

**Rapides Parish Library
Board of Control
June 16, 2020**

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Rapides Parish Library (RPL) Board of Control was called to order by Board President Linda McMahon at 3:30 p.m., Westside Regional Library, 4616 Provine Place, Alexandria.

Board members present were Mr. Michael Fairbanks, Ms. Linda McMahon, Ms. Le'Anza Jordan, Mr. Greg Walker, and Ms. Celise Reech-Harper.

Board members present by phone were Ms. June Arrington, Ms. Dana Cox, and Mr. Ralph Roach.

Mr. Morris Taft Thomas and Ms. Lana Havens were absent.

President Linda McMahon led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda

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

Minutes

Ms. McMahon made a motion to approve the May minutes. Mr. Fairbanks seconded, and the motion passed.

2019 Audit

Mr. Lee Willis of Rosier, McKay and Willis presented a draft copy of the 2019 audit. He said that the final audit would be filed with the State of Louisiana in a few days. The financial report is consistent with the monthly reports that are submitted to the Board of Control monthly. He said that the finances have improved from last year and that the Library is financially sound.

Service Awards

Martin Luther King Jr. Branch Manager LaKeisha Henton presented a 35 year service award to Cynthia McGinnis who is a circulation/reference clerk at the King Branch Library. Ms. Henton said that Ms. McGinnis is an important part of the Library. Ms. McGinnis said that she enjoyed working at the Library and helping the patrons.

Libuse Branch Manager Teri Sullivan presented a 25 year service award to Darlene Paul. Ms. Paul is a circulation/reference clerk at the Libuse Branch Library. Ms. Sullivan said that Ms. Paul often introduces patrons to new authors and encourages children to develop a love for reading. Ms. Paul said that she has enjoyed meeting people throughout the years including patrons and new and former employees.

Director Celise Reech-Harper presented a 20 year service award to Payroll and Benefits Administrator Stacy Dubrock. Ms. Reech-Harper said that Ms. Dubrock often is the first person to arrive in the mornings and stays late to get payroll and other important matters complete so that staff are taken care of. Ms. Dubrock said that she loves taking care of the librarians that take care of our patrons.

Director Celise Reech-Harper presented a 25 year service award to Facilities Manager Les Guidry. Ms. Reech Harper said that the facilities department are often the unsung heroes that keep our buildings and equipment safe, secure, and in working order. Mr. Guidry said he appreciated the opportunity to serve the Library for the last 25 years.

Financial Report

Business Manager Jimmy Holsomback presented the financial report for May. He said that ad valorem tax receipts will remain low until December when a substantial amount is expected. The interest received from the bank accounts continues to drop and is at 0.4%

Three payroll cycles were completed in May which increased the amount of salary expenses. Staff are paid every two weeks which is twenty-six pay cycles each year. Most months have two pay cycles, but this year May and November will have three. Utility expenses were lower than normal due to the COVID closure.

Account No. 5101 and 5102 were expenses paid out for the Boyce Branch project and will be reimbursed from the construction account.

Mr. Holsomback noted that Account No. 5750 were expenses related to COVID. An account has been created in operating statement to track these expenses in anticipation of grants or other reimbursement opportunities. He reported that the balance sheet indicates a strong financial standing.

Mr. Fairbanks made a motion to accept the financial report. Ms. Cox seconded, and the motion passed.

Director's Report

Ms. Celise Reech-Harper reported that the bid process has moved forward for the Alfred Boyce Wettermark Library. Bids are being received at the Rapides Parish Police Jury Office until 2 p.m. on July 14th. Bids will be opened at the Police Jury Office.

Laptops and hotspots will be available for checkout in early July. The Library is partnering with other organizations like the United Way and the Rapides Parish School Board to promote this service. The school board will also be providing hotspots, but their supply are for students only. The hotspots provided by the Library will be available to patrons.

The opening for limited public traffic in branches is tentatively set for June 29. However, that will likely be postponed until after the July 4th holiday due to rises in COVID-19 cases in Rapides Parish.

