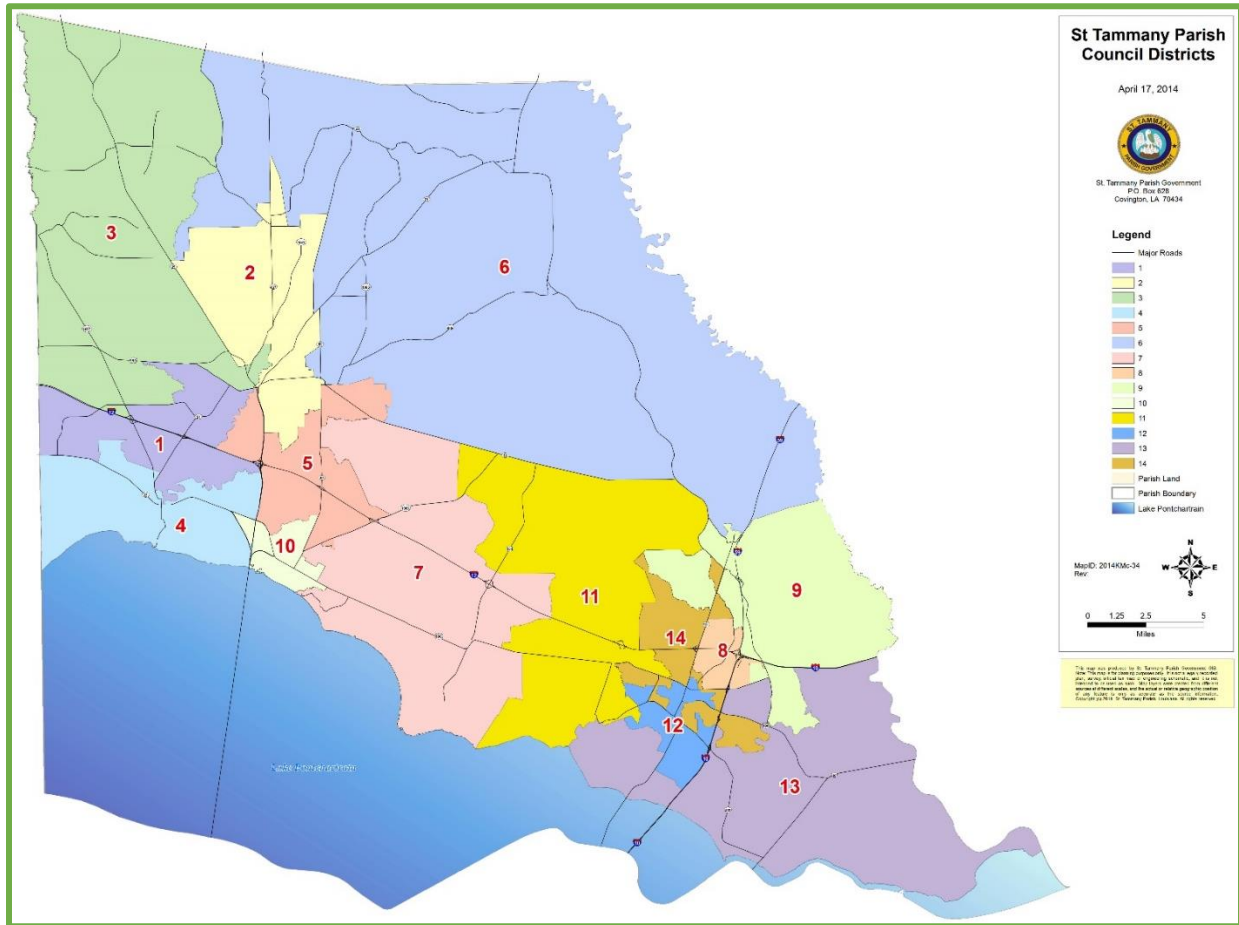


St Tammany Parish Council Candidate Responses on Library Censorship

The following report is a compilation of library-related responses by St Tammany Parish Council Candidates that was compiled by the St Tammany Library Alliance in September of 2023 to help educate voters on the serious issue regarding censorship in our public libraries. This information is based upon 3 recently published publicly available surveys, with a supplemental set of questions only asked of District 1 candidates. All survey questions and links to their sources are included below. For questions about this report, or if any candidates would like to provide additional information on their position towards the current issues in our public libraries or on censorship in general, please reach out to mail@sttammanylibraryalliance.org.



