

**Rapides Parish Library
Board of Control
September 15, 2026**

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 Board President Suelynne Mickey.

Board members present were Ms. Mickey, Ms. Dana Cox, Ms. Donna Rivers Doyle, Ms. Irene Hobbs, Dr. Christina Hurd, Mr. James Morgan, Mr. Alfred Rachal, Ms. Jackie Wilson, and Ms. Bliss Wise. Also present were Library Director Celise Reech-Harper, nine members of staff, and three members of the public.

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

Agenda

Ms. Hobbs motioned to add agenda item "Purchase of additional vehicles" under New Business. Ms. Cox seconded, and the motion unanimously passed. Ms. Cox motioned to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Dr. Hurd. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Minutes

Ms. Wilson motioned to approve the minutes of the July meeting, seconded by Ms. Hobbs. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Public Comments

Regarding agenda items 14.j. Property Donation Acceptance and 14.k. Lecompte Library, one member of the public, Amy Traylor, spoke against the relocation of the public library in Lecompte, citing safety concerns for the proposed new location near the highway, and one member of the public, Ron Schneider, spoke regarding communication and concerns about perceptions of him.

Financial Reports

Business Manager Stacy Dubrock presented the June financial report, which showed the budget to be on track with revenue and expenses for the year. Mr. Rachal motioned to approve the report, seconded by Ms. Wilson. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Ms. Dubrock presented the July financial report, which showed higher than usual building maintenance costs due to sidewalk construction at Robertson Branch. This was balanced with the sale of the Westside Regional land parcel for a net profit of \$18,909.39. Ms. Doyle motioned to accept the report, seconded by Dr. Hurd. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Direct Services Report

Association Director of Direct Services Lenna Mouton encouraged board members to visit their local branches during Library Card Sign-Up Month.

Human Resources Report

Human Resources Manager Jackie Brown presented four staff members for ratification: Mychelle Horn, Betsy Melton, Morgan Primeaux, and Kristi Roshto.

Ms. Cox motioned to ratify the employment of Floating Circulation/Reference Clerk Mychelle Horn, seconded by Ms. Hobbs. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Ms. Wilson motioned to ratify the employment of Floating Circulation/Reference Clerk Betsy Melton, seconded by Mr. Rachal. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Mr. Rachal motioned to ratify the employment of Floating Circulation/Reference Clerk Morgan Primeaux, seconded by Ms. Cox. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Ms. Hobbs motioned to ratify the employment of Floating Circulation/Reference Clerk Kristi Roshto, seconded by Mr. Rachal. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Programming & Outreach Report

Programming & Outreach Supervising Librarian Karla Kirby shared upcoming fall activities, including local markets, festivals, trunk-or-treats, and the annual Tales Along the Bayou event at Kent Plantation House.

IT Report

Systems Manager Janie Primeaux shared plans to replace children's PCs in the branches with updated systems that will include STEM, math, and language programs. The ILS department is researching virtual card services that will help reduce duplicate records in the ILS system.

Public Relations Report

Public Relations Manager Sandie Buller announced National Library Card Sign-Up Month incentives, including free tote bags and special edition library cards for new sign-ups. The goal for this year is to have 1,000 new cards issued.

New Business

An info sheet of upcoming dates of interest to board members was distributed and reviewed.

Ms. Bliss Wise was welcomed to the Board of Control as the new member from District A.

Ms. Mickey announced the departure of Ms. Dana Cox from the Board of Control. Ms. Cox was recognized for her years of service by board members and staff.

The Board reviewed a list of proposed 2027 library closure dates for holiday observances and staff training days. Ms. Wilson motioned to approve the closure dates schedule, seconded by Ms. Wise. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Ms. Brown presented an updated Director's Evaluation form for the Board's review. Board members are asked to review the form and submit feedback before the November 17 meeting.

Committee Preference Forms for 2027 were included in all Board member packets. Ms. Reech-Harper asked Board members to return the completed forms to the business office by November 17.

Ms. Hobbs, Dr. Hurd, and Ms. Wise volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee to select candidates for 2027's board officers. Ms. Mickey will Chair the committee and set a meeting date.

Two 2008 Chevrolet Uplanders belonging to the library were recently put into the shop and assessed as too costly to repair. Mr. Rachal motioned to approve the auctioning of library vehicle #105, seconded by

Ms. Wilson. On vote, the motion unanimously passed. Ms. Wilson motioned to approve the auctioning of library vehicle #106, seconded by Mr. Rachal. On unanimous vote, the motion passed.

In light of these two older fleet vehicles being decommissioned and a third older library vehicle being currently in the shop awaiting assessment, Ms. Dubrock requested permission to order new vehicles to replace them. Ms. Cox motioned to approve the purchase of three new vehicles on the existing State contract while discount prices and inventory are still available. Mr. Rachel seconded, and on vote the motion unanimously passed.

Ms. Reech-Harper informed the Board that Robert C. and Susan Wiley Jackson have donated 1.08 acres of land on Highway 71 in Lecompte to the Rapides Parish Police Jury to be used by the Rapides Parish Library. The Police Jury has accepted the donation and are working with the Library and legal counsel to plan and assess costs for a new library branch to be built on the property. A reserve construction fund currently exists within the library's assets to cover the estimated \$1.5 million project.

Ms. Reech-Harper addressed safety concerns of the location and intends to request assistance from Representative Rhonda Butler regarding the placement of a caution light at the intersection of the highway.

Mr. Morgan expressed concerns that the library board should not vote to accept the land until they have seen and assessed it themselves. Ms. Mickey stressed that the Police Jury had already accepted the donation, and that the library board's vote of approval would simply acknowledge that it was stipulated for library use. Many further discussions and planning sessions will be held on how the land will be developed for use as the process moves forward. Ms. Wise motioned to accept the property donation, seconded by Mr. Rachal. On majority vote, the motion passed with eight in favor (Cox, Doyle, Hobbs, Hurd, Mickey, Rachal, Wilson, Wise) and one opposed (Morgan).

Ms. Reech-Harper announced that she and Ms. Dubrock will attend the Library Journal Design Institute summit in Columbus, Ohio this October to gather construction and planning ideas for the new branch. She shared that RPL's Main Library was selected by a panel of architects for renovation planning review, but she will try to get the Lecompte project considered as it is a more time-sensitive need.

Ms. Mickey announced that a special meeting of the Board will be called on Tuesday, October 13 at 4:00 p.m. at Westside Regional Library. The purpose of the special meeting will be to organize Board of Control members to host a hospitality station at the Louisiana Library Association annual conference, which will be held at the Randolph Riverfront Center in Alexandria in February 2027.

The next regularly scheduled Library Board of Control meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2026 at 3:30 p.m. at the Westside Regional Library.

Ms. Wilson motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Wise. On unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Celise Reech-Harper
Secretary

Suelynne Mickey
President