burbank, the central library, a remodeling of either Goodwood, or downtown and the eastern branch. And once you decide what the scope of the project is, then it's a matter of saying how much it's going to cost. And then figuring out where the funding difference is going to come from. And at that point in time, you can really get into the issue of particularly in the central library, downtown or Goodwood. Because there are preliminary questions that just have to be answered before especially on the major issue that everybody would like to hear, are we going to do downtown or Goodwood. That's a question that's going to be answered by itself in my view when you answer all the other questions. Because like Stephen was leading to the point that economically there's about a three to five million dollar difference between building the library downtown or at Goodwood. That's the cost of the land. But yet the gap regardless of whether you build it at Goodwood or downtown could be anywhere from fifteen to twenty million. So you're going to have to figure out how to solve the overall gap. If one of the sites solves that and the other one doesn't, that's the Board's decision there on which way to go.

**Stephen Moret**

(poor audio quality-could not hear question)

**John Schneider**

Just on the central library.

**Georgia Brown**

Additionally to acquire going with the scenario of downtown, of acquiring property, that's the cost of the property plus the demolition.

**Lydia Acosta**

If there's something on the site. (poor audio quality)

**John Schneider**

That's why it was three to five million. Right now land downtown is ranging in the fifty dollars

to, let's say one hundred dollars. You get to the riverfront you're pretty much what you want to ask for. It's really not for sale. As you move back from Lafayette Street all the way to the interstate, at the interstate you may be at thirty dollars a square foot. At the river you may be at one hundred and twenty dollars. It increases ten dollars per block. So you figure if you need 50,000 square feet, you multiple anywhere from sixty to seventy-five to eighty and that's where you get a cost factor at three to five million.

**Lydia Acosta**

You asked about demolition. When we first started to talk about downtown, and someone proposed the idea of going to the post office, I asked Steve Jackson to help me identify what it would cost to demolish the building downtown. And I think Steve, correct me if I'm wrong, I think it was somewhere in the neighborhood of about a half a million dollars with the demolition, the clean-up, the carting away. And then we asked the City, didn't we, Brenda, to tell us how much it would cost to demolish the Goodwood Library. Remember?

**Brenda Lovett**

Yes, we did.

**Lydia Acosta**

The City has a contract with someone to do that. And the costs were not nearly as great as I expected. Do you remember the number? (asking Brenda Lovett)

**Brenda Lovett**

No, I don't.

**Lydia Acosta**

I can't remember the number. But I was surprised that it wasn't more than it was. And I know when we were looking at the Eden Park, you know we're interested in the Toxie Craft property it would probably cost us something around eighteen thousand dollars to demolish the little house, and the concrete and haul it away. So the cost of demolition is a factor, but it isn't the largest factor of any project whether it be at Goodwood or downtown.

**Stephen Moret**

John, could you expand on the cost gap, the total gap? (poor audio quality)

**John Schneider**

I think within the report what we did on page 42 is using the variables that were presented, we came up with variable timelines. The first column shows that pre-Katrina based upon the factors that the accounting department had and using the timeline 2009 to 2016 it was estimated that the cost of construction for all four projects pre-Katrina came to about \$76,000,000. This did not include the cost of operations, this was just construction. What we did then was set up four different timelines. We took the most ambitious timeline going back to extending it from there and showing what the cost factors. Our feeling that post-Katrina based on all the cost factors on the most ambitious timeline that was taken that there would be about a \$20,000,000 cost difference between pre-Katrina and post-Katrina. And as you extend it out and if you use a factor of construction costs increasing on a similar trend that construction costs have increased

over the last ten years for the Library, is that if you wait until 2011 to start construction of a central library and do your major things later, your construction costs could get up close to \$120,000,000. And so as was mentioned earlier, we added from there the operating costs of opening in the specific years and if you flip the page over to page 44 what you look at is that there was a projected, and this was not the cost of the land, as was mentioned that pre-Katrina the Board had based upon the information it had was projecting a deficit of between \$5,000,000 and \$15,000,000. What was not included in here just building the project, opening the building in 2009, 2013. These are the numbers that came from the proforma that used pre-Katrina.

**Stephen Moret**

This was based on today through 2016?

**John Schneider**

Yes, showing that the south branch

**Stephen Moret**

(poor audio quality-could not hear question)

**John Schneider**

No, it's a cumulative thing. What the Board said at the tax renewal election, was that built into the projection they recognize that if they got the renewal based on the way it was before the rollback, that they have built into the Capital Improvement Program a deficit that ranged anywhere from \$5,000,000 to \$15,000,000. And there would be a need for a public fund raising campaign. This was prior to October of 2005. After Katrina hit and everything else is what we went back in and looked at it. Then essentially using the same time frame

**Dan Reed**

Which is the last column, D?

**John Schneider**

Yes, what happened was that within the proformas put together pre-Katrina, it used a static construction cost price. The construction cost price would be pretty much the same.

**Stephen Moret**

The range of construction costs (poor audio quality-could not hear question) So we have an operating deficit.

**John Schneider**

Yes, and that's why our feeling was

**Stephen Moret**

(poor audio quality-could not hear question)

**John Schneider**

Just on the downtown. Then you added the operational cost

**Stephen Moret**

(poor audio quality-could not hear question)

**John Schneider**

Yes, I was just using a more aggressive construction timeline. That's why the general feeling is that if we assume construction is going to continue to rise, is that right now if the Board sticks with its existing plan, the size of the deficit could be anywhere from \$25,000,000 to \$40,000,000 depending upon the time frame.

