

MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING OF THE
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
MAIN LIBRARY
FIRST FLOOR LARGE MEETING ROOM
7711 GOODWOOD BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LA 70806
OCTOBER 15, 2020
4:00 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – Board President Jason Jacob (4:05 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Board Treasurer Martha Guarisco

- I. ROLL CALL – Assistant to the Deputy Library Director Rosana Sotile
Jason Jacob, Board President – Present
Candace Temple, Board Vice President – Present
Martha Guarisco, Board Treasurer – Present
Delores Watts – Absent
Donald Luther, Jr. – Present (4:08 p.m.)
Kathy Wascom – Present
Nicole Allmon-Learson – Absent
A quorum was present

STAFF PRESENT – Spencer Watts, Library Director; Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director; Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director; Rhonda Pinsonat, Library Business Manager; Ronnie Pierce, Library Assistant Business Manager; Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director; Stephen Solomon, PC/LAN Specialist

- II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 – A motion to approve was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Martha Guarisco. **The motion was carried unanimously.** (4:06 p.m.)

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

IV. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

A. FINANCIAL REPORT – Rhonda Pinsonat (4:06 p.m.)

- Operating expenditures through September 30th are 61.17% of the operating budget, and no more than 75% of the budget should be spent through September.
- Cash collections from property taxes are approximately 4.10% ahead of last year.

B. SYSTEM REPORTS – Mary Stein (4:07 p.m.)

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of ongoing Library programs.
- “Zorro” Facebook Live event was held September 22nd; 20 people watched live online; over 1,000 views after one week.
- The 43rd annual Author-Illustrator event was held October 1st and 2nd, with Candace Fleming; in-person events were socially distanced.
- Costumes on display for the 75th Diamond Jubilee Anniversary of Theatre Baton Rouge.
- The Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra will host “Bachtoberfest” on Friday, October 16, an in-person outdoor concert.
- The Mini Maker Faire will be a 100% virtual event, Saturday, October 17; attendance can be on Facebook Live or by accessing videos on YouTube; will also be archived for later viewing.
- Jay Ducote’s “Stir the Pot” event will also be virtual via Facebook Live.
- The 20th annual Attic Treasures and Collectibles event will be in-person on November 14th, and GIS Day will be completely virtual, on November 18th.

- Question from Kathy Wascom regarding mentioning the maker space at River Center Branch Library during the online Mini Maker Faire. Mary Stein replied that there will be a short video tour of the maker space during one of the panel discussions.
- The Carver Branch Library has been selected as a regional Maker-Ed pilot site in partnership with Knock-Knock Children's Museum, with a goal to teach all library system staff new ways to conduct maker space programs for toddlers and young children.

C. OTHER REPORTS

1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Spencer Watts (4:20 p.m.)

- Some minor issues from Hurricane Delta; tress and limbs down; power outages of varying durations at Main, Scotlandville, Baker, Carver and Pride-Chaneyville Branch Libraries.
- Received quotes for facility surge protection equipment for Central and Baker Branch Libraries; total cost was around \$3,000; will also receive quotes for Bluebonnet and Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Libraries.
- Meetings were held with vendors involved in the generator fuel tank project at Main; next meeting will be with the crane rental company to verify swing and lift angles; will be 3-4 days of work and shipping yard will be closed during that time; delay in production of the tank pushes back delivery and project start date to the week of November 16th or 23rd.
- The lowest bid for Carver Branch Library repairs was accepted at last night's Metro Council meeting; bid amount was \$70,000; insurance may cover most of it.
- Roof work is complete on the Outreach Services building; a close-out meeting was held earlier this week; HVAC work is almost complete; library facilities staff have been working on thermostats; new fire suppression system for the server room that will serve as a backup for the entire City-Parish has been installed; next will be securing a contract for the server room Liebert units that provide added cooling for the high density population of servers.
- The Eden Park Branch Library chiller is due to be installed on November 23rd, unless there's a shipping delay.
- Question from Kathy Wascom regarding the generator fuel tank: Does it run on natural gas or diesel fuel, and would it be possible to switch to natural gas similar to what is found on residential generators? Spencer Watts responded that it runs on diesel fuel, which is a standard technology. It would be very, very expensive to retool the entire generator or purchase a new one to accommodate natural gas. Jason Jacob commented that diesel fuel generators are very common for big, large-scale commercial and governmental buildings.

2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Spencer Watts (4:30 p.m.)

