

**RAPIDES PARISH LIBRARY  
BOARD OF CONTROL  
MINUTES**

**March 19, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Rapides Parish Library (RPL) Board of Control was called to order by President Susie Smith at 3:30 p.m. in the meeting room of the Huie-Dellmon House, 430 St. James Street, Alexandria, Louisiana.

Board members present were Mr. Eddy Boddie, Mrs. Ann Heath, Mrs. Le'Anza Jordan, Mrs. Diane Lawton, Mrs. Linda McMahon, Mr. Glenn Rechs, Mrs. Susie Smith, and Mr. Gregory Walker. Dr. Pat Barber was absent.

President Smith asked Mr. Rechs to lead the Pledge of Allegiance and then asked for a moment of silence. Mr. Walker moved to approve the amended agenda. Mrs. McMahon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote. Director Steve Rogge introduced Westside Regional Library Acting Manager Pam Martin. He explained she would be managing Westside until Assistant Director for Direct Services Laura-Ellen Ayres returned and a new manager was hired. Mrs. Heath moved to approve the February minutes. Mr. Walker seconded, and the motion passed.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Holsomback reviewed revenue and expenses for February 2013. He said \$1,420,457 in ad valorem taxes was collected during February. He said income was normal for the month. Income totaled \$1,599,425 for the month of February, which brought the year-to-date total to \$4,470,370. He said all expenses for February were normal. He pointed out the \$404,425 in principal and interest we paid on our loan. This means we have one more payment in February 2014, and then we will be debt free. February expenses totaled \$763,315, and year-to-date expenses totaled \$1,279,893. Mrs. Lawton moved to approve the February 2013 financial report. Mr. Rechs seconded, and the motion passed.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Steve Rogge reported that transactions moving averages showed a 2.72% increase since 2012, which was a somewhat small increase when compared to the previous months. He said the 2012 Annual Report was completed and referred to the Board's copies in their packets. He pointed out his overview on the first page and the statistics section. He said our turnover rate improved by over 7% when compared to 2012, and it is now higher than the national standard. He also pointed out the buildings, grounds, and vehicles section on the last page. The middle

includes reports by all departments and branches, including the financial reports prepared by Mr. Holsomback.

He said that we had to hire a separate crew to perform an asbestos abatement at the Martin Branch. This was due to the old asbestos tiles coming up with the old carpet as it was being removed so we could replace it with new carpet. This abatement process cost us an additional eight to nine thousand dollars. He thanked Assistant Director for Support Services Wesley Saunders, Technical Services Manager Lisa Salard, the Maintenance Staff, and Martin Branch Manager Donna LeBlanc and her staff for their efficient handling of this process. Mr. Rogge next referred to the pictures of the new Johnson Branch signs in the Board's packets. He said these signs with the new Johnson Branch hours were placed at various locations around the branch last month. One picture showed Maintenance Staff Workers James Carson and Jason Arnold installing one of the signs. Mr. Rogge reported that Ms. Ayres was out of surgery and in ICU. She is off by-pass and is doing well.

He said the Board had probably seen his articles on health tips in *Ripple* each month, but he had an example in their packets as well along with the quiz. He said he was trying to encourage staff members to improve their health by asking them to read these articles and take the corresponding quizzes. We don't keep track of staff members' scores; we just want to know who completed the quizzes as an indication that they read the articles. He said we recently revised our computer log-in screens for the public to show that we filter out websites that use hate speech. To keep all our policies and procedures aligned, we also recently revised the Promotional Materials Procedure in the Employee Handbook to show that Library staff will not post flyers for groups that use hate speech.

## **OUTREACH SERVICES**

Outreach Services Coordinator Tammy DiBartolo handed out information regarding the purchase of a new bookmobile. She also said she'd like to purchase eBooks for children through the Sebco Company. She explained that these eBooks would be available for unlimited use once we purchase them and that we wouldn't need multiple copies because the company would allow more than one of our customers to use them at the same time.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Administrative and Public Relations Specialist Jana Fryday said a Black History Month program at the King Branch was featured on KALB in February. Also, the X-box Dance Central 2 Competition was featured on KALB at 6 and 10 p.m. on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Westside Regional's "Electronic Petting Zoo" program was featured in *The Town Talk* on March sixth. *The Town Talk*, KALB, and KLAX continue to post announcements for various Library programs.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Rogge said he felt the administrative staff and the Board had a consensus about the King Branch needing a new building, but he was curious about the Board's ideas on which branch should receive an expansion or new building after the King project. He explained that both Gunter and Robertson needed more space because of their usage, but that Gunter doesn't have any land on which to expand while Robertson has plenty of room for expansion. He also mentioned that Boyce's usage numbers have been rising since Branch Manager Margie Mealer began there, and that a 6,000 square foot metal building on Main Street in Boyce had come up for sale. Unfortunately, turning this building into the new Boyce Branch would be too expensive because the roof and the HVAC unit were old and in need of upgrades, in addition to the cost of refurbishing the inside.

