

Rapides Parish Library
Board of Control
May 19, 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, Mr. Mike Fairbanks, Ms. Ann Heath and Mr. Glen Rechs. Mr. Ralph Roach and Dr. Pat Barber were absent.

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

Minutes

Ms. Smith made a motion to approve the April minutes with corrections, Ms. Heath seconded and the motion passed.

2014 Audit Report:

Mr. Lee Willis of Rozier, Harrington & McKay presented the draft of the 2014 Annual Financial Report. The final report will be submitted to the Office of the Legislative Auditor. Mr. Willis reported that the findings are consistent with the monthly reports presented to the Board of Control by Jimmy Holsomback.

The Library is in good financial standing as shown on page 4 and has improved since last year. There is a new item on the report. The Compensation, Benefits and Other Payments to Agency Head or Chief Executive Officer is reported on page 28.

Financial Report

Mr. Jimmy Holsomback gave the financial report for the month of April. The year to date revenue is \$4,894,533 which is close to the budgeted amount of \$5,000,000. He expects additional tax revenue in December.

The Martin Foundation Grant check was received in April. During the month of April \$16,077 was collected in E-Rate Income. There will be additional credits from A T & T and he is expected to reach the budgeted amount.

Mr. Holsomback reported that the largest monthly expenses are salary, health insurance, and retirement and these remain consistent. He has not found a better interest rate for the checking account. He petitioned the Board to send him any information about an account with a better rate.

The initial architect fees have been paid for the Robertson expansion. The loan of \$1,000,000 has been received and in the bank so the Library can proceed. Bids will be received on June 3 at

2:00 PM at the Huie-Dellmon House. The Board is invited to attend. The project should begin by early July.

Mr. Holsomback presented the Branch Financial Statement. The large branches are Westside Regional and Main with the largest transactions. The medium size branches are Gunter, Martin, King and Robertson with transactions from \$35,000 to \$58,000. The smaller branches, which are Boyce, Johnson, Hineston and McDonald, have the lowest transactions.

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

Director's Report

Ms. Laura-Ellen Ayres gave the Director's report. Dr. Pat Barber has been ill, but is home now and a card was signed by all present.

The addresses for the members of the Police Jury are not posted online. Their address is shown as the courthouse. The Board of Control members' addresses are posted on the Library's website. Ms. Ayres asked if the board members were comfortable with their addresses being posted. The general consensus was to leave it as is.

Ms. Ayres reported that two part-time employees had been terminated. Four new substitute clerks have been hired to handle the summer rush.

She reminded the Board that Ethics training is due.

Ms. Ayres will be off June 8 to 12. Wes Saunders will be in charge that week. Ms. Ayres will be available by cell phone. She will also be tutoring her grandson this summer which will affect her schedule; however she will continue her library duties as usual.

Ms. Ayres announced that Margie Mealer, Boyce Branch Manager, will be leaving the Rapides Parish Library. Ms. Mealer has recently received a Master's Degree in Library Sciences and has accepted a position as Head of the Children's Department in Lincoln Parish. Her last day will be June 10. She will be missed and we wish her well.

Ms. McMahon asked who was terminated and the reason for the termination. Ms. Ayres stated that since this is a public meeting it is not appropriate to discuss names or details.

Ms. McMahon inquired about past employment openings that have been brought before the board, specifically when Ms. Ayres became director. Mr. Rechs stated that was a different issue since it was the director of the Library. Ms. Ayres said that it was her understanding that as part of her job as director; she was to handle the employment issues including hiring and termination.

Ms. Ayres reminded the board that she had hired and terminated substitute clerks in the past without approval of the board members. Ms. McMahon said that the policy should be reviewed. In the past, employment issues had been brought before the board; however that was when the employee personally brought the issue to the board meeting.

Ms. Rechs said that the board makes the policy and is not involved in the day to day operations of the Library, including hiring or terminating employees.

Ms. McMahon was concerned that the terminated employee did not receive due process. Ms. Heath inquired the meaning of “due process”. Ms. McMahon explained what she meant. She was concerned that the terminated employee’s rights had been violated. Ms. McMahon asked if part-time employees have the same rights as a full-time employee and is the probation period of employment different than the part-time status. Ms. Carolyn Colwell, Human Resources Administrator, said that part-time employees do have the same rights as full-time employees.

Ms. Ayres suggested that this matter be discussed with the personnel committee.

Direct Services

Ms. Lenna’ Mouton gave the Direct Services Report. Ms. Mouton presented the survey of the King Branch hours. The current hours of the King Branch are Monday to Thursday 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM and Friday and Saturday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The public computer usage and circulation activity was compared with Robertson Branch, Martin Library and Main Library. The survey revealed that the public computer usage as well as the circulation activity during the 6:00 to 8:00 PM time slot is low compared to the other branches as well as the earlier times at King.

Ms. Mouton suggested that the operation times be changed to 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM like the other medium size branches.

Ms. Smith asked if there was any type of public survey done. It was discussed that a public survey was conducted before the new location open; however the current activity results did not reflect the findings in the prior survey.

