

Rapides Parish Library
Board of Control
June 16, 2015
Minutes

The regular meeting of the Rapides Parish Library (RPL) Board of Control was called to order by President Glenn Rechs at 4:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Huie-Dellmon House, located at 430 Saint James Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana.

Board members present were: Ms. Susie Smith, Mrs. Linda McMahon, Ms. Le'Anza Jordan, Mr. Greg Walker, Ms. Ann Heath, Mr. Glen Rechs and Mr. Ralph Roach. Dr. Pat Barber arrived late. Mr. Mike Fairbanks was absent.

Mr. Rechs led the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Board observed a moment of silence.

Minutes

Ms. McMahon made a motion to approve the May minutes. Ms. Smith seconded and the motion passed.

Financial Report

Mr. Jimmy Holsomback gave the financial report for the month of May. Revenue is less than previous months; however this is typical. He reported that \$24,048 was collected in Ad Valorem Taxes and is within \$81,000 of budget for the year. State Revenue Sharing funds were received. This is the second of three installments.

The operating expenses were normal for the month.

The balance sheet includes normal year-end adjustments made by the auditor, most of which are fund balance.

Mr. Holsomback presented the proposed budget for the Robertson Branch Expansion. The budget amount includes the actual bid and actual architectural fees. All other items are estimates. \$42,000 is budgeted for contingency.

The Capital Projects Robertson Branch report shows that the architect fee and bonding fee are the only items paid out as of date. Mr. Holsomback presented a report showing the combined income and expenditures of the King Branch construction and the Robertson Branch Addition.

Lastly, balance sheet from the King Branch Construction projects indicates a net balance of \$109,406.62.

Ms. Smith moved to accept the financial report, Ms. McMahon seconded and the motion passed.

Properties Committee Report

In the absence of committee chair, Mr. Fairbanks, Laura-Ellen presented a written report for the Properties Committee.

The first item discussed was adding the Main Library to the National Historic Register. After meeting with Bill Tudor and Megan Lord, from the Alexandria Preservation Commission it was confirmed that the building meets the criteria. Advantages mentioned are a tax credit on qualified renovations and future significant changes to the building must be approved by the Board of Control. The building can be removed from the register if desired by the board.

Mr. Roach made a motion to authorize the Director to move forward in getting the Main Library put on the National Register, with any attendant costs, seconded by Ms. Heath and the motion passed.

Ms. Ayres presented the second item from the Properties Committee. The carpet in Main's public area is over 20 years old and needs to be replaced. There is asbestos tile under the carpet and in order to replace the carpet abatement must be done. The carpet would be replaced with carpet tiles. The estimated cost of replacing the carpet is \$63,000. The estimated cost of the abatement is \$45,000 for an estimated total of \$108,000. In addition the Library will be closed for 12 weeks. The auditor confirmed that the remaining capital funds can be used for this project since the asbestos must be removed.

There was discussion on the matter. Ms. Ayres reported that administration became aware of the asbestos problem when the carpet was replaced in the Children's Room. In the late 1980's, the ceiling was repaired due to the asbestos material in it. Mr. Rechs, who worked in the asbestos abatement business, acknowledged that in many instances the asbestos was covered up with new flooring.

Ms. Ayres said that the rear part of the building contains asbestos and it would have to be removed if any renovations were done to that area, but is not in the scope of this project.

Mr. Holsomback reported that the estimates presented are consistent with the asbestos abatement and carpet replacement at the Martin Library. Ms. Ayres reminded the Board that the capital project funds left over from the King Branch building project must be spent by July 2016.

Discussion if this project would be part on the motion discussed earlier. The Library would qualify for tax credits if it were on the National Historic Register. The money from the capital funds must be spent by July, 2016. That might not allow enough time to get the approval for the National Historic Register.

Ms. McMahon asked about the closure of the Library. Ms. Ayres explained that the process would be complete in three stages. The right side would be complete, then the middle, and lastly the left side. All books and removable shelving, desks, etc. will be relocated to the side not currently undergoing abatement. Ms. Jordan asked if cleaning included in the removal of the

asbestos. Mr. Rechs commented that was usually included in the contract. He also explained that each work area would be sealed off to prevent contamination to areas already completed.

The ceiling has been sealed throughout the entire building, according to Ms. Ayres; therefore no further action is required.

Mr. Rechs said, that in his experience, a penalty clause was included in the contact to ensure that the project would be completed in a specific timeframe.

Ms. Ayres reported that the staff would be consulted on the best time to close the Library for an extended period of time; possibly December to February.

