

TENTATIVE AGENDA
FOR REGULAR MEETING OF THE
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
EDEN PARK BRANCH LIBRARY
5131 GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD
BATON ROUGE, LA 70806
MEETING ROOMS 1 AND 2
MARCH 15, 2007
4:00 P.M.

- I. ROLL CALL
- II. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF JANUARY 30, 2007 AND FEBRUARY 15, 2007
- III. DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL FOR RIVER CENTER BRANCH LIBRARY – LINDA DRUMMOND, PRESIDENT OF DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION AND JEFF FLUHR, ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
- IV. UPDATE ON TOXIE CRAFT PROPERTY – LYDIA ACOSTA
- V. UPDATE ON SAFE PLACE
- VI. UPDATE ON JTS PROPOSAL
- VII. REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
- VIII. APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AS NEEDED
- IX. 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

March 15, 2007

The regular monthly meeting of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control was held at the Eden Park Branch Library on Thursday, March 15, 2007. Mrs. Georgia Brown, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Members of the Board present were Mrs. Katherine Auer, 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 Mrs. Rhonda Pinsonat, Assistant Library Business Manager. Also present were Ms. Nikki Essix of the Parish Attorney's Office; Mr. Jeff Fluhr, Assistant Executive Director of the Downtown Development District; Mr. Ted Jack, Landscape Architect with BREC; Mr. Grant Conway of JTS Realty Services, LLC; 11 members of the community; and Mr. Scott Dyer of *The Advocate*. Absent from the meeting were Library Board members, Mr. Dan Reed and Mr. Stephen Moret.

Mrs. Brown noted that item 8 (Approval of the Recommendations of the Finance Committee as Needed) on the agenda would be deleted as there were no recommendations to be approved. Mrs. Acosta added that she hopes that there will be some recommendations to approve by the regular April Board meeting. Mrs. Brown asked for a motion by the Library Board to adopt the revised agenda for the meeting. Mrs. Auer made a motion that the agenda be adopted with the deletion of item 8, and Ms. Stepteau seconded the motion.

The minutes of the workshop meeting of the Library Board on January 30, 2007 were discussed. The minutes contain a transcription of the 3-hour discussion of the implementation of the recommendations of the Cyntrenik's study of the Library's 10-Year Strategic Plan. Both Mrs. Brown and Ms. Stepteau complimented Ms. Liz Zozulin, the Executive Assistant to Mrs. Acosta, for her thorough transcription of the meeting. Mrs. Brown requested that the transcription be reworded as a narrative, and then distributed to the Library Board for approval at the regular April meeting. Mrs. Acosta suggested that Mrs. Brown and Ms. Stepteau coordinate the material to be placed in the narrative with Ms. Zozulin. The Board will review the narrative before the April meeting, and then approve the minutes at that meeting.

The minutes of the regular meeting on February 15, 2007 were approved on a motion by Mrs. Auer, and seconded by Ms. Stepteau.

Downtown Merchants Association Proposal for River Center Branch Library –Jeff Fluhr, Assistant Executive Director, Downtown Development District

On March 8, 2007 Mrs. Acosta received a letter from Ms. Linda Drummond, President of the Downtown Merchants Association requesting permission to present a proposal to the Library Board of Control for its approval to participate in publicizing the *Live After Five Concert Series*.

Mr. Jeff Fluhr, Assistant Executive Director of the Downtown Development District was invited to inform the Board members of the details of this proposal.

Mr. Fluhr stated that the *Live After Five Concert Series* will begin its tenth year this spring. The concert series consists of eight events in the spring and eight in the fall in Galvez Plaza between the River Center Branch Library and the old State Capitol. The popularity of the concerts has grown over the years with the anticipation of 45,000 people attending each concert this year. The Downtown Merchants Association would like to engage the Library in this cultural event by obtaining permission to install a banner advertising the event on the west façade of the River Center Branch Library. To protect the building, the City Parish would be involved in the installation and removal of the banner. The design of the banner would be subject to the approval of the Library Board. The proposed banner is 28 feet tall with a cost of \$18,000 to be paid for by the sponsors of the concert.

Mr. Fluhr distributed a brochure describing the type of anchoring system that will secure the banner to the building wall. The anchoring system contains a series of clear fasteners the size of a dime that are attached to the building wall in a grid pattern. This provides flexibility for the size and placement of the banners on the building. Because the fasteners are clear and small, they are virtually undetectable. Mr. Fluhr has spoken to Mr. Pete Newkirk, Director of the City-Parish Department of Public Works about installing the anchoring system. With the Library Board's approval, Mr. Newkirk will authorize his department to place the fasteners on the library wall in time for the first spring concert scheduled for April 13, 2007. At the end of the spring series the Department of Public Works will remove the banner. Mr. Fluhr added that since the fasteners are permanently installed on the library wall, the Library could use the anchoring system to advertise its own events.