**Stephen Moret**

Have you talked to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation? (poor audio quality-could not hear question)

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

The situation is that we never inquired as to an overall plan. There had been some suggestion early on that a community fund raising effort should be undertaken. So we did not try to focus on will you give some money to build here as opposed to will you give some money to build there. A community fund raising campaign-how much will it have to raise under the various scenarios? (poor audio quality)

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Let me just say, this unscientific data, a few people who have come to me as I've been out and about in the public, and talked about donations, they all have related to downtown. I haven't heard one person, I know one person who will give, and this isn't to say that they won't, but they just haven't told me that. I don't talk to a whole lot of people who have money. I don't know a whole lot of people who have money, but those that have approached me to the person, it has been I know people who will donate to downtown. And I don't know, well, they didn't say they didn't know anybody who would donate to Goodwood, they just didn't talk about Goodwood. So that's one reason why I like the idea of having people go out who want to come back with the information. They may know people who will donate to the Goodwood, they may know people who will donate to downtown. They may know somebody who will donate to whatever that I certainly wouldn't even know existed.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Those are the things that we need to clarify when we talk about the cost, and we talk about the cost downtown and about the cost per square foot in mid-city and so forth is to make it clear because we don't want to leave the impression that you can make that decision in a vacuum. And say, we'll go so far from downtown into the forty dollars per square foot area because it doesn't exist. I think we have given you what exists. It simply does not exist. So we shouldn't accept this report with a suggestion that x decision could be made based on the report and we'll shoot for the \$35,000 area because it doesn't exist.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

What the report does say to us is if we accelerate the construction we're going to save money. However, with operation that is accelerated, but it's not as much as if we delay the construction. Is that right?

**John Schneider**

Although the operational costs net will be higher under a more aggressive plan, if construction rates continue to climb, that increase in operational cost accelerated will be less than what the total construction costs are.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

One thing about construction costs right now and I can almost be sworn and testify. There are people who have signed deals right now for whom the contractors and their subs are saying if we do not adhere to the timelines because the new costs are already in. We ran the old costs, but the new costs are already in and if for some reason we're not kicking by x date, we're (poor audio quality) giving you new costs. So it's already moving. John prefaces his statement by saying should those trends continue, you can almost erase that and say as those trends continue.

**Dan Reed**

If we go back to page 44, I hate to sound like \$9,000,000 isn't a lot of money. Nine million dollars is a lot of money. But there isn't a lot of difference between the net costs that you're going to lose by keeping the timeline where it is versus the accelerated timeline. In other words, no matter what you do with the timeline, you're still \$40,000,000 short. The difference between 40,000,000 and \$49,000,000. (poor audio quality) The timeline is not the big issue.

**Lydia Acosta**

Isn't that the worst case scenario?

**John Schneider**

What it deals with, Dan, is the fact is the community desire like right now Goodwood in the ideal world it would have been expanded, rebuilt, or whatever three years ago or five years ago. (poor audio quality) In the acceleration I don't know that it's the monetary savings. I think it's how long can we wait until Goodwood either is made into a super-regional or a central library. It is drastically needed. That more than anything else is from our standpoint what the accelerated point that we wanted to be made. Yes, there is dollar savings, but it also meets what I consider to be the public demand for a new facility.

**Lydia Acosta**

That's right. We raised this issue in the fall of 2004 and it's been a topic of conversation, for better or for worse, in this community since then. To push it so far into the future when the interest of the people whether they build it here or they build it there. People are waiting for us to achieve our goal. I think we have a responsibility to move as quickly as we possibly can. In the long run we save \$9,000,000, and that's great. But I really think we need to do something. And the other side you have your philanthropic community, I mean how long will we be able to captivate their interest in our project if we just keep it dangling out there?

**Georgia Brown**

Well, this workshop has brought to the forefront a pressing problem that has to be addressed. And that now we realize that we are broke; we are under funded. We don't have any money. So now my question to the Board is, and I appointed Dan to chair the committee, is to what charge would you like to give to him to proceed from here, so that all the discussion that you had today,

can bear some fruit?

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Well, I would like to see us give him some idea about the size of the library. You know what it is we want. I would rather see if we're talking about whether to put size in the branches or size in the Main Library. I'd rather see that the size increase in the Main Library than in the branches, and I'm only talking about two branches.

**Lydia Acosta**

We can get the data together probably in a week because we've gotten a lot of the data already. But we can put the various scenarios together, on the size of the facilities, as regards population projections.

**Brenda Lovett**

We've got E-rate.

**Lydia Acosta**

We have the opportunity to bring in a half a million dollars from our E-rate application to the federal government. So we can't lose that. So we probably need two weeks to work on the specifics.

**Dan Reed**

We actually are probably talking about probably three branches, right, because the Main Library has to go somewhere. If it goes somewhere close to downtown, then we're talking about building a new library at Goodwood potentially.

**Lydia Acosta**

Or renovating that facility.

**Dan Reed**

If it goes close to Goodwood or is at Goodwood, then we're talking potentially about doing something about downtown.

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes, renovating that facility and we have two branches there. We're talking about reaching the desired best practice square footage numbers. At a half a million or 550,000 we have to look at the branches that we're considering building and what size they should be, and then determine the size of the main or central library which would mean that we would have to add square footage to that facility to bring it back up to where we once began and planned. Or add another building to the mix, say for example, if the decision of the Board is to move on Perkins, a 15 or 20,000 square foot building, then perhaps in the subsequent ten year tax period plan a building that would be that size on Burbank. So those are the issues. You either add more buildings, make the buildings that you're going to have on the drawing board larger, or put all the growth into the central facility. We could allow for all these rooms that we're talking about that we would need for all these other functions.

**Georgia Brown**

Any clarifications? Just for me personally, but didn't we say earlier about the Perkins Library that we were interested in going forth with that because the funds were allocated there and we must let Mr. Spinosa know something?

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes.

**Georgia Brown**

So that I think is a decision that we made earlier I believe, am I right?

**Lydia Acosta**

Sure. But the ultimate size of that building has not been

**Georgia Brown**

But that is what we planned to do and let him know something there. So we are concerned about the other three, what we need to move forward, the eastern section of the City, and the Burbank section, and the central.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

And, Madam President, as I have stated in the past, I'm concerned about the size of branches because we did struggle to get Eden Park up to a certain size, and that was not easy to get the amount of square feet in that library building. And we finally got there. So I would certainly not like to see us exceed the size there for the other branches. You know the other branches. I'm not speaking of a regional wherever that regional goes. I'm speaking just of the branches. I'm talking about being comparable. I'm talking about equity as we address the citizens who reside in various parts of our parish.

**Lydia Acosta**

Mr. Godfrey has a question.