Mr. Roach moved to authorize the Director to move forward in replacing the Main Library's public flooring, including asbestos abatement and the closure of the Library, using capital funds to pay for the expense, seconded by Ms. McMahon and the motion passed.

Lastly, Ms. Ayres presented information about the bid received for the Robertson Branch expansion. Bayou Rapides Corp. is the lowest bid which is \$719,975.00.

Mr. Roach moved that the Library Board accept the lower bid for the construction of the Robertson Branch expansion, which is Bayou Rapides Corp., and that the motion to be sent to the Police Jury for approval, seconded by Ms. Jordan and the motion passed.

Ms. McMahon asked if three bids were required. Mr. Holsomback explained that it was a public bid and only two bids were received. Others were expected but decided not to pursue the project. There is no requirement for a minimum amount of bids.

Personnel Committee Report

Mr. Walker presented the Personnel Committee Report. The Personnel Committee met with Ms. Ayres for her 12 month evaluation. The marks were high from the Board and the Staff. The Committee recommended that Ms. Ayres receive a 3% pay increase just as all other staff.

Mr. Walker made a motion that Ms. Ayres receive a 3% pay increase and seconded by Ms. Smith and the motion passed.

Mr. Walker reported that Ms. Ayres requested the personnel committee to look into the procedures to terminate and determine if proper procedure was followed in the recent termination that was discussed at the May 2015 meeting. Mr. Walker researched the procedure and the committee decided that proper procedure was followed.

Mr. Walker continued to explain that the Library is not regulated by the Civil Service Commission. RPL employees are "at will" employees, which means that an employee can be terminated without cause except for race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, and the like.

In cases when rights have been violated, employees have the right to file a complaint with the EEOC. There is a website that may be consulted with examples and procedures.

The committee reviewed the employee handbook which gave some examples of reasons for termination short of a “fair warning”. Ms. Ayres confirmed to the committee that the individual violated one of the prohibited acts.

Mr. Walker explained that the Board as a whole has oversight. In order to make changes, there should be a review of the policy then a motion, seconded and a vote by the Board. A committee could be created or the personnel committee can be appointed to review the policy and changes presented to the board.

Ms. McMahon believed that there was a procedure similar to civil service in place and that an employee could not be terminated for a single infraction. Mr. Walker explained that the Rapides Parish Library is not civil service, therefore the procedure is different.

Mr. Walker said that currently the Director is required to report involuntary terminations to the Board of Control. After reviewing the procedure in this particular case, he found no violations.

Ms. McMahon expressed a desire to further look into the procedure. She suggested that specific instances be given for termination. Ms. Colwell stated that the policy does list actions that would put an employee “at risk” of being terminated.

Ms., Heath disagreed with making a change. She expressed that the Director has a better understanding of the everyday activity at the Library.

Ms. McMahon made a motion “to review those policies and procedures to include full disclosure of fireable offenses and a procedure prior to firing,” seconded by Ms. Smith, the motion was opposed by Ms. Heath and Mr. Walker.

Mr. Walker presented a substitute motion, rewording the motion for the Chairman to appoint a committee to review the procedures, seconded by Ms. McMahon, the motion passed.

Mr. Rechs appointed Mr. Walker, Ms. McMahon, and Mr. Roach.

Mr. Walker requested Ms. Colwell to submit proposals based on other Libraries’ policies. When she completes this, to contact Mr. Rechs and a meeting will be scheduled. Since there is no Board of Control meeting in July, this will be presented at the August meeting.

Director’s Report

The Director’s Report was given by Ms. Laura-Ellen Ayres. The State Aid report has been submitted. The Library received \$21,875 for last year which is July 2014 to June 2015. The Library purchased Play-aways for children and teens, renewed the Zinio subscription for adults and purchased 11 Surface Pro Tablets to be used at Storytimes and for inventory. The State has not budgeted any money for State Aid this year.

Ms. Ayres worked with Mr. Chester Mealer and others to create a Robertson Construction Blog. It is on the website under "Branches". Ms. Ayres will update it on the process after the Police Jury approves the bid.

An E-Branch will soon be added to the webpage. It will list all the available e-resources.

Ms. Ayres updated the Board on the progress on the Gunter Branch Expansion. The Board decided to construct the new King Branch and expand the Robertson and Gunter Branches during this tax cycle.

Ms. Ayres and Mr. Holsomback have determined that 2 acres are required to have a larger building and enough parking. The land behind the Gunter Branch that is owned by Mrs. Gunter will not be enough. Those lots are 0.42 acres and Gunter Library property is 0.41 acres. In comparison, the Robertson Branch is 1.19 acres and it is barely enough land.

