

**Rapides Parish Library  
Board of Control  
February 21, 2017**

Minutes

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

Board members present were: Ms. June Arrington, Dr. Pat Barber, Mr. Michael Fairbanks, Ms. Lana Havens, Mr. Ralph Roach, Mr. Morris Taft Thomas, Mr. Gregory Walker and Ms. Laura-Ellen Ayres. Ms. Le'Anza Jordan and Ms. Linda McMahon were absent.

Mr. Fairbanks asked for public comments. There were none.

**Changes to Agenda by Unanimous Consent**

Dr. Barber made a motion to make the following changes to agenda: Table 16a Employee Handbook Changes, Table 16b Sex Offender Policy, and Add 16c Johnson Branch Lease. Ms. Havens seconded. The Board was polled and all approved.

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

**Agenda**

Mr. Thomas made a motion to approve the agenda. Dr. Barber seconded and the motion passed.

Mr. Fairbanks asked for Board Member reports. Mr. Fairbanks commented that he was happy to be back after his recent illness.

**Minutes**

Mr. Roach made a motion to approve the January minutes. Ms. Havens seconded and the motion passed.

**Service Award**

Former Director Steve Rogge presented a 35 year service award to Director Laura-Ellen Ayres. Mr. Rogge said that Ms. Ayres has worn many hats at the Rapides Parish Library during her 35 years of service. In 1989, she was promoted from Manager of Technical Services to the newly created position of Collection Manager Coordinator. In 1999, the IT Department was created and Ms. Ayres was selected to head the department. She set up the department and hired qualified people. She was often the "go between" for the circulation staff and the IT staff explaining new technology and ideas. When the Assistant Director for Direct Services position was created, Ms. Ayres was asked again to work in the newly created position.

Throughout her career, Ms. Ayres has worked with budgets, construction, tax campaigns, censorship, problems with patrons and employees and a long list of other duties. In 2014, when Mr. Rogge retired, Ms. Ayres became the Library Director. The Rapides Parish Library

continues to grow, improve and evolve under her leadership. The people of Rapides Parish have greatly benefited from her experience and expertise.

Ms. Ayres thanked the Board for the honor. She was hired while a student at Louisiana College. Her duties at that time included reference, cataloging and transporting a 16mm film projector to the branches during the summer. While attending Library school, the director asked her to come back to RPL when she finished her studies. She was delighted to be able to come back to work in her hometown. Ms. Ayres shared a fond memory. As a child, she would attend the Martin Library with her mother and brother and bring home a clothes basket full of books. She said her goal is to serve the customers as best she can. She often quotes Steve Rogge who said, "Find a way to get to 'yes'."

### **Financial Report**

Mr. Jimmy Holsomback presented the Financial Report. There were several unusual revenue and expenses for January. The January Ad Valorem Taxes was more than previous years. As previously reported, the parish tax notice were delayed due to the reassessment by the Rapides Parish Tax Assessor. Therefore, receipt of some tax income was delayed until January. Additional Ad Valorem Tax has been received and will be reported in February.

Accounts 4158 and 4159 are yearly principal and interest payments for the loans for the King, Robertson and Libuse Branches. Account 4240 is an expense for a large maintenance agreement for the software system including payroll and accounting. Account 4280 is a yearly expense for the Retirement System Statutory Fee.

The Assets heading on the Balance Sheet indicates the yearly income expected to receive for Ad Valorem Taxes and State Revenue Sharing. The auditor requires that this income is listed on the Balance Sheet.

The Libuse Branch Report and the Libuse Project Budget reflects the expenses for the project. The contractor has begun working on the foundation. The rain has delayed the progress, however work is expected to steadily continue.

Dr. Barber asked where the income from late fees was reported. Mr. Holsomback explained that Account 3038 on the Financial Statement reports all branch income which includes late fees, copy and fax fees, etc.

Mr. Roach made a motion to approve the Financial Report. Mr. Thomas seconded and the motion passed.

### **Director's Report**

Ms. Laura- Ellen Ayres presented the Statistics Report for October, November, and December 2016. She reported that the moving averages increased each month due to an increase in Online Resources. Ms. Ayres and Ms. Mouton are working on ways to attract people to the Library buildings.

Ms. Ayres presented the 2016 Annual Report. The short form is given to the public and highlights Capital Improvements, Partnerships, Programs and Technology. Ms. Ayres noted that a partnership with the Hispanic Committee of the South provides car seats. There are many more partnerships other than the ones highlighted in the report. The long form of the Annual Report is provided to the Board, Police Jury and staff. She pointed out on the Statistical Summaries that the Circulation Rate has increased 9.88% and the Turnover Rate for 2016 is 2.67. The goal for the Turnover Rate is 2.5. Each department manager and branch manager submitted a report for the year's accomplishments.

The Huie-Dellmon House has been added to the National Historic Register. The Huie-Dellmon House was added under the communication classification of the National Historic Register. Ms. Myrtle Dellmon was an innovator who served many years as the Chair of the Board of the *Town Talk*. The certificate from the national organization is expected soon.