**Georgia Brown**

Yes, sir.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

I guess one thing we would continue to urge as he goes into that room that table that you will assemble for him (poor audio quality) to keep in mind page 34. I was at your ceremony at the new Carver Branch a couple of years ago. And I was absolutely stunned, Mrs. Brown, I don't know if you saw it or not, but walking into that building directly across the street from it is a little, a miniature BREC park with all kinds of toys, and swings and everything. And we just went there at a time of day when there was not a single child in that park. And there was not a space to be had in that library, not a chair, not a computer, to be had by another child if one had walked in the door. And the reason that existed is because of what we put in it. In other words it was because you answered the question of what you wanted it to be. Those kids, if what they were looking for was not in the Library, they would have been across the street. And that's a question we need to keep insisting on. And I understand that in some form or fashion everything

on page 34 is being addressed by the current system. I do understand that. But it would be a very worthwhile exercise, we believe, to really take page 34 and send yourself through it point by point by point, and make very solid decisions on those because if you were to, for example, engage us again, and say here's our analysis as a result of page 34. We could take that and tell you what you want. We're not trying to be super smart people, but we facilitate groups all the time. We can tell you what's in your head just by the answers to the questions on page 34. Just give me the answers and let me tell you what you want to do. That's a classic technique. That would be a big piece in solving your puzzle.

**John Schneider**

If I may say something. Having gone through the period of the study, I don't envy Dan because I know all the issues that are there.

**Dan Reed**

You might be on the committee. (Laughter from the Board).

**John Schneider**

I'm just trying to be realistic that the first thing that needs to be done is what the central library needs to be and that information comes from three sources. One, you need to have public input as to what they feel. Those answers on page 34 should be it. Number two, you need the staff's input. A lot of that had been done two years before and that's based upon what they're seeing. There's a third source, there are library consultants or architects that are on the cutting edge of what's being done in central libraries across the country. My feeling is appointing Dan is looking at a 90-day period, February, March, April where information comes in from these three sources, from the public, from the library staff, and from people who deal with new libraries every day. And my feeling at the end of that ninety days is that we now have a good idea what the central library needs to be. And over the next whether it's 30, 60 or 90 days, based upon what it's going to be, how big does it need to be. And then that tells you the size, and using the construction formulas, it can tell you the cost. And then the next phase is that there's that 30, 60 or 90 days to figure out the funding sources to get it. I really think realistically the Board is not going to be in a position to make a decision on the site location for the library until later in this year once it goes through the three phases of what should it be, what should the size be, and where the money is going to come from. I just urge the Board to either challenge what I'm saying or I think the most important thing is to take this barrel in the media over pro-downtown, or pro-Goodwood out of the paper and just realize that there's a vehicle that we're going to reach this conclusion. But it's going to be x months down the road. Because if people leave here today thinking that at the February Board meeting this is when the Board is going to decide, I think realistically you have to figure out what your process is to get to that conclusion. And that's just a suggestion for you.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

A suggestion that I made and that I shared with you is that we should answer all of the questions on pages 33 through 35, and 38 through 39. I don't mean here at this meeting. That needs to be done.

**Dan Reed**

I guess I'm going to differ with John a little bit. I think we've answered a lot of those questions. What we're trying to avoid doing is dealing with is page 44 which is where your money is. We're trying to avoid dealing with that issue because that's a tough issue. To me the idea of essentially borrowing money which is what we're going to be doing, so that we can build forty million dollars more library than we thought we were going to be able to build, doesn't make a lot of sense. And despite the public's desire and my desire to build what we want to build tomorrow, the taxes are not going to bring in the money tomorrow. It doesn't bring in all the money until ten years from now. When I look at the difference between the deficits my guess would be that the margin for error is that big. That when we're talking about forty million dollars on the speeded up timeline versus the forty-nine million dollars under the original timeline, we're not talking about a lot of difference. The margin for error in the numbers is probably that high. So my question becomes if we're talking about building under the tax proposal we set out there, we would be talking about hiring an architect for the central library in 2010. And the question is why are we going to do that in 2007 in a situation where we really don't have the money. That's the question the Board needs to answer. Is that what we want to do? Do we want to go down this path or do we want to stay with the idea that we have taxes that we pay-as-we-go and when we have the money to build the library we committed to the people to build, we'll build it? When we do that we'll pick a spot for it. It's smarter it seems to me to pick a spot for it three years from now when we know a lot more about the future than we do today.

**Lydia Acosta**

I'd like to respond to the issue of the architect. Granted we know that there's a 39 to 48 million dollar difference. Having an architect work and give us a schematic of a projected library that we would build in mid-city or downtown will allow us to show that and develop fund raising supporters that can help us achieve that goal sooner. And so I don't think that that idea should be dismissed out of hand because we don't have \$40,000,000 sitting around. And I'm really uncomfortable if we're going to say after all is said and done, we're going to go back to pay-as-you-go without pursuing all these other financial alternatives that we just learned a little more about today. Because we need these facilities now. And we cannot stay in the park indefinitely. BREC is expecting some answer from this group about our future plans. They're not looking for an answer three years from now. They need it this year. In all of our earnestness we thought we would have the results of this study early fall and we would be able to make some decisions so that we could get back to them early this year to tell them what it is that we're planning to do. So, if we're suggesting that we're going to wait around for three years I don't think that's going to serve BREC's needs. So that's a pressing issue as well.

**Dan Reed**

I know we'd like to do it faster, and perhaps these funding sources will do that. I know when we talked about the tax election, we were looking at making up a shortfall of five to fifteen million, I think that's a shortfall we can make up. But forty million is going to take some doing. I'm happy to chair the committee, and we'll hear what. I think the request for proposals is the only option we have with a forty million dollar short fall. It's to go out there and say, has anybody got an idea of how we can make up this forty million dollar shortfall? Because that's the problem. And then we know that and then we say if you have an idea if you put the library on

The corner of, I'll pick a spot, Siegen and Airline and you go do it and save us \$40,000,000 then we have to make that decision.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Dan, I largely agree with you except for the point on page 34 and I say that on the basis of observing you as a Board, and this is not to be critical. But I think the people in the audience see the same thing. When you say you've answered the questions on page 34 we've talked about them a lot. I look at you nodding and I see some general agreement, but we have never seen you decide as a Board. Because if you did that, went through this exercise, and continued with the profile that we gave you, people like us, I'll say this and get out of your business, because it's not for us to decide. You decide. People like us who look at those results, it paints us a picture. Right now I don't know, yes we want to help you do that, we ought to help the homeless, but the Board has not decided, you all have not decided. And so some decisions have to be made to get to where you want to go, and that would be a good starting place because the community would then have a solid idea. This is the vision that our Board has to what the new library is going to be. And it's defined in this box because they made that decision. Right now I see some general that's a good idea from you. But I don't see decisions.

