

**Rapides Parish Library
Board of Control
August 20, 2019**

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Rapides Parish Library (RPL) Board of Control was called to order by Board President Gregory Walker at 3:30 p.m., at the Glankler Media Lab of Main Library located at 411 Washington St., Alexandria.

Board members present were: Ms. June Arrington, Mr. Michael Fairbanks, Ms. Lana Havens, Ms. Linda McMahon, Mr. Ralph Roach, Mr. Morris Taft Thomas, Greg Walker and Ms. Laura-Ellen Ayres.

Absent: Ms. Dana Cox and Ms. Le'Anza Jordan

President Greg Walker led the Pledge of Allegiance and offered an invocation.

Agenda

Mr. Thomas made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. McMahon seconded and the motion passed.

Recognition of Volunteers

Martin Library Manager Pam Bennett introduced Brittney Gibson who worked at Martin Library through the Student Worker Program of the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Ms. Gibson's duties included weeding, shelving, shelf reading, and helping with BookEnds (the Friends' used bookstore).

Libuse Branch Manager Pam Martin introduced Raven Brister who worked at Libuse Branch Library through the Student Worker Program of the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Ms. Martin noted that the program allows student workers to get hands-on training. She said that Ms. Brister helped during programs at Libuse during the *Summer Reading Program*. Ms. Martin said that Ms. Brister had good customer service skills and a willingness to help the staff and customers.

Main Programming Specialist Tara Williamson introduced Mr. David Sproles and Ms. Nina Sproles who taught electronics workshops focusing on STEM. They led electronic camps at Main and Libuse.

Ms. Williamson introduced Ms. Jennifer DePriest who usually works with college students but taught middle school students Python Coding during camps offered at Main Library. The camps were two-and-a-half to three hours long. Morning and afternoon sessions were offered and the children often stayed at the Library for the entire day. Ms. DePriest said that she hopes to continue to offer the coding camps at Main Library and other locations.

Ms. LaKeisha Henton, Martin Luther King Jr. Branch Manager, said that the King Branch focused on the arts during the *Summer Reading Program*. She said that Board Member Mr. Morris Taft

Thomas taught classes about art during the summer months. These classes focused on express and techniques but taught the children that “they can be so much more.” The classes were well attended with up to seventeen in attendance.

Ms. Henton said that the Sankofa Cultural Collective offered Teen Poetry Night, pottery classes, and other programs focusing on the arts. Many adults attended the programs with the teens and children.

Each of the recognized volunteers received a certificate and a goody bag from the Library.

Volunteer Coordinator Londa Price reported that there are 98 registered volunteers who have logged 3,344.5 volunteer hours. She said that the volunteers work in many areas including the Friends of the Library book sale, *Summer Reading Program* and *Tales Along the Bayou*. Organizations volunteer such as People & Pets who help with reading programs at Libuse Branch and Westside Regional Libraries. Ms. Price said that volunteer opportunities are available.

Mr. Walker congratulated the volunteers and thanked them for sharing their time and knowledge with the patrons of the Library. He said that they are making a difference by mentoring the children.

The volunteers were dismissed to a reception in the programming room.

Board Members Report

Ms. McMahon reported that the Director Search Committee will reschedule the meeting for later in September.

Ms. McMahon said the Ms. Jordan’s son, Kyle Davis Jordan, passed away recently and that a card would be appropriate.

Minutes

Ms. Havens made a motion to approve the June minutes. Mr. Fairbanks seconded, and the motion passed.

Financial Report

Business Manager Jimmy Holsomback presented the June and July financial report. He said that the revenue is about \$100,000 more than last year at this time. The operating expenses were the normal expenses for the month. He mentioned that Account No. 4155 was professional fees for the auditor and other professional fees. Expenses listed at the end of the written report are unbudgeted items paid from the contingency fund.

The balance of the set-aside accounts is shown on the Balance Sheet. These accounts are earning 1.75% interest. Fifty-five thousand dollars, along with the interest earned, will be added at the end of the year, making the balance about nine hundred thousand dollars.

Mr. Holsomback explained that the maintenance shop had repairs recently. The shop floods when there is a heavy rain. A new roof and gutters were installed. Gutters will be installed at the Annex

Building which is adjacent to the shop. Additional landscaping is scheduled and should fix the flooding problem.

He reported that plank flooring was installed in the Annex which had painted concrete floors. He invited the Board to stop by and look at the changes made at the building.

Mr. Fairbanks made a motion to accept the financial report. Mr. Thomas seconded and the motion passed.

Director's Report

Ms. Laura-Ellen Ayres presented the statistical reports for April, May and June. She noted that circulation increased for at least one month. Increases were reported in programming attendance and electronic resources. The *Summer Reading Program* has ended. Karla Kirby will report next month about the participation numbers.

The City of Alexandria has changed 5th Street to a one-way street to help with traffic flow and parking for the community college. The parking lot at Main Library may be re-stripped to make parking easier for our patrons.

Ms. Ayres said that the director of the Central Louisiana Prevention Services has asked the Library to consider having employees who can administer the rescue drug Narcan. If the Library decides to do this, our lawyer and the Board will be consulted. Volunteers from the staff would be asked to take the training and be able to administer the drug which is used for opioid overdoses. Ms. McMahon said that she is on the Board that Ms. Ayres mentioned. With a fire station across the street from Main Library, there would be assistance close by. Ms. Ayres said that at least one staff member is trained in the use of Narcan.