Ms. Stepteau asked about the use by the Library in light of there being sixteen weeks of concerts each year. Mr. Fluhr thought that one of the options during the concert series would be for the Library to display a banner at the top of the building above the concert banner. Mrs. Brown asked about the Downtown Merchant Association's flexibility and whether a partnership could be worked out. Ms. Stepteau also asked if the Planning and Zoning Committee of the Metropolitan Council will approve a banner of the size which is being proposed. Mr. Fluhr responded that the Department of Public Works did not foresee any problems with this proposal. Mrs. Stein, Assistant Library Director of Administration, envisioned the wall being used to promote the Library's programs such as *The Big Read-One Book/One Community* and the jazz program scheduled for July, 2007.

Mr. Berry, a member of the community, asked to speak on the issue. He said that he enjoys the free concerts. However, the acoustics in Galvez Plaza are poor because of the library wall surface. He feels that a mesh banner the size of the entire wall will help with the sound projection.

In conclusion both Mrs. Brown and Ms. Stepteau wanted to approve the proposal. Mrs. Auer was also in agreement, and thereby the proposal was approved providing that the Library Board of Control reviews subsequent requests for displays. Mrs. Acosta will notify Mrs. Drummond that the proposal has been approved by the Library Board.

Update on Toxie Craft Property

At the regular March meeting of the Library Board of Control, the Board asked Mrs. Acosta to contact SJB Group, LLC for a cost proposal to conduct a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment of the Craft property located at 5051 Greenwell Springs Road, adjacent to the new Eden Park Branch Library. The Phase II Environmental Site Assessment would determine the nature and extent of contamination of the Craft property due to a leaking underground gasoline storage tank at a former 7-Eleven, Inc. Store that was located immediately west of the Craft property at the current location of the Quality Express gas station. Mrs. Acosta received the cost proposal from SJB Group, LLC on March 14, 2007. The estimated cost is \$6,260.00. Mrs. Acosta also spoke with Mr. Jorge Ferrer, an environmental engineer with the City-Parish Department of Public Works. He told Mrs. Acosta that he agreed with Dr. Aaron Bass, an engineer with SJB Group that the Library should have a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment prior to the Library Board of Control approving the purchase of the property. Mr. Ferrer also noted that the City-Parish contracts with SJB Group, and that they have a good reputation in their field. Mr. Ferrer added that since the City-Parish has a contract in place with Entek Labs who can analyze the soil samples, this would be a cost savings to the Library.

Mrs. Acosta asked both Mr. Ferrer and Dr. Bass about the Library's legal responsibility in regard to the Eden Park Branch Library property, should the soil on the Craft property be contaminated. Both men agreed that if the Eden Park Branch Library property is contaminated, the responsible party is the 7-Eleven Corporation who has already assumed culpability for the contamination at the current Quality Express gas station site. Mrs. Acosta also spoke to Mr. Larry Book of the Parish Attorney's Office for his opinion about this issue. Mr. Book advised the Library to thoroughly investigate this issue before proceeding further with the Craft property purchase. The discussion concluded with the Library Board unanimously agreeing to proceed with a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. Mrs. Acosta will sign the proposal by SJB Group authorizing them to conduct the assessment.

Update on *Safe Place*

Ms. Nikki Essix of the Parish Attorney's Office gave an update about *Safe Place*. The *Safe Place* program is designed to provide youth in crisis aged 10-17 with immediate crisis intervention services by establishing a network of *Safe Place* sites to be accessed in times of need. The program also acts as an outreach program, educating youth on the dangers of life on the streets and services available throughout the parish. Youth Oasis, a local youth service agency designed to provide necessary services and resources to runaway, throwaway, and homeless youth ages 10 to 21 has requested that the Library Board of Control approve the Main Library and the branches as *Safe Place* sites.

Ms. Essix spoke to Mr. Alvin F. Smith, Executive Director of Youth Oasis, to Mr. Alfred Williams, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer in the Mayor's Office, and to Ms. Dawn Guillot, of the Parish Attorney's Office about the Library's participation in the *Safe Place* program. The consensus of agreement is that the Library can participate as a *Safe Place* site once a hold harmless indemnity agreement is signed by the Director of *Safe Place* and the

Library stating that the *Safe Place* program will hold the Library harmless of anything that occurs in the Library's participation as a *Safe Place* site. Ms. Essix stated that Ms. Guillot informed her that the City Fire and Police Department facilities will not be designated as *Safe Place* sites because these facilities are not considered public facilities. If *Safe Place* doesn't have a hold harmless agreement in place, Ms. Essix will proceed with the creation of a hold harmless indemnity agreement that the Library Board can review before voting to approve the Library's participation in the program.

Update on JTS Realty Services Proposal

Ms. Essix gave the Library Board an update on the status of the non-binding letter of intent and the letter of donation that Mr. Joseph T. Spinosa, owner of the former Ford property on Perkins Road in Southdowns, and the Library have been attempting to finalize over the last several months. On October 13, 2006 JTS Realty Services sent the Library a revised letter of intent and letter of donation. Ms. Essix has reviewed both documents. She requested several changes to both documents. Mr. Bobby Simpson, Chief Operating Officer for JTS Realty Services, has agreed on all of the changes that Ms. Essix asked for in the non-binding letter of intent. Therefore, the non-binding letter of intent can be signed by Mrs. Brown once the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Library Board to take action on the letter of intent.