**Dan Reed**

I could make it a motion, but I don't think an answer yes to that question. Every one of those questions if we need to make a motion and second it, we can do that.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

No, I'm sorry. (Laughter from the Board)

**Dan Reed**

Should the Library be a safe and engaging place for teens? Yes. I mean how hard is that to answer? Sure.

**Lydia Acosta**

But you know there are central libraries where they fully staff and equip. (change audio tape) A teen center will go a long way in achieving some of the educational and cultural goals that we have for that teen population. Mary Stein who's devoted many years of her life to that population will say yes, yes.

**Mary Stein**

Sound proof.

**Lydia Acosta**

And we'll tell you how. We've got ideas and they're ready to go. We just don't have a place to put them. We've got teen centers in every new branch and I mean little. And the teens love to go to their little corner and have their special chairs that we bought. They were kind of funky. Special resources and we have teen councils in each building where they help plan the activities and help generate other teens in coming to the library. And in this packet there's a beautiful article about what is going on in Zachary.

**Mary Stein**

No, that was in *The Advocate*.

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes, I know.

**Mary Stein**

They went out and shot the teens at the Zachary Library.

**Lydia Acosta**

The Zachary Library because of what we're doing there with teens. So we just want to do more.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

I understand that, but unfortunately when you say literacy, Mrs. Brown, the way we are measured as an area which hurt us so badly is how our kids perform. And that's kind of a different question. Do you think we can do something about that? That's a little bit different from just having a place where they'll go. Are you willing to actually challenge yourself and say we can become a resource that helps us as a community with that? Because when you say literacy, we're being judged by how well our kids do, like it or not. And right now they're not doing very well. But I'm not saying you ought to do that, but if you thought that was something a challenge our community faces and you could help with, then it takes a little more fashioning of what it is you do. Because teens are attracted to a lot of things. There are a lot of I Pods on the table. But is that helping them to answer the challenge? That's our only point. When you answer these questions on page 34 drawing kids and having them there is good, but that's not the question we believe needs to be answered. The question we believe needs to be answered is do you believe that you can be a part of the solution to the challenge. If the answer is yes, then you've really got an answer then because it's simply not being in a place where teens like to come. It's all of a sudden about what they do there.

**Lydia Acosta**

Well, it's the programmatic that goes hand in glove with the physical space. There's no question about that.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Along with the physical space. See you just helped him in that commitment. That answer is yes, but it has to go hand in glove with the physical space. That begins to get to decision making.

**Lydia Acosta**

That's why we put a little bit of money in the budget for homework help for some of our new branches because we felt that school age children needed special homework help staffing to assist them. And so we're going to try that out to see how we can do that.

**Dan Reed**

But I don't see how these questions help us. To me the answers to these questions were addressed before we ever asked the people for the money to build a new main library. We said to the people we want to improve our libraries; we want to make them a safe and engaging place

for teens; we want to develop programs and collections for both children and older adults; we want to be positioned to solve one of today's pressing problems. And that's why we want to build a main library. And so to me those questions I don't want to make it a part of the job that I'm going to chair a group to find out whether we need a main library or not. I think that when you answer these questions what you're saying is we need a system that responds to the library needs of the community. Well, we've got that. We know that. That's what we're trying to do. It seems to me we've got to answer some more specific questions than these if we're going to make a plan for what the Board is going to do.

**John Schneider**

Let me try from this standpoint. In doing the study one of the reports that I read how it was determined in the beginning that there was a need for a central library to be 200,000 square feet. And I may be just summarizing the pattern, but from what I understand an architectural firm was retained, met with each of the Department Heads and asked them to describe their section, how many square feet they needed and then it was all totaled up.

**Lydia Acosta**

For programs as well as space.

**John Schneider**

For programs it said 200,000 square feet. That was 2004? (Question to Lydia Acosta). Mrs. Brown threw out something earlier that we're in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and we're building a library that's going to last for the next twenty-five to thirty years. The important thing is that you don't want it to be obsolete on the day that it opens. So the question comes back and it was just thrown out, what if the central library would be a total electronic library.

**Member of the Audience**

That's not a new idea.

**John Schneider**

No, I'm not saying it's a new idea. But this is what we're getting back to is what is the central library? Is it going to have 600,000 books or 800,000 books? What exactly is it going to be? Or is it going to be more electronically oriented with more meeting spaces addressing something from there? That's what we're talking about. What's the central library truly going to be?

**Lydia Acosta**

They're not mutually exclusive, John. Having books and having electronics because having electronics once you have the computers there it is the databases that you provide for the users that whether it be accessed from within the building or the home computer, is what makes it more and more electronic. Our demand for best seller fiction, best seller non-fiction, audio books, video cassettes, DVDs, instructional programming to learn a foreign language are changing. People need that and so you still need physical space.

**John Schneider**

And I agree. Is it 60% book space, 30% meeting rooms and 10% electronic computer space? The Board has never said we're going to build a 150 or 200,000 square foot library and it's going

to have 40% of it is going to house books, 30% is going to house this or that. That's what we're talking about.

**Lydia Acosta**

It's all there in the building program.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

And what you just said now is going to change. Let me give an example. I teach a class at LSU Law School. This year when they sent me my book list where we have to say what do you want the kids to buy, I sent it back with a big x across the page. I don't want them to buy anything and the reason is last Thursday night I began a lecture about the Magna Charta and its relationship to our Constitution. Before I could get the words Magna Charta out, every student had the Magna Charta on their computer screen as I was talking. That's just going to keep happening.