- South Branch update: First meeting with Post Architects, City-Parish Architectural Services and Library staff was held September 22nd; Library staff edited and delivered a 67-page building program which includes breakdown of square footage requirements for capacities, FF&E, collections, etc.; the Notice to Proceed was submitted following City Council approval and should be issued soon; an orientation meeting will then be scheduled with the TND, architects, City-Parish and Library.
- Following Hurricane Delta, most library locations were able to open that Saturday afternoon at 2:00 p.m.; it was helpful to the community for the library to open, since 30 thousand people were still without electricity; the library provided internet and Wi-Fi for those needing help.
- Covid-19 update: Book stacks were opened for browsing at all locations on Tuesday, September 29th; so far, there has been no destabilizing effect as most patrons are happy to be able to browse again; after first week of opening, there was a 9.5% increase in circulated materials compared to previous week; library staff have been working on plans to open meeting rooms for limited use at the following library locations: Main, Bluebonnet, Delmont Gardens, Eden Park, Fairwood, Greenwell Springs, Pride-Chaneyville, River Center, and Zachary; social distancing still has to be maintained during a meeting, and the library is still limited in the amount of cleaning that can be offered by janitorial services; Central Branch Library is hosting early voting, and Bluebonnet, Zachary and Fairwood Branch Libraries will be election-day voting sites, in their meeting rooms; library locations are still offering masks to everyone, increasing hand sanitizer stations, and fogging after hours.

- The first interactive, in-person Metro Council meeting was held October 14th in conjunction with the River Center Branch Library; Allison Cooper, branch manager for the River Center library, along with other library staff, worked with the Council Administrator and City-Parish IT staff to make the large meeting room on the fourth floor available for the public to attend the meetings remotely but interactively; some technical issues arose but were resolved and will continue to be addressed.
- The additional servers for the Virtual Desktop project are onsite; installation documentation is being reviewed; facilities staff has added new power strips that were needed.
- Feedback was received from CISA (Cyber Infrastructure Security Agency) regarding a session that was held over the summer; the Library was supplied with a dashboard that can help gauge how different steps will improve the security profile; also received an assessment comparing the Library to other agencies to determine how well its cybersecurity is positioned.
- Other miscellaneous project updates: The RFID vendor has been installing additional kiosks and a table top unit at Main Library and the new security gates at River Center Branch Library; the WiFi vendor selected for the upgrade project is in the process of renewing their state contract; work with a vendor has begun on the alternate, independent credit card solution; work also continues with Management Partners and the effectiveness study conducted earlier this year, to review their observations on strategic planning, internal communications, information sharing and technology applications.

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

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

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON RENOVATION OF JONES CREEK REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband (4:50 p.m.)

- The punch-list walk-through was held September 25th and notes were submitted to the architect.
- Fire marshal inspection took place on October 8th; the temporary certificate of occupancy was issued October 13th.
- Geo-cell matts and sod were installed in the rear of the building for the drainage slope; meeting held with landscape architect to determine what else will be installed and planted.
- The AV package was delivered and installed on September 25th.
- The moving vendor was onsite September 25 – 30 to move off site unneeded furniture and bring over part of the collection from storage.
- The library will be closed October 13 – 15: shelves in the building will be constructed in their proper places; staff moved into the staff workroom; the temporary restrooms were removed; the contractor removed the doors and canopy at the temporary entrance and reinstalled the window; copiers, coin-ops and self-check-outs are being installed; some remaining furniture is being moved offsite.
- Contractor continues to work on the punch-list; minor issues for the punch-list are relayed to the architect and architectural services.
- RFID gates and the intelligent return will be installed in their permanent locations; no date set yet.
- Keying meeting with contractor is scheduled for October 16th.
- Furniture is in the process of being purchased.
- Slideshow presentation of photos.
- Acknowledgement of collaboration efforts between Library staff and shelving vendor to determine placement of collection and incorporating existing shelving back into the new space; Jones Creek Regional Branch Library staff have been busy loading the collection from the storage facility to be moved back to the library, as well as moving and setting up equipment during Phase 2; Facilities staff and Branch Division Heads have also coordinated moving efforts between staff and the moving vendor; Architectural Services and administrative staff from the Library's Branch Services have also worked diligently on the project.

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

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. LIBRARY OVERVIEW OF 2020 – Spencer Watts (4:57 P.M.)