He said most of the land around the Gunter Branch was not for sale the last time he looked into it. The man who owns the pet grooming business next door asked too high a price to sell his land. Mr. Rogge also mentioned that Ms. Ayres had suggested the possibility of a new regional library north of the river, between the Gunter and Robertson locations, perhaps on Military Highway or Esler Field Road. However, the administrative staff agreed that some customers at both branches already have a bit of a drive, and this idea could make it less convenient for them to visit the Library. He also mentioned the possibility of building a new small branch in the Buckeye area, but the administrative staff felt this would be too expensive with the additional staff and additional collection.

Mr. Rogge suggested that we get rolling with the process of building a new King Branch and selling the old property. He suggested once that project is completed, we begin expanding Robertson or Gunter. He suggested Robertson first because the land is there and it is slightly busier than Gunter. Mrs. McMahan asked if we had concurrent projects while building the Westside Regional Library. Mr. Rogge said we had worked on the planning to build Westside, Hineston, and McDonald at the same time because we had enough money. We think we'll have enough money for three more construction projects during the next ten years. Mrs. Lawton asked where the bookmobile fit into this. Mr. Rogge said the money for the new bookmobile would not come from the loans we propose to get for these building projects. We have already set aside \$110,000 for purchasing a new bookmobile, which means we'll only need \$70,000 from the overage we acquired from 2012-2013.

Mr. Rechs agreed that King needed a new building first. He proposed we add roughly forty-five feet by forty-eight feet on to the Robertson building. Robertson Branch Manager Mariann Strange explained that her weekly storytime programs were held in a space that was fifteen feet by fifteen feet, and that they'd had as many as twenty-four children, two teens and eight to nine

parents attending their storytimes. She also explained many people who work in Natchitoches and Winn parishes use her branch because they work in Tioga. Branch Manager Pam Martin said that although she was the acting manager at Westside Regional, her heart was at Gunter, the branch she was hired to manage. She explained that while they had the annex to use for their storytimes, they had to cap attendance at their home school storytime because they don't have enough room. Their parking lot at Gunter doesn't have enough room, either. Boyce Branch Manager Margie Mealer said her branch had a working area of twenty-eight by twenty-six feet. She holds lots of programs there, and her most recent was a practice LEAP test for parents, which was attended by eight parents and nineteen children. Mr. Rogge explained that he wasn't asking the Board to make a decision about Robertson, Gunter, or Boyce today, but he wanted them to be thinking about prioritizing these construction projects.

Mr. Rogge said he had spoken with the School Board about acquiring the Broadway property for the new King Branch, and that was going forward. We'd like to use the same plans that were designed for the Hineston and McDonald Branches, so Mr. Rogge asked Mr. Bill Tudor, of Alliance Design, to speak to the Board about plans for a new King Branch. Mr. Tudor said he enjoyed working with the Library on the Westside, Hineston, and McDonald buildings, and that he believed we could use a similar lay-out to the Hineston and McDonald branches for the new King Branch. He said he had visited the site, and it looked great. Mr. Holsomback asked whether the site had enough land for the design. Mr. Tudor said the one acre footprint was enough land for the building design and a future expansion. As soon as the Board approves it, they could draw up specific plans for the new King building and have them ready in thirty to forty-five days. Mr. Rogge asked the Board to pass a resolution to enter into a contract with Mr. Bill Tudor at Alliance Design. Mr. Rechs moved that the Board do so. Mrs. McMahon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rogge mentioned that in addition to Mr. Joe Williams (Pillbox Pharmacy) being interested in the King property, the Sheriff's Department was also interested because they'd like to open a new substation in that neighborhood. He asked that the Board also pass a resolution for the Library to enter into negotiations with the Rapides Parish School Board to acquire a portion of the Peabody High School property to build a new branch library. Mr. Rechs moved that the Board enter into negotiations with the School Board to acquire this property. Mrs. McMahon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rogge said Library had an overage of about \$500,000 that was carried over from 2012 to 2013. He said he had met with the administrative staff, and they would like to have the Board's permission to spend some of this money on several projects. He said we'd like to install new automatic doors at Main and Westside to make them more accessible to the elderly and to people with disabilities. We'd also like to build a new reference desk at Main, re-carpet Main and possibly do an asbestos abatement in that process, and build a new circulation desk at Johnson.

In addition we'd like to purchase the E-Commerce service so our customers could pay for copies, prints, faxes, and fines with credit cards. We'd also like to purchase a new bookmobile, which was mentioned previously. Mr. Holsomback said he was comfortable with spending some of this surplus from our 2012 operating budget because it looks like we will have an excess of income in 2013 as well. The Board discussed the cost effectiveness of purchasing the credit card system since E-Commerce would receive a percentage of the money we collect with credit cards. After this discussion, Mr. Holsomback said he and Systems Manager Janie Primeaux would research this service and bring more information regarding E-Commerce to the next Board meeting. Mr. Rogge asked the Board to approve the spending for the previously mentioned projects except the E-Commerce service. Mrs. Heath moved to approve the above capital expenditures. Mrs. Jordan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rogge said the Library recently modified the previously mentioned promotional procedure to prohibit materials with hate speech. He asked the Board to approve the revised Meeting Room Policy which would prohibit meeting room use by groups who use or promote hate speech. Mrs. McMahon moved to approve the revised policy, and Mrs. Jordan seconded. The motion passed.

**The next meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2013, at the Huie-Dellmon House.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Steve Rogge  
Secretary

Susie Smith  
President

March 2013