**Lydia Acosta**

Absolutely.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

And so that's why, and we're going to get out of your business, that's why we're saying that you all are going to have to get inside of your heads because we hear you say it. But like you keep saying, "We've answered all those questions on page 34." You have in a certain kind of way. But we're saying is that if you do that exercise and hand it to somebody, for instance, Dan you just said, "Of course, we want our library to be a source of answers to the serious cultural challenges." Which one? If you tell us which one, then we'll say how. And those detailed interviews you're looking for is how that process is going to have to go. But to simply say yes to that doesn't end that process.

**Georgia Brown**

Your question lends itself to yes or no. You did not say it was yes and explain.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

No, because we want to take you a step farther.

**Georgia Brown**

But you see if I just have this, and you ask me this question, and I say yes and you mark me. You cannot mark me incorrect because

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

It's not incorrect.

**Georgia Brown**

You see so you had to say give me an example or explain to me how you plan to achieve this.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

No, you said literacy is and that was probably an unfair example. But you did say literacy as one

of those challenges. But it does then require because that's a broad thing, I mentioned how it's measured how people look at us.

**Georgia Brown**

You want to know how it's going to be carried out.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

No, I don't want to know. I want you to determine how it's going to be carried out.

**Georgia Brown**

No, you said to answer these questions, and give them back to you and then you'll get a clear picture of

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

I meant collectively.

**Georgia Brown**

I take literally what people say.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

I was viewing my position in the community, not as Cyntreniks.

**Lydia Acosta**

I'd like to remind you that these are visions that the Board has for the Library system as a whole. It's the responsibility of the staff to answer the how and why and when and how much it is going to cost. And each year we need to address these, and more specifically, in a facility that we would like to have in the future.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

Where is the facility going to be? (Laughter)

**Lydia Acosta**

I'm not worried about the where. I'm worried about the

**Georgia Brown**

We have a (poor audio quality)

**Lydia Acosta**

We have the percentages of staff (poor audio quality) But the issue is yes, we have programmatic means in which to try and achieve these. We're not going to take all the ills of society in East Baton Rouge Parish and heap them on our shoulders. We are not a social service agency. We are a library that has educational, cultural, recreational missions.

**Georgia Brown**

Okay, well, I think Dan is pretty clear on his assignment. (Laughter) So you meet with the members of your committee. I had promised the audience twenty minutes to express their

impression of what they heard and so

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Will you let me respond to the attorneys? First of all, what I would like you to feel, I can't determine what you're going to feel, but I would like you to feel that you're not getting into our business of the Board. This is our business and yours. (motioning to include everyone) So you are entitled to say whatever. Okay, and then one of the places on your survey, where I have a why and a how after it is, "Are our libraries to play a unique and powerful role of community building by serving as a bridge to bring together different types of people who may not share experiences with each other otherwise?" And so after that I said, Dot, why question mark, how question mark. I went through this (holding up report) with a magnifying glass.

**Brace Godfrey, Jr.**

I understand. That's a significant one.

**Stephen Moret**

May I make some comments?

**Georgia Brown**

Yes, go right ahead.

**Stephen Moret**

First of all, a minor point. Madam Chair, I think you said earlier that we're broke. I don't think that's actually the case. (poor audio quality) (Laughter)

**Dan Reed**

We have \$35,000,000 in the bank.

**Georgia Brown**

No, we're not broke, but in comparison to what we need to clear out all these projects we need help. Yes, we do have some money, but we don't have nearly what we need to start on these projects.

**Stephen Moret**

The bulk of the financial challenge of the Library system is the results of the construction costs post-Katrina. So I think that's what's different today. My thought on all this is that we ultimately need to find a solution that meets the needs of the total community, one that balances all the interests and desires that are out there. And I think we can reach a decision with a consensus of our whole Board. I think to get there we need to answer a number of questions. And one of them is can we at least clarify or revalidate what the concept is for the central library or whatever we're going to call it. Most of the work has already been done. So how big is it going to be? What's the funding strategy going to be? And I think those are the questions that we'll pursue. I think on the timing of that I guess I'm in between Dan and John. I think we're talking about probably six months altogether, hopefully sooner, but I think we want to make sure we're talking about establishing a spending plan for maybe \$50,000,000 that will establish the

future of this Library system for the next twenty-five to fifty years. And, as a result of that, I think it's worth a little bit of extra consideration. I guess I would see the Board, whatever the structure is, having a series of a few meetings in which we go through a series of questions based ultimately where we arrive at a few options. The issue right now is there are a lot of questions, and we really don't have a total Option A, a total Option B, which includes concept, location, and strategy. And ultimately, that's what we need to get to. To have a few options to choose from and then incorporate all these different elements into it. In terms of one problem with the funding gap, I believe that there is a critical mass, or at least, that there could be a critical mass of philanthropic interest in the Library system. And when I'm talking about that, I'm not talking about small contributions, although, obviously, those would be welcomed, but it would make a lot of sense for us as a Board to create an opportunity for philanthropists in our community who care about education and libraries to be able to contribute and get some level of recognition for that. I'm not talking about public/private partnerships. I'm simply talking about the community making contributions to the Library system in recognition of that. I believe that with the right concepts that the amount of money would be potentially at least ten million, maybe twenty million total. I think most of the interest, most of the big dollar amounts would be in the main or central, whatever you want to call it; probably some substantial interest in the others as well. But the potential philanthropic piece in this could be a major part of the solution, in a way to be able to deliver the aspirations of this Board for the community without asking the community to pay any more taxes than they have already committed to the Library Board. Some of the things that I'm hoping we will look at; one is a look at public/private partnerships in other places and what they achieved, what kind of policies they have in terms of naming rights. In public/private partnerships I think it's something worth exploring, but I don't see it as necessarily part of the solution. I think it's something that might be worthwhile, but I would stop just short of saying let's put out an RFP on that. I think there are a few things we can figure out before we get to that point to clarify our position to decide if that's something we want to do. But looking at public/private partnerships of other libraries around the country with our size, would be very worthwhile. I think on the financing strategies we need to really understand a little better New Market Tax Credits. If it really works like it sounds like it works, it's almost like a no-brainer at least for the depressed areas. Something I don't believe the City-Parish will be willing to guarantee a bond that goes beyond the term of our tax. There's just one person's speculation on that. They're trying to run things very conservatively and that's would be a challenge. On location there's a lot of debate in e-mails, and letters about security and parking. I believe that this Board will only accept options in which all those questions are addressed. I think anyone here should feel confident of that unless my Board members disagree with me. Whatever answers we come up with, they will be secured and safe, well lit, and there will be ample parking. Consideration will be given to disabled and elderly folks. Those debates really aren't needed. All points will come down to what is the concept, what's the overall price tag and how are we going to finance it. Of course, I think the last question, a research question, we do need to pay a little bit of attention to is the evolving role of libraries. We really ought to ask ourselves the question in the year 2050 or at least 2025 libraries built then, what will the role, what will they be then? Let's make sure the decisions we make this year will be compatible with that. I'm the newest person on the Board. And I can say I'm very impressed with the other members of the Board, and with the staff, and their thoughtfulness and commitment in trying to find a good answer for this community. I really I believe that we will get to that answer, I believe ultimately we will get to that answer, and it will be an answer the community will embrace. We have a lot