RPL has applied through the State Library of Louisiana for funding of our hotspots and hotspot coverage. An application has been submitted to IMLS for funding of a contracted social worker and

mental health and addiction-related programming. If funding is received, a social worker would rotate to all locations, but primarily will serve Main Library since there is a greater need.

The number of checkouts has seen a decline over the last quarter, as expected, due to COVID-19. Utilization and engagement on our social media forums have significantly increased. \$233,424.94 in total late item fines was forgiven. Patrons have expressed appreciation for this act of goodwill during the pandemic.

The Main and Martin Branches closed early on June 3, 2020 in anticipation of traffic and parking congestion related to marches held in downtown Alexandria.

Direct Services

No Report

Human Resources

No Report

Outreach and Youth Services

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

Summer Reading has begun. Outreach staff, with the help of other staff members, put together Grab and Go craft bags for patrons to pick up at their library location.

The department put together:

- 800 children's bags that include 4 crafts or activities
- 400 teen bags that include 4 crafts or activities
- 463 adult bags that include 4 crafts or activities

RPL is using Beanstack again this year for patrons to register and record minutes read virtually.

Virtual storytimes continue via the RPL Facebook page. We plan to continue this program and will add more virtual programs in the very near future.

Outreach continues to take the hotspots to stops throughout the parish. This service makes Wi-Fi available in areas that may have limited or no internet access.

Bookmobile/Homebound staff will be starting a drop-off, no contact homebound service in the near future. Our homebound patrons say that they have missed having books and movies during the quarantine.

Update on Temple Grandin: Dr. Grandin is only providing virtual lectures and programs until the end of 2020. She will postpone the live program until next summer. Our deposit will carry over to 2021, and we will host Dr. Grandin in the summer of 2021. Specific date will be announced soon.

Ms. Reech-Harper added that the Library has a \$750 credit with Better World Books for weeded items that was sent to the organization. Some of the items that we send are sold or are sent to locations that do not have access to books.

Ms. McMahan mentioned a book depository called "Take A Book – Leave A Book" in which books are exchanged at a drop off location in a community. Ms. Jordan mentioned that there is a similar

Little Lending Library in the Garden District. Ms. DiBartolo reported that there is one at the Rapides Parish Courthouse that the Library replenishes from time to time.

IT

No Report

Public Relations

Public Relations Officer Jennifer Hughes reported that the *Safe Pick Up, Summer Reading Program, and Internet on the Go* has been promoted on the RPL website, in local media, on social media, and banners at our locations. Yard signs were placed at the locations of the *Internet on the Go* program and billboards throughout the parish are promoting *Summer Reading Program*.

The annual *Back to School Bash* may be a drive through program this year. Ms. Hughes reported that social media engagement continues to increase. She mentioned Johnson Branch Manager Suzanne Bosarge and Johnson Circulation Clerk Sonja Spahn have done a particularly good job engaging the Lecompte community on social media.

Unfinished Business

Ms. Reech-Harper presented the Sex Offender Policy with necessary changes that reflect the branches that are within 1,000 feet of schools. Ms. Reech-Harper said that there have been no changes to the law. She said that Library policy follows the guidelines of the law but does not enforce the law. Details about an individual's violations are not posted on the State website for registered sex offenders. Individuals are responsible for insuring they are not violating their own parole or other limitations. The Library policy is posted on the Library website, and the changes will be effective the date of this meeting.

Mr. Fairbanks made a motion to approve the updated policy. Ms. McMahon seconded and the motion passed.

New Business

Ms. Reech-Harper presented the Credit Card Policy for renewal without changes.

Ms. McMahon made a motion to approve the policy as presented. M. Fairbanks seconded and the motion passed.

Ms. McMahon announced that the next meeting will be on August 18th at the Huie-Dellmon House.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Celise Reech-Harper
Secretary

Linda McMahon
President