

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**  
**January 19, 2023**  
**4:00 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER – Jason Jacob, Board President (4:04 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Donald Luther, Jr.

ROLL CALL – Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director  
Jason Jacob, Board President – Present  
Candace Temple, Board Vice President – Present  
Martha Stickle, Board Treasurer – Present  
Delores Watts – Present (4:14 p.m.)  
Donald Luther, Jr. – Present  
Kathy Wascom – Present  
Nicole Allmon-Learson – Present  
*A quorum was present*

STAFF PRESENT – Spencer Watts, Library Director; Kristen Edson, Deputy Library Director; Mary Stein, Assistant Library Director; Patricia Husband, Assistant Library Director; Rhonda Pinsonat, Library Business Manager; Rosana Sotile, Assistant to the Deputy Library Director; Tim Martin, Network Technician I; William Decker, Network Technician I.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 17, 2022 – A motion to approve was made by Donald Luther, Jr. and seconded by Martha Stickle. **The motion was carried unanimously.**

II. SPECIAL ORDERS – There were no Special Orders.

III. REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR

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

- For 2022, operating expenditures through December 31st are or 81.43% of the operating budget. Although 2022 has ended, a number of expenditures are not yet posted, so both total expenditures and the corresponding percentage will increase for several more months.
- Cash collections from Property Taxes for 2022 are approximately 1.23% ahead of 2021. This total will also change in a few months, once 4th quarter interest earnings are posted.
- For 2023, cash collections are off to a great start, as we are 6.10% ahead of 2022. While this increase is very encouraging, it is too soon to know if it will continue, or will drop to perhaps a 3% – 4% increase, which over time, is our historical average.

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

- “Around the Parish” slideshow and descriptions of Library programs.
- November and December library events included the “Game On!” program, GIS Day, Tim the Magician, Red Stick Rising and the Downtown Cortana Kiwanis Parade, Write Time with Boo Milton, House of Palacios art installation, and Live and Virtual Author Talks.
- Next Sunday, January 29, 2023 the Main Library will host the first lecture “How Earth Came to Be” in the Sounds of Science series; the series will continue in February and March.
- The Abraham Lincoln impersonator/speaker will perform at the Main Library on January 22 and 23, 2023.
- This is the 10<sup>th</sup> year the East Baton Rouge Parish Library has been designated a Star Library; based on 2020 information and statistics; over 5,300 public libraries were rated.
- Mary Stein displayed the recent version of the library’s newsletter, The Source, which was printed in color for the first time.
- Board members received a draft of the Key Performance Indicators Report for the time period 2010-2022.

## C. OTHER REPORTS

### 1. MAINTENANCE AND ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS – Kristen Edson (4:22 p.m.)

- Board members received the new work-order format, which was produced from the library's new work-order management software.
- Delmont Gardens Branch library was closed for two days in December during the hard freeze, due to major issues with the boiler; several parts were replaced and is now operating efficiently.
- The dampers on the HVAC system at the Main Library are being repaired to make sure they close properly; a cooling coil was damaged during the hard freeze, due to the damper not closing.
- Windows were replaced at Greenwell Springs Regional, Eden Park and the Main library.
- Formal quotes were received for repairing concrete at the back of the Jones Creek Regional library; a contract was awarded, and work should begin in February.
- The library is reviewing the cost estimates for the City-Parish project to replace the current card access system; the library may utilize carry-forward funding for the project.
- A meeting is scheduled for Friday with the contractor on the Outreach Services building improvement project; a Notice to Proceed is expected to be issued soon after the meeting; a letter was issued to the contractor to allow for placing the order for the Leibert HVAC units, as the current lead time to receive them is 40 weeks; a meeting was held in November to discuss phasing of the concrete work
- A design development meeting was held with architects in November to re-start the Bluebonnet Regional improvement project; the architect's MEP engineer will draft a set of preliminary drawings.
- The Delmont Gardens Branch roofing replacement is complete; still waiting on a new bench and metal fencing for outdoor staff area.
- The Zachary Branch roof replacement is also complete, along with pressure washing and masonry sealing; still waiting on gutters.
- Bluebonnet Regionals' roof replacement is also complete; re-roofing work has begun on Jones Creek Regional; Kalwalls will be replaced in February at both locations.
- The contract amendment for the chiller replacement project, to include Carver Branch library, was processed earlier this month.
- The library is waiting on pricing from designers for the monumental sign project.
- Discussion on engaging library staff for input on project design.

