

**Rapides Parish Library  
Board of Control  
March 16, 2021**

Minutes

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

Board members physically present were Mr. Fairbanks, Mr. Ralph Roach, Ms. Dana Cox, Ms. June Arrington, Mr. Greg Walker, and Ms. Lana Havens.

Present by phone were Ms. Le'Anza Jordan and Ms. Linda McMahon.

Mr. Morris Taft Thomas was absent.

Mr. Fairbanks led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Agenda**

Mr. Fairbanks requested an addition be made to the agenda to include discussion of a grant resolution under New Business. Mr. Walker moved to accept the addition. Ms. Havens seconded, and the motion passed. Mr. Fairbanks then called for a motion to approve the amended agenda. Ms. Cox so moved, and Ms. Havens seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.

**Minutes**

Mr. Roach moved to approve the February minutes. Ms. Cox seconded, and the motion passed.

**Financial Report**

Business Manager Stacy Dubrock presented the February financial report. The budget remains on track with bills coming in slightly later than normal due to slow mail. Ad valorem revenue has been received, and refunds and reimbursements are expected for some expenditures.

The building that currently houses the Boyce branch has been sold to the Town of Boyce. The mayor of Boyce is currently reviewing the situation. Once Mayor Moore has reviewed the documents, the Library's director and business manager will discuss with her an extension for the library to stay until the new branch is completed. Completion is projected for the second half of July with a move-in target of mid-August.

Ms. Havens motioned to approve the report. Mr. Roach seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Director's Report**

Director Celise Reech-Harper reported on the following:

- All physical locations are now open to the public with mask and physical distancing requirements in place. Surfaces will be sanitized regularly and returned items quarantined for three days. Curbside and drive-through services will continue to be offered.

- Members of the Strategic Planning Committee are creating targeted surveys to gather responses from library stakeholder groups. The data collected will create a guide for five years of library growth and community support.
- Earlier this month, counselors from Central Louisiana Human Services District and the Louisiana Spirit Crisis Specialists visited all branches and provided support to staff for stressors related to the pandemic and reopening. The Library will be exploring future partnerships with these specialists.
- Friends of the Library President Michelle Riggs Waller has been working with the Director to involve the Friends in the Library's strategic planning and to reinvigorate the group with new active memberships.
- The Rapides Parish Police Jury has formally proclaimed April 4-10, 2021 as Library Week in Rapides Parish. This coincides with the national observance of Library Week.

### **Direct Services**

Direct Services Coordinator Lenná Mouton confirmed all branches are now open to the public and doing well.

### **Human Resources**

No report.

### **Outreach and Youth Services**

Outreach Services Coordinator Tammy DiBartolo reminded the board that the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities virtual book discussion series "Who Gets to Vote?" will begin on Thursday, March 18.

Outreach will participate in an outdoor "make and take" safe activity sponsored by the Junior League on March 20 in the First United Methodist Church parking lot; they will also be promoting library services and the upcoming Summer Reading Program.

A grant of \$11,058 was received from the Rapides Foundation to construct StoryWalks in Boyce and Glenmora.

### **IT**

No report.

### **Public Relations**

Public Relations Officer Jennifer Hughes reported 210 new followers to RPL social media accounts. A new radio ad is currently running to promote the Library's reopening. The goal for newsletter subscriptions remains 10,000; there are currently 9,934.

To celebrate Earth Day, RPL is partnered with Neighborhood Forest to deliver trees to community children to plant. The trees will be delivered on or around April 22.

### **New Business**

A Board Grant Resolution was submitted to the board to authorize Tammy DiBartolo to negotiate and execute grant agreements on behalf of the Library and its Board and to give her the authority to manage such documents with the Rapides Foundation. This resolution will apply only to Rapides Foundation grants.

Ms. Le'Anza Jordan motioned for the board to accept and sign the written resolution. Ms. McMahon seconded. On unanimous vote, the motion passed and the document was signed immediately by President Michael Fairbanks.

Director Reech-Harper reminded the board that all branches currently offer free printing and faxing of up to 20 pages per day per individual. This service has been popular and beneficial to patrons. Ms. Reech-Harper proposed extending the service, and all present unanimously agreed.

Considering the rise in vaccinations and the potential for state open meeting laws to revert to pre-pandemic requirements, Ms. Reech-Harper suggested the board consider meeting fully in-person again beginning with the June 2021 meeting. Since a final decision would be based on case numbers at that time, the board agreed to reconsider this proposal in May.

The board next agreed to continue the practice of livestreaming all open board meetings and posting the video recordings publically to social media. It was decided this should be a simple procedural change rather than a change to the bylaws.

The State Library offers training to trustees on various topics; Ms. Reech-Harper asked the board if they would be interested in these training sessions. The board enthusiastically responded that they were interested and had participated in similar sessions in the past alongside other local boards.

Finance Committee Chair Le'Anza Jordan reported that the committee had met on March 12 and approved changing the contact name on all RPL financial accounts from Jimmy Holsomback to Stacy Dubrock. They also looked into reinvesting an expiring fund that Capital One would not renew because they no longer deal with public funds. Their decision, on Ms. Dubrock's recommendation, was to re-invest the funds at Evangeline Bank with a 12 month CD.

A motion to approve was requested for each Finance Committee item. Ms. Havens motioned for approval of the name change on accounts. Ms. McMahon seconded and the motion passed. Ms. Cox moved for approval to reinvest the CD funds with Evangeline bank. Mr. Roach seconded and the motion passed.

Ms. Reech-Harper updated the board on the Boyce construction project. The building is being prepared for exterior bricks. The projected completion date of late July is a bit later than originally hoped due to weather and supply chain setbacks, but construction is progressing nicely.

Mr. Fairbanks announced that the next meeting will be on April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Westside Regional Library.

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

Respectfully submitted by

Celise Reech-Harper  
Secretary

Michael Fairbanks  
President