Ms. Starla Jones, King Branch Manager, explained that children were not coming to the Library in the afternoons or evenings. At the Third St. location, there was an increase in activity in the afternoons during the summer. She expressed that 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM would be “dead time”. She explained that people come into the branch in the afternoons and evenings after work.

Ms. Jones also noted that circulation is the same as the prior location which was a part-time branch. She acknowledged that activity slowed beginning about 7:00 PM to 7:45 PM; however the Wi-Fi usage is very good. Many young people come to the Library to use the Wi-Fi. The Wi-Fi usage is not broken down by time. Ms. Mouton noted that the Wi-Fi can be accessed outside the building.

Ms. Ayres stressed that this survey was not about reducing the hours. This Library branch offers many services and will grow into the services offered. The report is only on the effectiveness of having the Library open after 6:00 PM. Ms. Ayres said she is opposed to shortening the hours of the King Branch. Ms. Jordan suggested continuing the survey through the summer months since the students will be out of school.

Ms. McMahon suggested creating a short survey to obtain the public’s opinion on the hours.

Ms. Ayres said that if there is no growth then that would be another issue. Ms. Ayres suggested promoting the programs more aggressively. Ms. Margie Mealer, Boyce Branch Manager, suggested promoting the late King Branch hours in all the branches so those preferring the later hours will be aware of the King Branch hours.

There was discussion about advertising King Branch hours at other branches. Ms. Suzanne James, Public Relations Officer, will look into ways to promote the later hours.

The issue changing the hours of the King Branch was tabled until September after more data is gathered.

Human Resources

Ms. Carolyn Colwell, Human Resources Administrator recommended ratification of Jennifer Moore, King Circulation/Reference Clerk and Linda LaFever, Main Circulation Manager. Ms. McMahan made a motion to approve the ratification, Mr. Fairbanks seconded and the motion passed.

Ms. Colwell introduced the new substitute clerks.

Ms. Ayres presented Les Guidry, Facility Manager, with a 20 year Service Award. Mr. Guidry was hired as a maintenance worker in 1995 and was promoted to head of the department 3 years ago when the previous manager retired.

Ms. Darlene Paul will also receive a 20 year Service Award at the Full Staff Meeting next week.

Outreach and Youth Services

Ms. Tammy DiBartolo gave the Outreach and Youth Services report. She reported that Summer Reading, which dates are May 21 to July 25, is for children, teens, and adults. She is looking for places to promote the Summer Reading Program. The Bookmobile will be in Cheatham Park for the Community Fun Day sponsored by Delta Sigma Theta. On May 15, the annual concert for friends with special needs was held at the John Eskew Center.

Library staff from Beauregard Parish visited the RPL Outreach Program and will be setting up a homebound service similar to ours.

IT

In the absence to Janie Primeaux, Ms. Ayres read the IT report. Surface 3 Tablets have been purchased for each branch with the remainder of State Aid Money. IT will begin rolling these out in June.

Main's Online Catalog computers have been replaced. The ones at Westside Regional will be replaced by the end of the month. All of the IT staff attended Tech Fest at the State Library last month. Chester will begin offering All Day Microsoft classes to the staff in June.

Public Relations

Ms. Suzanne James gave the Public Relations report. In addition to the usual Marketing Report, she has made additional connections with Community Calendars, some of which are the Arts Council and the Downtown Revitalization.

The Rapides Parish School Board Superintendent has agreed to continue the Cards 4 Kids as well as adding a Library Card to the school supply list. Suzanne has been invited to attend orientation for teachers as well as open houses in the school.

Table tents will be set up in the Alexandria Mall Food Court which will share events and services that the Library offers.

The Library is now a distribution point for *Cenla Focus*. There were 8 to 10 bundles distributed to the branches in April.

Ms. McMahon shared about an article that she read about people with misdemeanors or felony convictions that did not have access to jobs. She responded to the article suggesting to readers to go to the Public Library in their area. Many Libraries offer free access to computers where job sites can be researched. Also free training is offered. She encouraged the board members to be advocates for the Library.

Ms. Tammy DiBartolo mentioned a Friends of the Rapides Library board member, Mike Wynn, who works in Probation and Parole. Mr. Wynn is an excellent promoter of the Library and is employed in the field that Ms. McMahon had described.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

New Business

Ms. McMahon presented the Long Range Plan and opened up the floor for questions. Ms. Jordan asked about the possibility of naming the Main Library to the National Register. Ms. Ayres explained that this will be discussed by the Properties Committee and then presented to the board. The Main Library is 50 years old. By placing the building on the National Register, some money for repairs such as a new roof may be available.

A reception is planned in the fall for the 50 year anniversary of the Library.

Ms. Ayres also noted that a goal had been added on the long form under the Johnson Branch, under Item I, sub-item c, to review the lease when it expires to explore other options.

Ms. Heath moved to accept the Long Range Plan, Mr. Fairbanks seconded and the motion passed.

The next regular meeting of the Rapides Parish Library Board of Control is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 2015, at 4:00 p.m., at the Huie-Dellmon House.

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

Respectfully submitted by

Laura-Ellen Ayres
Secretary

Glenn Rechs
President