- Slideshow presentation of photos of various significant milestones and events from 2020 thus far.
- River Center Branch Library opened June 26, 2020 after a prolonged and challenging construction project.
- Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library renovation project was completed in 2020; added over 5,000 square feet to the building.
- Jones Creek Regional Branch Library renovation project is ongoing during 2020; added 3,500 square feet.
- Other capital projects beginning in 2020: South Branch Library receives Notice to Proceed with Architect; Scope of Work completed for Baker and Scotlandville Branch Library renovation projects; Outreach Services building received a new roof and new A/C; Carver Branch Library repairs, including new walls, glass windows, and meeting room; new Facilitize reporting system for maintenance repair requests; WiFi upgrade project; new Brivo elevator boards; upgrades to security cameras and system.
- Covid-19 review: Library provided service throughout the duration; increased emphasis on Digital Library brought in new users; strengthened partnerships with community agencies; steadily increased access and opportunities as time went on; currently, open book stacks for browsing and limited use of meeting rooms.
- Utilization of resources by patrons since Covid-19 is steadily increasing; OverDrive use has remained steady throughout the spring and fall; Adult and Children's print materials are bouncing back.
- Geographical mapping of patrons and library use throughout the parish; increasing more each week.
- Community assessment survey was completed in early February; 1,779 responses; data from survey results will be considered when updating the Library Strategic Plan; Net Promoter Score was 95, highest in country among peer libraries.
- Digital Library review: Increased messaging and promotions since March 2020; E-book embargo was resolved; Library Academy, Infoguides and staff assistance; Beanstack was the new Summer Reading platform.
- New or expanded technologies: WebEx; Zoom; Microsoft Teams; FaceBook Live and Groups; YouTube channel was expanded; Remote Help at the library's Reference Desk; Reference assistance with Access; Library Academy; Library staff cyber-security training.
- Flexibility and adaptability of Library and staff: effort and coordination of moving collections and furniture during construction projects; finding temporary storage space; Bookmobile scramble when one was out of service; technology for programming and organizational communication and training; the effectiveness study for feedback on how to do things differently; a new Technology Plan is also a goal for 2020 and is about 80% complete; Vertical Lift Modules installed at Outreach Services provide storage for up to 9,000 books.
- Library Programming in 2020: Beanstack summer reading and continuous virtual programs; virtual story-times expanded to include Story Starters, Book It and Book Talks; Grab and Geaux Bags for children's crafts; "Qaranteen" Bags for teens; 20-something activities; "Take it Outside" to promote outdoor programming; staff training on using online platforms.
- Carver Branch Library was chosen as a Making Spaces MakerEd pilot site.
- Looking forward: Library website redesign; ILS improvement/replacement; Delmont Gardens, Central and Zachary Branch Libraries renovations; Strategic Plan update; Dark Fiber IRU project; secure a moving contract.

B. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON ADJUSTMENTS TO FINES, FEES, AND CIRCULATION PRACTICES, INCLUDING THE CLAIM RETURNED PERIOD, FINES ON CHILDREN'S MATERIALS, THE AMOUNT OF ACCUMULATED CHARGES FOR BLOCKED STATUS, AND SIMILAR MATTERS – Spencer Watts (5:21 p.m.)

- Purpose of resolution is to modify some practices and regulations, and to lower barriers to make it easier for patrons with isolated problems to overcome the issue.
- 7,090 patrons owe between five cents and twenty-five cents; the number is higher than usual because the library is not accepting cash at the moment due to the pandemic.
- In total, only 9,000 patrons out of 273,000 library card holders have fines, or 3%.

- 392 patrons owe between \$26 - \$35; 449 owe between \$35 - \$50; 532 owe between \$50 - \$100; there are some who owe more than \$100, likely due to a disaster such as the 2016 flood, and have never notified the Library.
- There's a cluster of patrons owing just under \$26 that if the Library changes the barrier, it will help the patrons more easily maintain access to the library.
- Another cluster of patrons among the \$35 - \$50 fine range are most likely from having lost books.
- It is estimated that around 800 patrons would benefit from changing policies and having their library cards unblocked; would be a good thing for the Library to have them as active patrons once again; the numbers aren't too high or overwhelming.
- A vote on the proposed resolution will be taken at the next Board meeting.

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

VIII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

- Martha Guarisco commented that her students registered for their digital library cards and it's been a great resource to have the digital content; it's a Covid-related positive thing.
- Donald Luther, Jr. commented on the passing of former Metro Council member Rodney "Smokie" Bourgeois; he was Mr. Luther's council member and he expressed his acknowledgement of Mr. Bourgeois' service to the community.
- Jason Jacob commented that Martha Guarisco will send out the Library Director's evaluation instrument next week; Spencer Watts commented that he will have the self-evaluation completed and sent to the Board members within the next few business days.
- Kathy Wascom commented that she'd like to formally ask the Board to thank Library staff for doing an excellent job during the hurricane, as they always do no matter the circumstance.
- Patricia Husband commented that she'd like to include the Computer Services staff in acknowledging their hard work in removing equipment, setting up new computers and identifying and resolving issues.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Candace Temple and seconded by Martha Guarisco. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m. by unanimous vote.**