Ms. Essix continues to have objections to the letter of donation; specifically with paragraphs 5 and 7. Paragraph 5 states that the donation of the property is made to the City-Parish for the sole purpose of constructing a library. The paragraph stipulates that if the City-Parish declares the library surplus property, it must be sold back to JTS Realty Services as "fair market value" as it exists on the date of the purchase of the building. As stated, this becomes a prohibited donation. The City cannot give it back to the donor for less than fair market value on the date of the purchase of the property.

Paragraph 7 states that in the event that construction of the library has not commenced within 180 days from the date of donation, the property will revert back to JTS Realty Services. Ms. Essix has requested that the paragraph be revised to extend the time limit to three years based on the history of the length of time it takes the government to commence a building project. Mr. Simpson is agreeable with this change, but must get the approval of Mr. Spinosa.

Ms. Essix concluded her report by stating that until these issues are resolved a letter of donation cannot be approved by the Metropolitan Council for the Library Board to sign.

Mrs. Brown said that she knows the letter of intent is non-binding, but she wants to know exactly where on the site the library would be located. Mr. Grant Conway of JTS Realty Services replied that they plan for the library to be on Perkins Road across from Congress Boulevard. Mrs. Gayle Smith, a member of the community, asked what the letter says; to which Ms. Essix read it aloud. Ms. Essix added that the 10,000 square foot footprint for the building, the architectural, engineering and landscaping fees, and the parking spaces donated by JTS Realty Services would run well into \$1 million. It is a very attractive proposal for the Library. Ms. Essix also noted that Mr. Spinosa will need a signed non-binding letter of intent to present to the

Planning Commission and the Zoning Committee of the Metropolitan Council. That will be an issue between JTS Realty Services and the Zoning Committee.

A discussion followed about the total size of the library facility. JTS Realty Services has proposed a two-story building of 10,000 square feet on each floor for a total of 20,000 square feet. Ms. Stepteau said she will lobby against a 20,000 square foot facility for this community branch library because the Board would not vote to construct the Eden Park Branch Library any larger than 14,000 square feet. She noted that it was difficult to get 14,000 square feet approved. As a matter of equality, Ms. Stepteau believes that no community branch library in the system should be larger than the Eden Park Branch Library.

Report from the Finance Committee

Since Mr. Reed, Chairman of the Finance Committee, was absent for this Board meeting, Mrs. Acosta agreed to summarize the discussion of the Finance Committee meeting on March 12, 2007 at the River Center Branch Library. Mrs. Acosta has worked with the former Superintendent of BREC, Mark Thornton, and the then acting Superintendent Bill Palmer who is now the Superintendent over the last three years regarding the library in Independence Park called the "Library in the Park". The concept would draw people from the park into the library, and vice versa. There would be two entrances to the complex from Independence Boulevard. The Finance Committee is discussing a library within the park and will bring recommendations to the Library Board in the near future.

At the Finance Committee meeting Mr. Thomas Adamek of Stonehenge Capital Company, LLC, spoke to the Committee about New Market Tax Credits as a way to finance new construction. The New Market Tax Credits is a federal tax program that can be used as a finance tool to develop low income areas such as downtown. The Goodwood area does not qualify for this program.

Ms. Stepteau, who is also on this Committee, added that Mrs. Acosta gave an accurate summary of the meeting. The next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, April 2, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the River Center Branch Library. The announcement of the meeting will be posted in each library facility, on the Library's website and through the media. Mrs. Brown concluded this discussion by thanking the Committee for its work.

On another matter, Ms. Stepteau emphasized that the first Finance Committee meeting was not delayed by her medical condition requiring a brief hospital stay. She also clarified about eating a food bar at a community meeting in 2005 about the Library Tax Renewal at the Martin Luther King Community Center. She explained that she is a diabetic and had missed a meal prior to the meeting because of travel delays.

Mrs. Acosta proudly showed a plaque that was awarded to the staff by the Capital Area United Way because they increased their contributions this year by 41% over the prior year. Mrs. Acosta mentioned that last fall she encouraged participation by authorizing a "blue jean Friday" for the remainder of 2006 for all of those who contributed at least one dollar per week to United Way. Of course, the contributions were personal donations from employees themselves. No tax

dollars were used. Mrs. Brown said she is familiar with the good work of United Way and she thanked the employees for participating.

Mrs. Smith asked why the Jones Creek Regional Branch Library has been closed to the public. Mrs. Acosta explained that the branch was opened in 1990. Therefore, extensive routine maintenance was required, necessitating the building being closed temporarily.

Mrs. Brown ended the meeting by saying that she appreciates the coverage that the Library receives from the staff and the press. She also said that she continues to receive e-mails from the public which she reads. She thanked everyone for their attendance at today's meeting.

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

Georgia Brown, President

Lydia M. Acosta, Director