Mr. Holsomback has tried to contact Mr. Tinsley who owns the property on the side of Gunter without any response. In the past, Mr. Tinsley has not been willing to sell.

The 1982 donation from the Mr. and Mrs. Gunter states that if the property ceases to be an active library that the property and building reverts back to the family. It has been requested to Mrs. Gunter that if the library moved to another location in the area and continued to use the Gunter name, would she be willing to allow the Library to use the proceeds from a sale of the current location. She refused to offer.

The next step is to consult Assistant District Attorney Tom Wells on the process of how to let go of this land. The building is owned by the Police Jury.

The Library continues to look at other property in case we cannot persuade Mr. Tinsley to sell his land.

Ms. Jordan asked to discuss the email that Ms. Ayres had written to the Board members regarding the inappropriate use of a computer by a patron. The initial problem was 2 years ago in which the patron was ban from use of the computers. Recently, the patron has been "helping" his wife at the computer station. Ms. Ayres sent a registered letter to the patron stating that he could not be in the computer area even with a friend or family member. The signature card for the register mail has not been returned.

The next step will be to ban the patron from the Library and file charges if necessary. Ms. Primeaux explained that the patron was counting key strokes to obtain other customer's passwords. He also had by-passed the Library's system and set-up his own homepage. This occurred at the Robertson Branch and he was not able to access the RPL main server, so no confidential information was violated. Former administration wanted to allow the individual the ability to continue to use in hopes that he would change.

Mr. Wes Saunders reported on the recent incident at Main in which the individual was assisting his wife who is wheelchair bound with one of the public computers.

The Board discussed the serious offenses of this individual. Ms. Ayres will ban the individual if the Board desires. The Board recommends that this individual and his wife be banned from the Library if any other problems occur and charges be pressed if appropriate.

Direct Services

Ms. Lenna' Mouton was ill. There was no Direct Services Report.

Human Resources

Ms. Carolyn Colwell, Human Resources Administrator recommended ratification of Ginger Moore, Martin Circulation/Reference Clerk. Ms. Smith made a motion to approve the ratification, Ms. McMahon seconded and the motion passed.

Outreach and Youth Services

Ms. Tammy DiBartolo gave the Outreach and Youth Services report. She reported that the Summer Reading Program is going well. The second week of entertainment is scheduled for next week with a magician. The Bookmobile was at Cheatham Park for the Community Fun Day organized by Delta Sigma Theta on June 13. They promoted the Summer Reading Program and the King Branch later hours as well as issued Library cards. On June 20, Outreach Services will be at Hunter Park for a Family Fun Day.

The Small Business Association will be sponsoring three workshops on "How to Start a Business". Each is on a different topic and can stand alone,

Ms. DiBartolo will be conducting an early listening workshop for the United Way Volunteers. She will be teaching how to do storytime for daycare and head start centers.

IT

The IT report was given by Janie Primeaux. She presented the Board with the July class schedule. Candace Hamilton will be doing classes once a month and has almost completed her training.

Chester Mealer has conducted all day Microsoft Office classes for the staff. He conducted a successful PowerPoint class for staff.

All the older Kids PCs will be replaced by the middle of July with new touchscreen units. The branches left to be replaced are McDonald, Martin, King, and Hineston.

Public Relations

Ms. Suzanne James gave the Public Relations report. She presented items that are being used to promote the King Branch's extended hours. A card with the hours and upcoming events was handed out at the Cheatham Park event. King staff requested a postcard that can be mailed to

area churches and daycare centers that includes hours and programs offered. It is also available at the circulation desk.

The Ministers of Economic Development (MOED) met on June 4 and were given a flyer with similar information about the King Branch.

Ms. James showed the tent cards that are on the tables at the Alexandria Mall food court. It promotes the 3D printer, Summer Reading Program and the King Branch extended hours. The tent cards will be on display until July 4. There is also a display about the 3D printers in the soft play area at the Alexandria Mall.

Card 4 Kids will be presented at orientation for principals and new teachers.

Ms. James presented an Event Guide that highlights and promotes area museums and parks. This will help patrons go and see places in the area. The reference staff can help with travel guides and where to find information. This idea was from the Hineston Branch staff.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

New Business

No new business

The next regular meeting of the Rapides Parish Library Board of Control is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18, 2015, at 4:00 p.m., at the Huie-Dellmon House.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Laura-Ellen Ayres
Secretary

Glenn Rechs
President