

**Rapides Parish Library
Board of Control
May 17, 2022**

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, 5416 Provine Place, Alexandria by Vice President Le'Anza Jordan.

Board members present were Ms. Jordan, Mr. Gregory Walker, Ms. Lana Havens, Ms. Dana Cox and Ms. Irene Hobs. President Michael Fairbanks, Mr. Morris Taft Thomas, Mr. Ralph Roach, and Ms. June Arrington were absent. Also present were Library Director Celise Reech-Harper, five members of staff and one member of the public.

Ms. Jordan led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence dedicated to Mr. Fairbank's family upon the loss of his mother.

Public Comments

Mr. James Morgan addressed the Board regarding concerns about the Library's Collection Development Policy. He requested sections of the policy be revised to remove restrictions against hate speech in the collection and remove the statement ensuring access to materials for children. Ms. Jordan thanked Mr. Morgan for voicing his concerns and asked that he submit his petition and any specific concerns in writing to be further considered by the Board and Director.

Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved as written.

Minutes

Ms. Hobbs moved to approve the April minutes, seconded by Ms. Havens. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Financial Report

Business Manager Stacy Dubrock presented the April financial report, which showed most of the year's revenue has been received. Spending on gas and utilities continues to rise as national inflation worsens. She also reported that renegotiating the contract on the old Boyce building is not possible and rent will continue to be paid until the end of the existing agreement. The building will be used for storage in the meantime.

Ms. Havens moved to approve the financial report, seconded by Ms. Cox. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Director's Report

Library Director Celise Reech-Harper reported the following:

- The millage vote passed with 68% approval, ensuring the Library will be funded for the next ten years.

- Procedures on book challenges have been reviewed, and concerned patrons are invited to fill out the appropriate forms. Decisions are made by the Director with appeals to the Board possible.
- Lighting and air conditioning system updates are underway at several branches, and completion of additional projects at Boyce will be finished by the end of the month.
- In October, she will be speaking at the Internet Librarian and Information Management Professionals Conference in California on social services and mental health support through community partnerships via libraries.

Direct Services Report

Ms. Reech-Harper commended Direct Services Coordinator Lenna Mouton for filling in at the branches during recent staff coverage shortages.

Human Resources Report

Ms. Reech-Harper reported that in order to attract more potential job candidates, new full-time Floating Circulation Clerk positions have been created and are currently being advertised.

Programming and Outreach Report

Adult Programming & Outreach Manager Karen Riley Simmons informed the board of her department's recent activities, including painting classes and a writing workshop hosted by Louisiana Poet Laureate Mona Lisa Saloy. Preschool Outreach has recently begun delivering to daycares again. The summer reading program begins on June 1, and the POD is excited for in-person events and activities.

IT Report

Systems Manager Janie Primeaux said her staff is still working hard to restore internet speeds. They are also adding additional memory to all staff PCs.

Public Relations Report

Public Relations Officer Jennifer Smarr announced the upcoming event promotions, including the Summer Reading Program and a community plant swap. The weekly newsletter has been reinstated. Matt Martin is working to update RPL's branded print materials.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 21, 2022 at the Westside Regional Library.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Celise Reech-Harper

Michael Fairbanks

Secretary

President