### 2. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – Kristen Edson (4:37 p.m.)

- The library will hold a staff training day on February 20, as part of developing its strategic plan and to include more staff participation; the library system will close all locations that day.
- The library's Technology Strategic Plan Committee met to perform its annual review; it will be updated to reflect the overall strategic plan.
- Final proposals for the library's website RFP will soon be issued by Purchasing, for library staff to review.
- Library staff are beginning to review new software apps for its inventory system, with the intention of adding it to current apps, such as the purchase request app; would possibly purchase the new app in 2024.
- The technology lab at the River Center Branch library is complete and open for programs; computers in the lab feature specialized software for advanced digital projects.
- A meeting with the architect team for the Baker Branch renovation project was held in December; discussed options for exterior design.
- A recent merger of two large publishing houses has reduced the competitively priced market; may result in an increase on book pricing.
- Glenn Curtis was appointed the new Chief Administrative Officer for the City-Parish; library leadership staff will meet with him soon.
- In early December, the State Attorney General established a tip-line for the public to express any concern over materials in schools and public libraries; the library has a Request for Reconsideration form for the public to use, as well as other established policies for reconsidering materials.
- The City-Parish budget hearing was held in November with the Metro Council; discussions were held on the plans to renovate the Central Branch library, the use of the Bookmobile, and the proposed location for a new Delmont Gardens Branch library.
- A non-binding intent for the Delmont Gardens property was issued and approved by the parish attorney in November; a meeting was held with Build Baton Rouge and other interested parties.
- Library staff received an update from BREC regarding the reopening of the Garden Café at the Main Library, which is proposed for March 2023.

- There has been a slight increase of Covid-19 infections in library staff; after-hours fogging of library buildings continues.
- Early voting was held at Central Branch Library in November and December; over 2,000 people voted early at that location.
- Kiosk use for 2022 was 24.7% for self check-out; credit card payments for 2022 totaled over \$24,000.
- The Wi-Fi hot spots were circulated over 3,400 times in 2022; will expand availability this year.
- Over 11,800 lbs of food were collected for the library's Food for Fines program, creating over 9,800 donated meals.

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

#### IV. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – UPDATE FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE (5:03 p.m.)

- Board President Jason Jacob explained that of the seven applicants, the search committee selected three finalists; each finalist was scheduled to give a public presentation to the Board, however two candidates withdrew their applications before the scheduled presentations, and the committee decided to pause the search process.
- Jason Jacob asked the board for suggestions or comments on moving forward with the director search; the Board and library staff discussed the options of when to resume the search and various factors involved in selecting the best candidate.
- The Board agreed to schedule another meeting with the consultants to discuss a new timeline for re-advertising the position. Nicole Allmon-Learson made an official motion for pausing the search and communicating with the consultants for feedback. The motion was seconded by Donald Luther, Jr. The motion carried unanimously.

#### V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### A. UPDATE ON SOUTH BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband and Mary Stein (5:30 p.m.)

- Library staff met with the architects and Architectural Services to review the latest value-engineered options; the architects provided an updated probable cost, which may bring the project budget back to the original budget proposed by the library.
- Library staff also selected colors of the flat metal panels and acoustical wall coverings.
- Alternate selections by library staff included particular vinyl wall coverings, adding the wood wall only at the circulation desk, and some limited spandrel glass on the north side of the building.
- Library staff and Architectural Services also met with the interior designer; the probable cost for the furniture package was over budget, so different options were discussed.
- The architects have submitted their final plans to Rouzan for approval.
- The tentative updated project timeline calls for completion of the final construction bid package at the end of January or early February; the project should be advertised for bids in March; the project will be out for bid for 30 days, and once the bids are reviewed and a contractor selected, it will go to the Metro Council for approval; library staff anticipate a possible contract award in May, and possible ground breaking in June; tentative total construction time is around 365 days.
- Kathy Wascom and Patricia Husband discussed the lengthy process of reviewing construction documents before issuing a request for proposals.

##### B. UPDATE ON SCOTLANDVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY – Patricia Husband and Kristen Edson (5:41 p.m.)

- The construction bid was advertised in early December, and the due date was moved to January 19; six addenda have also been issued for the project.
- Architectural Services and Purchasing will work together to review and evaluate the bid responses.
- The City-Parish is investigating the option of securing builder's risk insurance for new construction projects; it is currently not required and to date, not requiring Builder's Risk Insurance has not posed a problem for Library projects; the Library is in agreement that it is the contractor's responsibility to provide security against theft and vandalism during construction.

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

#### VI. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. VOTE TO ELECT OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR 2023 – Jason Jacob (5:45 p.m.)

- Donald Luther, Jr. made a motion to reappoint the current officers to retain their standing offices; it was seconded by Delores Watts. The motion carried unanimously.

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

VII. COMMENTS BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

- Kathy Wascom thanked Spencer Watts for his time at the library and for establishing a dynamic library system that is a jewel for the City-Parish.
- Spencer Watts commented that he feels privileged to have worked with a wonderful library board and a great staff, as well as citizens who use and appreciate the library; there was already a solid foundation to work with, when he first began working at the library; he feels satisfied that everyone has been able to maintain that foundation, and the library continues to fulfill its mission and purpose; he also thanked the board for giving him the opportunity to work with them.
- Jason Jacob thanked Spencer Watts for his leadership and dedication, and commented that he will be missed.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Board President Jason Jacob requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Delores Watts and seconded by Candace Temple. **The meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m. by unanimous vote.**

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Mr. Jason Jacob, President

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Mr. Spencer Watts, Library Director