

**Rapides Parish Library
Board of Control
January 20, 2026**

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Rapides Parish Library (RPL) Board of Control was called to order at 3:35 p.m. at the Westside Regional Library, 5416 Provine Place, Alexandria by Board President Suelynne Mickey.

Board members present were Ms. Mickey, Ms. June Arrington, Dr. Christina Hurd, Mr. James Morgan, and Ms. Jackie Wilson. Ms. Dana Cox, Ms. Donna Rivers Doyle, and Ms. Irene Hobbs were absent. Also present were Library Director Celise Reech-Harper, seven members of staff, and five members of the public.

Ms. Mickey led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Agenda

Ms. Arrington motioned to approve the agenda. Ms. Wilson seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

Minutes

Mr. Morgan motioned to approve the minutes of the December regular meeting, seconded by Dr. Hurd. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Service Award

Direct Services Coordinator Lenna Mouton presented McDonald Branch Manager Gail Goldberg with an award for thirty-five years of distinguished service to the library and the Glenmora community.

Financial Reports

Business Manager Stacy Dubrock presented the November financial report. While insurance costs increased, revenue was boosted by greater than expected returns on bank interest, as well as grants and donations received. Ms. Arrington motioned to accept the financial report, seconded by Ms. Wilson. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Director's Report

Ms. Reech-Harper reported on library business, including upcoming events, conferences, and speaking engagements. She also shared year-end statistics showing increases in library card registrations and materials circulation.

Direct Services Report

Direct Services Coordinator Lenna Mouton invited all Board members to attend the third annual African American Cultural Heritage Center celebration, which will take place at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch Library on February 21.

Programming & Outreach Report

Ms. Reech-Harper shared news of recent school visits and Storytimes. The State Library's Youth Summer Reading Workshop will be held at Westside Regional Library on January 22.

IT Report

ILS Administrator Trina Kirk was pleased to announce changes in overdue notice procedures that will save time and materials costs. Relevant staff will attend the 2026 Innovative Users Group (IUG) Conference to learn more ways to advance the library's internal systems.

Public Relations Report

Ms. Reech-Harper promoted upcoming February events and recounted the success of the December charity donations across all branches.

Old Business

Ms. Reech-Harper distributed 2026 committee assignments to the Board. Ms. Arrington motioned to accept the assignments, seconded by Ms. Wilson. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

New Business

Mayor David Butler of the town of Woodworth addressed the Board and requested their consideration of a proposal for a new library branch to be built in Woodworth. After hearing the full proposal, which outlined a cooperative agreement between the Rapides Parish Library and the town of Woodworth, Ms. Mickey motioned to recommend the proposal to the Rapides Parish Police Jury. Ms. Wilson seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

A list of 2026 regular meeting dates was presented to the Board. Ms. Arrington motioned to adopt the meeting dates, seconded by Ms. Wilson. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Ms. Reech-Harper announced that the Police Jury had completed the bidding process on the unused portion of land at Westside Regional Library. Ms. Wilson motioned to accept the winning bid of \$24,500 by Caroline Dessens of Rise Physical Therapy. Mr. Morgan seconded, and the motion unanimously passed. The final vote on the sale will be made by the Police Jury.

Ms. Dubrock requested that three additional library vehicles be purchased while stock is available. The dealership is willing to extend 2025 state contract pricing, which is an opportunity to procure the needed vehicles at a competitive price that fits within the existing library budget. Ms. Arrington motioned to approve the purchase, seconded by Ms. Wilson. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

On behalf of the Personnel Committee, Ms. Arrington opened the floor to discussion of the Director's evaluation, at which time Ms. Reech-Harper waived her right to executive session. Ms. Arrington reported that the committee recommends a 5% increase to the Director's salary based on overall evaluation scores and in accordance with the Director's contract. Ms. Wilson motioned to approve the 5% increase. Dr. Hurd seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The next Library Board of Control meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at the Westside Regional Library.

Ms. Arrington motioned to adjourn, seconded by Dr. Hurd. On unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Celise Reech-Harper
Secretary

Suelynne Mickey
President

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