of work ahead of us. But I do believe that we can finish this year with in my mind in terms of roughly six months give or take to have final answers to all that. Having said that, with the fund raising as part of it, we may pursue an option where we say assuming we get x amount of private donations, assuming we can get New Market Tax Credits, we'll need to decide on a decision that says we're going down this path and we'll keep going down that path as long as we'll be able to get the private dollars, the tax credits, etc. So we've got a lot of work to do, but I think we're going to get to a good place. I found today was a very useful exercise for me.

**Georgia Brown**

Thank you. We have twenty minutes.

**Tom DuBos**

May I be recognized?

**Georgia Brown**

You're recognized.

**Tom DuBos**

I have a suggestion to add to Mr. Reed's committee's work. I hope that you would develop an option and not just looking at page 34, but clearly looking at pages 44 and 42. It starts with the novel idea of this is how much money we have, what is it we can do, knowing what we would like to have, and on that basis then it might answer the question of where. It seems to me abundantly clear we cannot do four projects. I think if you look at three, it means we eliminate the downtown site and we have the requirement of less than what we actually have now. So then perhaps the redoing of Goodwood could be augmented. If that's the case, with residual funds we could improve the existing River Center Branch and we'll have solved the problem. Three structures instead of four. I'd like to see that worked out.

**Georgia Brown**

Yes.

**John Berry**

I'd like to suggest to the committee which looks like it was just formed on the fly today, I haven't heard, but who's going to be on this committee?

**Dan Reed**

I haven't either.

**John Berry**

I would suggest that you take a member of the public from each side of the location issue. That's obviously one of the major considerations here. That's why a lot of us are here today. Location. So that's my suggestion on that. I still have some other comments if I may. Also it looks like on the fly today, you suggested RFPs go out for proposals for a library and going to take the libraries from the Cyntreniks report. Mrs. Brown said this. I would suggest a move that does not include location. A location that does not include downtown specifically and not including any other specific and what you said .

**Georgia Brown**

May I say what I said? I did not say take that from the Cyntreniks report. I said no matter where location was not an issue. What I said was proposals from how we could fund this project. I did not mention the report.

**John Berry**

Well, I'm sorry. That's what I heard and wrote down.

**Georgia Brown**

Thank you.

**John Berry**

One other thing you suggested is a possible Goodwood/Independence site after that which Mrs. Acosta took issue with. And, so I'm glad that you're considering a Goodwood/Independence site as main, central, headquarters site whichever you today choose to call it. Lydia also said that she was trying to stay to the one square foot per population in the parish which was 550 K in the parish. That's fine, but what you're leaving out of that statistic is where do you put it? Where are these residents? And that's our beef. We're not going to take issue with 550,000 people means you want 550,000 square footage of library sites in the parish. But we want that to be centrally located. Not just because you have to have that many. Is that going to be an excuse to put it downtown? Okay.

**Lydia Acosta**

The formula for best practices is a total square footage of libraries in a governmental agency like a parish or a county and that distribution is by building, and those branches and those libraries are established according to the criteria established by the people. It doesn't presume putting 250,000 square feet downtown nor does it presume putting it in Goodwood. It just speaks to the total number of square feet. And I didn't take issue with Mrs. Brown. What I did say was I'd like us to work out the alternatives that have been outlined in the program before we take on yet another alternative of modifying and perhaps having a totally electronic branch, as opposed to having a central library that would be a balance of electronics and books.

**John Berry**

My further comment is about the JTS site being considered on Perkins Road. This is to the detriment apparently of the Burbank site. The Burbank site is being donated. It has been offered for a long time now, and apparently the Board is ignoring that offered donation. You're trying to work very hard with JTS Spinosa it appears, and he is trying very hard to get his site through which the problem is going to be getting it through the zoning commission for multi-use. We have not heard and probably not heard that I know of this letter that you mentioned that has come in from Spinosa as of October. We'd like to see that come to light. I'd like to re-enforce the letter that was sent to the Board by three association leaders from Southside, Woodridge, [sic], Woodchase, and Pollard that surround that property stating their opposition due to traffic, drainage, changing of zoning, etc. and you mentioned that. Some of you were wondering if they changed their minds. Nobody has changed their minds. So I would urge you to reconsider why not Burbank. Burbank is growing fast. I go through that area every week. Traffic is high, buildings are going up everywhere. There's no reason why in terms of population you shouldn't

not consider Burbank for a new library in that area if you're going to consider building one. Someone mentioned that, I believe Lydia, that BREC considers the parking garage a concern. From our discussion with Bill Palmer, Superintendent of BREC, that is not a concern. Lydia mentioned in a previous meeting that, no it was on the radio that BREC was not happy with a specter of a four story building at the park. In our conversation directly with Bill Palmer again, he said that a four story building would be in context with the buildings surrounding Independence Park already, including State Police just across Independence Boulevard, Florida Boulevard, Airport, Goodwood and around. So, if there is a need for a parking garage, I don't think you're going to find opposition from BREC.

**Georgia Brown**

May I ask a question?

**John Berry**

Yes, Ma'am.

**Georgia Brown**

Are you representing your entire group because I need to know whether anyone else needs to speak?

**John Berry**

I have one more comment.

**Georgia Brown**

Okay, thank you.

**John Berry**

Can I make one more comment?

**Georgia Brown**

Yes.