The 2020 budget should include the expansion of the parking lot at the Libuse Branch Library. During popular Library programs and voting, there is not enough parking. The area around the library branch continues to grow. The original plans by the architect include an area of expansion for parking. The addition of the ten parking spaces is estimated to cost about \$60,000 - \$65,000. It was noted that the Library owns the first row of pecan trees only. The remainder of the orchard is owned by the Tuma family.

Closures to report:

- Robertson was closed for a power outage on 6/20 – 6/21.
- Robertson closed during Tropical Storm Barry due to power outage.
- The Lecompte High School Board closed the Johnson Branch on 8/8 due to an electrical issue resulting in smoke filling the lower part of the building.
- Main Library closed on 8/16 for A/C repairs.

IT

Systems Manager Janie Primeaux reported that all of the new servers at the branches have been installed. This was one of the IT projects for the year. Chester Mealer replaced all of the hardware at Main and the branches to improve the Wi-Fi service.

Roland Rodrigue and Matt Martin are continuing to replace circulation computers. They have completed Martin, Boyce, Robertson and Hineston.

Bill Huffman and Chester Mealer are working on the new SharePoint server which is our in-house site.

Public Relations

Public Relations Officer Jennifer Hughes gave the Public Relations Report. She said that her focus is on the *Back 2 School Bash* which will be Saturday at Pineville Elementary School. September is library card sign-up month. Everyone signing up for a card will be entered in a drawing for a Tamp and Grind gift card.

Cards 4 Kids library card applications have gone out to most of the private schools in the area. Kindergarten, 4th and 8th grades will receive the applications in the public schools.

Social media followers has almost doubled since August, 2018. This is due in large part to a new Instagram account managed by ILS Administrator, Trina Kirk.

Direct Services

Lennà Mouton reported that Westside Branch Manager Elizabeth Parish has resigned and Libuse Manage Pam Martin is acting as dual manager of Westside and Libuse until a manager is selected.

CLTCC continues to offer Hi-set classes at the Boyce Annex. There are currently five students enrolled and the program will continue as long as there is a need. Main Library is hosting tours of students from CLTCC in August and September. The staff walk through the building with the students and discuss the resources available at the Library.

This is the third year to host the *Back 2 School Bash*. It will be held at Pineville Elementary from 9:00 – 11:00 on Saturday.

Human Resources

Human Resource Administrator Jackie Brown presented James Layssard, Lead Facilities Specialist, for ratification. Mr. Fairbanks made a motion to approve the ratification. Ms. Havens seconded and the motion passed.

Outreach and Youth Services

Tammy DiBartolo, Outreach Services Coordinator, presented the Outreach and Youth Services Report.

Ms. DiBartolo reported *Rapides Reads* will begin soon. There are many exciting events planned.

She was able to obtain grant funding from Aetna Healthcare (one of the Louisiana Medicaid providers) to purchase school supplies for the rural branches. This year Boyce, Johnson, McDonald and Hineston got bags of school supplies to give away. We hope to make this event bigger next year.

Through our partnership with the Pollock Prison, Ms. DiBartolo was asked to participate in one of the job training events on July 17th. She shared ways that the library could help in both job training and job searches. The prison staff has asked her to come back and do an event for the families of those who are incarcerated.

Information was provided at the Food Bank's *Good Food Project Kid's Day* on 7/24. Ms. DiBartolo read stories to the children and promoted library services.

Judge Davidson asked Ms. DiBartolo to be part of a new group called *Improving Services to Families*. Judge Davidson feels that the library is a place that can offer families services that can improve their quality of life. The first meeting will be held on August 21st.

Karla Kirby and Ms. DiBartolo will be presenting a session at the State Library on serving hard-to-reach teens on August 22nd. This is a great opportunity for them.

Ms. DiBartolo reported about a partnership with the Louisiana Beef Industry Council for a presentation by Temple Grandin. Dr. Grandin is an accomplished and well-known adult with autism. She is a professor of animal science at Colorado State University.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Mr. Roach reported on behalf of the Properties Committee. The Committee met on July 23rd to discuss property in Boyce owned by Wettermark LLC at the corner of Belfast St. and Hwy 8.

Mr. Roach said that after discussion, the committee agreed that this was a perfect place for the new Boyce Branch. Two acres were appraised for \$40,000, but the committee agreed that Mr. Holsomback would obtain an appraisal for the on 3.4 acres. All in the committee, agreed they would prefer to purchase the entire tract. Mr. Holsomback has received the appraisal on the 3.4 acres for \$68,000.

At a later time, once the land is purchased, the Library can work with other organizations to fund the building, at least partially with grants, or failing that, consider using the Library's fund balance to fund it.

But, for now, the committee would like to work on purchasing the land. At the meeting on July 23rd, Mr. Walker made a motion to authorize the Administration to negotiate and purchase the property for no more than the appraised value. Ms. Cox seconded and the motion passed. Therefore, the committee moved and seconded this as a Board-level motion, and call on the President to call for a vote.

Discuss followed about the access to the site by the community and services that could be offered in collaboration with CLTCC.

Mr. Walker called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Walker announced that the next meeting will be on September 17th at the Huie-Dellmon House.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Laura-Ellen Ayres
Secretary

Gregory Walker
President