The renewal of the Materials Circulation Policy in March will be postponed until September. Library cards of other library systems do not expire. RPL cards expire after three years. The same company that handles the collections has a program in which patron addresses are verified and updated. Ms. Ayres will research this program and look at the policies of other Library systems as to the expiration of cards before the policy is presented in the fall.

The pay for Substitute Clerks has increased from \$7.65 an hour to \$8.00 an hour, in hopes to attract good candidates for the position who will stay in the system. There are currently four Substitute Clerks who also received the increase.

### **Direct Services**

Ms. Lenna' Mouton reported that the Alexandria locations were without power for short time today due to a power outage in the City of Alexandria. No closures were necessary and power has been restored.

The Boyce Branch closed early on February 2 due to a citywide shutdown of the water system in the Town of Boyce. On Friday, the Martin Library opened an hour early at 8:00 am and closed an hour early at 5:00 pm, due to the Pineville Mardi Gras parade.

The tables and chairs in the meeting room at the Martin Library have been replaced with new ones. The room will seat ten to twenty people and is available after hours for meetings. The flooring at the circulation desk and public computer area has been replaced with new tile. Dr. Barber commented that she meets monthly at the Martin Library for a book club. The group enjoys using the meeting room and the Branch Manager always has coffee available for them.

The King Branch will host its *3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Author Showcase* on Saturday at the Alexandria Mall Common Area. More than twenty authors are expected to attend.

There were two of dead trees near the Robertson Branch parking lot which could cause damage to vehicles. These trees were taken down this week. Mr. Holsomback and Facilities Manager Les Guidry are working with the architect to widen the drive-thru at the Robertson Branch to allow for easier access to the window.

## **Human Resources**

Ms. Jackie Brown reported that a Substitute Clerk voluntarily terminated before the six month ratification period was complete.

## **Outreach and Youth Services**

Ms. Tammy DiBartolo was unable to attend the Board meeting. She submitted a written report.

February is always a busy month for Youth Services and it seems as though it has gotten busier! The Bookmobile continues to be very popular in the community. They are getting more requests from schools to have the Bookmobile visit them.

New POP Clerk, Natasha McNett, has been hosting teen programs at various branches. Ms. McNett has great ideas for teen programs that will bring more teens into the library.

Ms. Ayres reported that Ms. Karla Kirby and Ms. DiBartolo will be giving the keynote address at the State Library's Staff Days on February 21 and 23. They are talking about special needs programs in public libraries and how to make them happen successfully.

The annual Black History program, *Candied Yams and Cornbread* was held at Main on February 18. The turnout was better than usual. Ms. Kirby was able to go on the Tony Brown radio show to promote the event.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Creative Con was a success. Attendance was over 300 and the day went off without a hitch. We hope to grow this event and make it better each year.

The Library will be at the Tobacco Free Zone at the Alexandria Mardi Gras parade on Sunday February 26. The Rapides Parish Library has been part of this event since its inception nine years ago. This is a safe place to bring kids to enjoy activities before the parade comes.

Ms. Ayres mentioned that Ms. DiBartolo and Ms. Kirby will be hosting a one day workshop in May about special needs programming at the Pineville Convention Center. This is open to all librarians in Louisiana.

## **IT**

No Report.

## **Public Relations**

Ms. Suzanne James reported that the authors who are attending 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Authors Showcase are independent authors who design the covers and edit the books themselves. They will have books for sale and be available to autograph the copies. The King Branch's Royal Writers Guild has published a book of short stories and poems that will be available to purchase. The proceeds will help support programming at the King Branch.

Teen Tech Month in March highlights the resources available at the Library for teens. Scienceflix is a resource for students in fifth grade thru high school which helps with science

project. This year's theme is "Be the Source of Change." In Natasha McNett's Teen Program for the month of March, teens will create a blog with a thirty second commercial showing why their Library is the best.

Social media continues to grow. There are about 1,200 Facebook followers and the Pinterest following is growing

### **Unfinished Business**

None.

Ms. Mouton mentioned that she and Outreach staff had met with a client from St. Mary's Training School who will begin volunteering at Main Library from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm for five days a week. This will open doors to a partnership with the school.

### **New Business**

Mr. Holsomback explained that the lease for the Johnson Branch Library will expire on April 1, 2017. The current rent is \$1,150 per month, which includes utilities. The Director of the Lecompte High School has offered to renew the lease for three years at the current price. Mr. Holsomback explained that, other than salaries and purchase of circulation items, there is very little expense at the Johnson Branch. Maintenance is provided by LHS (Lecompte High School). Dr. Barber said that the Library is the highlight of the old Lecompte High School building and is an asset to the community.

Dr. Barber made a motion to renew the lease at \$1,150 per month, including utilities until April 1, 2020. Mr. Roach seconded and the motion passed.

Ms. Ayres reminded the Board that the recommendation will be sent to the Police Jury for approval in their March meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Rapides Parish Library Board of Control is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, 2017, at 3:30 p.m., at the Huie-Dellmon House.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Laura-Ellen Ayres

Secretary

Michael Fairbanks

President