**John Berry**

I appreciate the time. You've all talked about bus service, homes, need for meeting rooms, theaters, all this stuff. There is no reason at all that all of this cannot be taken care of at any other location besides downtown. All of the stuff that you want to put into a brand new library, if you want a shark tank, coffee shop and a book shop and all this stuff that people have mentioned including books by the way, can be handled at the park as well as in downtown.

**Lydia Acosta**

We know that. Nobody is saying that.

**John Berry**

A lot of people don't know that or don't want to say that.

**Georgia Brown**

Well, thank you so much for your comments. Yes, sir.

**Bobby Burns**

I have a question. Am I to understand however you persuade it, leave the Main Library where it is in the Park with these entities who we know they're somebody in the way. We just have not seen them. Bring them out in the open. Get the School Board and the Mayor. Put one downtown and leave one at where it is. And I think ten years from today this tax will pass. Because if you all fumble the ball, you might not be in the Super Bowl. Thank you.

**Georgia Brown**

Thank you.

**Davis Rhorer**

(Standing up to speak.)

**Georgia Brown**

I hate to do this to you, but permit me to recognize the gentleman with his hand up back there. He had his hand up at the same time.

**Unidentified Gentleman**

I had a brief comment. Number one, I continue to be impressed by the work that you folks are doing, and by the very high quality of our library facilities. I would like to make one suggestion about communications with the public. It's very difficult to hear you in this type of a surrounding. We've got a beautiful School Board Office where they have their meetings and everyone has a microphone. And you can actually hear what's going on. I would suggest that maybe for the next meeting in the interest of cooperating between education and the Library when you want to communicate with the public, why don't you ask them if they'd let you use their facility?

**Georgia Brown**

Thank you. Good idea. (Applause from the audience)

**Dan Reed**

If I have to go on TV, I'm quitting. (Laughter)

**Davis Rhorer**

I'll be real brief. I just want to thank you so much for your service. This has been a difficult few months to go through. I think though the discussion today certainly with the Cyntreniks study identifying the shortfall, but also the Cyntreniks study identifies the solution about how you can go about. So what I heard today was a willingness by the Board to consider that and as Dan proceeds with his committee on that, to me that's very exciting. Because I think that proposes a response from us that could be very creative with a lot of partnerships coming together, using New Market Tax Credits, using things like that. I think Stephen Moret gave a great framework of questions for the committee to start with, to ask themselves. I think that will set you on that path and you'll move quickly within that six month time. And so again I thank you for your

service.

**Georgia Brown**

Thank you for your comments. Yes.

**Gayle Smith**

I have a request. We're constantly talking about what BREC has offered and the way he seems to know all the answers. I would like to request that Bill Palmer come to one of the meetings and make a presentation. He made a presentation to the Board in October, 2005, I think was the date. And we could all ask questions to him and all hear the answers, okay?

**John Rogers Smith**

I've talked to all of you about literacy before and I'm glad that that word was mentioned today. I'd like to take a shot at painting a vision for a future for Baton Rouge. I see Baton Rouge with a literate, educated workforce that attracts new employers, a Baton Rouge that public and private K through 12 education attracts young families, and a Baton Rouge Library system that substantially and measurably contributes to that future with programs that reach resources that help us become a community of life-long learners. First, I'm really pretty disappointed that I haven't heard very much, and other people have said this same thing that everybody keeps talking about. Some of you have this question to some degree. Some of you think you have this question answered. How do you know that library system is going to get us to that point? And then I heard some things that tell me that I feel are basically nonsense. And so, for example, when I hear that we need a big new Main Library to include a lot of small meeting rooms to do one-on-one adult literacy programs, I consider that nonsense. When I talk to the people in this community who are doing adult literacy programs, they tell me about going to the workplace, about making that contact absolutely convenient time efficient for the people who need the services. It doesn't have anything to do with the Main Library. When I hear you talk about what BREC will and won't do, as Gayle's just said, you haven't asked BREC what they will and won't do. I consider that nonsense. I hope that whatever this effort is that you have to engage the community in reaching consensus with the community, that, in fact, there will be community participation in it instead of either the community just sitting listening or community just spouting off as I'm doing right now and you listen. I think there really needs to be an engagement and it needs to include people. Some folks have already said the same thing, BREC, and real literacy advocates, and really have library staff who thought about these things that we can talk to instead of they're hidden somewhere. And educational leaders in the community. And when we're talking about downtown three quarters of the space downtown is public space. Why, and you've heard this story before, too, why don't we have some of the government entities that are your main perspective participants in a downtown library that don't use your downtown library now, engage in that conversation? And what would be convenient for them, for their customers? So with that said, I hope last thing, if you want to have community participation you've got to tell us it's going to happen and when and where and what we're going to talk about and what the format is instead of saying that, oh, if we put it on our website and we put it buried in the newspaper once or twice on the meeting notice's page, that that's giving good public notice. And, I particularly take offense when past meetings there hasn't even been anything posted in the Main Library. And, with that said, I think that's my lecture for the day. (applause by the audience)

**Bobby Burns**

Ya'll need to listen.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

We've done a lot of that for months and months and months, and we will continue to do just that.

**Georgia Brown**

Mr. Reed, I think has (poor audio quality) particularly formulated this committee. He has some members of the Board on this committee, but he'd like the opportunity I believe to ask other persons in person before just announcing the names. Am I right?

**Dan Reed**

I didn't know anything about this committee until today.

**Georgia Brown**

Til you got here. Just the point.

**Dan Reed**

What's your thoughts about this Stephen?

**Stephen Moret**

First, I don't know if the gentleman (referring to John Rogers Smith) is referring to me about engaging the public more, but actually I think the problem in my mind in just joining the Board, the conversation has been exactly the other way. The Board today in the last few hours the total conversation we've had as a Board on this topic is about ten times as much conversation as the Board has had on this topic in the last ten months. In fact, I think the conversation has been from the public to the Board predominantly ever since I've joined the Board. And I think while we continue to have and gain much value from public input, the reality is that at least ninety-five percent of the letters and e-mails from all sides of the issues in the last six months, we keep getting the same points, not a lot of new points being made about the sort of big issues. I think your points about literacy are well taken, how you work out the mechanics of that and what the right spaces of that are. If there's interest in engaging the library staff, I think the Board would welcome that. I don't think candidly that there's a lot of value in continuing to have people come back and say the same things over and over. Even today the Board has to come to grips with the question of, what is the main library going to be, where is it going to go, how big is it going to be, and how are we going to pay for it. The Board also will have to make that decision. I really don't think that in the last six months we have heard a lot of ideas that are different because it's a lot of the people making the same ideas over and over. And, again, it's very useful, but still not a lot of new information. I don't want you to think for a second that what I'm suggesting for our committee was an attempt to get more public engagement. We certainly welcome more public engagement, but the point of this committee is to focus on making some decisions on being able to afford these key questions. I think we continue to welcome public input, but I would think what is really needed here and is what is not clear in the public's eye, is the fact that the Board has not talked about this a lot. We've sat and listened for the last few months. It's been more of a one-way dialog to the Board. And the Board itself hasn't really

dialogued on some of these issues. I think we really need to grapple with some of these issues involved. On the committee I'll just say that my personal recommendations that the committee needs to be made up of interested Board members, welcome certainly presentations from the community, but ultimately the Board itself is going to have to have to make a decision. I think the committee should be made up of a subset or all of the Board involved who are interested. I thought that there would be value in potentially having the Chair of that Committee separate from the Chair of the Board itself simply because of all the demands on the Board's time. Just having a different Chairperson has value (poor audio quality) in picking on Dan, for example, to take on this task. So I just wanted to kind of let you know.

**Georgia Brown**

Katherine, do you have any comment?

**Katherine Auer**

No.

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Madam President, I think that if we get to the point of asking for proposals, then we could perhaps realize now that some of the proposals may not even mention public/private partnerships. They may be strictly dealing with philanthropic means of gaining the money. So I wouldn't like to see us delay because we don't know if we want to get into public/private partnerships. But we have astute people in this group that certainly in the larger community they will come up with excellent ideas about how we can make this happen for the betterment of everybody. So let's not delay unnecessarily because we're thinking we may not want public/private partnerships.

**Dan Reed**

I tend to agree with Stephen that a committee like this ought to be made up of members of the Board. I do think that we have not had enough dialog. I agree with you (pointing to John Rogers Smith) that we've got you speaking to us and we don't really have any real dialog going on. And so I think my hope would be the committee would be able to sit down with some stakeholders as has been mentioned, like Tom from the Federation, or Davis and maybe somebody from BREC, so we have a dialog from the committee side and talk with the people and bounce ideas back and forth. But I guess an issue as I've been sitting here is that some people in the city would think we would be going beyond what we can do. But the Council has appointed us to do this. So I think perhaps we ought to make this a committee of the Board with the commitment that we're going to take and have some additional public input. I hesitate to say this, as Stephen says, we just can't throw it out to just anyone who wants to make a comment because we're at the point where we need to have focused kinds of discussions that take into account the various sides, but that allow some interplay between the parties because opening this up to 750 e-mails which I read last night doesn't help you a lot in making the decision. That's what I would say. I would suggest perhaps Stephen and Dorothy and on the committee, and if that's acceptable (poor audio quality). Is that okay with you? (talking to Dorothy Stepteau; Katherine Auer shaking her head in agreement.)

**Dorothy Stepteau**

Yes, that's fine. Thank you, that's fine.

**Georgia Brown**

Would you like to have a closing thought?

**Lydia Acosta**

Yes. Regarding the RFP process, I think ultimately when we're ready for that and it has great value, the property that is available is owned and it would behoove us to see if there was any serious interest on the part of the property owners including BREC as a respondent. We have not excluded that idea, and, yes, while it may be valuable to have Bill Palmer reiterate what he said before, but Mr. Palmer like myself, answers to a Board. Mr. Palmer is not in a position to make proposals to this Board. It has to be BREC Board to Library Board working out an arrangement should the decision be made to build it within the park. So I would hope that if and when we get to the point of soliciting proposals from property owners wherever the property is located including land that we may not even know that is available, that we encourage our partner in BREC. Who knows? I don't think the School Board's got any property that they're sitting on that they want to throw into the mix because they're still trying to find land to build their schools. But it is not an exclusive process. It is anyone who wishes to respond to the RFP as the Board knows.

**Georgia Brown**

Well, the President's comments will be short and sweet.

**Stephen Moret**

Can I make just one more comment?

**Georgia Brown**

Yes.

**Stephen Moret**

I just want to be very clear to the audience. I'm not suggesting at all that this Board does not welcome input. What we need input on is the thing we haven't heard input on. We haven't heard a lot about financing. We haven't heard a lot in the scheme of things about programming. Things like that are really valuable. Tom's suggestion about living within our means; that's a new idea. That's a useful thing to hear. If all the input is simply about the location of the Main Library, we're just rehashing the conversations that have been had over and over. Again, we've heard the same arguments. We can have more sessions to hear that, but it doesn't really do anything for the community. I believe every person on this Board can give a very strong, articulate case for downtown, and a very strong, articulate case for Goodwood based on all the feedback. I think we know the arguments very, very well. They've been repeated and repeated through e-mails and letters. We're going to make a decision. But what we need initial input on are some of these other questions. The question about programming and the question about how large the facility should be, the balance between regionals and the main library, that kind of input is very, very valuable. Certainly we welcome all of this, but in terms of new input for the Board, those are the kinds of things I think are needed.

**Georgia Brown**

Pardon me. (speaking to member in the audience) I said I'd give you twenty minutes and I did that. We've been having persons sitting here for more than three and a half hours. And, I for one would like to go home, too. I don't want to impose on them. So if you can make it quickly and to the point.

**Unidentified Lady in the Audience**

Mr. Reed, you have three members of the Board on the committee which is a quorum. I'm wondering if you'll advertise when the next meeting will be?

**Dan Reed**

Absolutely. We're going to do that.

**Georgia Brown**

And thank you so much And I would just like to say in my remarks, thank you so very much for coming and you're so patient and the interest you've shown It's not easy to give up your afternoon to come here and sit and listen to us go on and on. So it is appreciated and we are listening, and we are paying attention to what you say. Again, thank you.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Ms. Stepteau, seconded by Mr. Reed.

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Georgia Brown, President

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Lydia M. Acosta, Director