Link to current Council District Map:

<https://stp-gis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=52ebef5237c24c969b614ed8170a6880>

Link to 2024 Council District Map:

<https://stp-gis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3236f4c013c442509bf4a3f24baa7711>

Link to the Louisiana Voter Portal for additional election information: <https://voterportal.sos.la.gov/>

Link to register to vote online: <https://www.sos.la.gov/ElectionsAndVoting/Pages/OnlineVoterRegistration.aspx>

NOTE: The St Tammany Library Alliance is not recommending any candidates based upon their responses to the surveys compiled within. This report is only being provided as an educational tool for voters who are interested in learning more about Parish Council Candidate stances towards censorship in our public libraries.

Survey by the St Tammany Library Alliance (“STLA Survey”)

This survey request was sent to all candidates who directly impact St Tammany Parish residents, including but not limited to all Parish Council candidates. A total of 12 responses were received and, of these, 8 were candidates for Parish Council.

Link to survey response data, includes responses by candidates outside of the St Tammany Parish Council:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1nMeUe3CpN2COIAEmvvC_3baemhCrIJU1Kq3kCvIrv8/edit?usp=drivesdk

Questions:

1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?

This broad question pertains to 5a – 5e, with 5f as a follow up.

 - a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.
 - b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people’s access to books does not protect them from life’s complex and challenging issues.
 - c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.
 - d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents’ children.
 - e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library’s books.
 - f. If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.
6. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.

1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important

This broad question pertains to 6a – 6d.

 - a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives
 - b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)
 - c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)
 - d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)
 - e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc
7. Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
8. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?
9. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.
10. Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

Survey by Abigail Nairnsey Licatino (“ANL Survey”)

Link to Facebook post with additional information:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid034yshy8PusovBMezcafsvsSz8nWs2JviLw3hrXwMaeQXFcTb4WcB1KLJYNF XuRV Til&id=791809236&sfnsn=mo&mibextid=6aamW6

Link to survey results:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AbyQ0JUiaJyXaukfzgyiXKqS9XkNAjldyBrrwMZWO1l/edit?usp=sharing>

Link to a Dropbox of each candidate’s individual responses (prepared and shared by ANL):

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/8221d23itdy5rytnks288/h?rlkey=0e2pwex0tzwfaj7rjncp1ztet&dl=0>

Permission to use this data was given via public statement on the Facebook post: “I am sharing the survey with organizations and groups on social media so we can get the voices of the candidates out to as many voting citizens as possible. My only request of these groups/individuals was to keep the survey in it’s entirety without edits or omissions.”

Note: Only answers for question 10 are included in this packet as that Q&A specifically pertains to the library, however all responses for all candidates who replied are available at the above links and the St Tammany Library Alliance recommends using these links for answers on all voter issues addressed by this survey.

Questions:

1. Name (first and last)
2. Please list the district you are running in.
3. Please let us know WHY you are running for this Parish Council position. (what is your WHY?)
4. What makes you the best candidate for your district? Tell us a little about yourself.
5. In your opinion, what are the most important roles of a Parish Council Member?
6. How many Parish council meetings have you attended in person and online? How many zoning and planning meetings have you attended in person and online?
7. What do you think are the main issues of the current Parish Council and what do you plan on doing differently if you are elected in?
8. What are your thoughts on reducing council size and adding At-Large Members? By reducing Parish Council size, would you consider supporting making this a full-time position?
9. If voted into this role, how will you make yourself available to the people in your district?
10. What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?
11. Working collaboratively with other council members, the parish president, the D.A. and the sheriff is imperative to getting things done in the parish. How do you plan on doing this? For example, how would you proceed to resolve the shortage in paying for state-mandated services?
12. What qualifications would you seek in anyone you might nominate for an appointment to the Planning and Zoning commissions?
13. How would you approach the budget issues and concerns facing the parish council now and in the future?

Survey by the Slidell Ministers Association (“SMA Survey”)

Link to original source, includes responses by candidates outside of the St Tammany Parish Council:

https://mailchi.mp/31de8e7bba7f/st-parish-campaign-2023-final-sma-survey-results-13397335?fbclid=IwAR3HG0t_bvmG-Yji9DnlhCeG4WV5r9LEVVftfrfIDNnkHuDaFLPj2aXxh6U

Link to survey results:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ON4X_skRMq1zJogl4iaoqi47Qln0HsNJ/view?usp=drivesdk

Permission to use this data was given via public statement on link: “You can use this information as you see fit.”

Questions:

1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree

- S1. Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother’s Life.
- S2. The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.
- S3. There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.
- S4. Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.
- S5. Parent’s Rights to a Child’s Education Should Not Be Restricted.
- S6. Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.
- S7. CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools
- S8. Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.

Additional Question by Mel Manuel, Congressional Candidate for District 1-A, mel4louisiana.com

The following was only asked of District 1. Permission was granted by Mel Manuel to include these responses in this report. If other candidates would like to provide their responses, please send them to mail@sttammanylibraryalliance.org and this report will be updated accordingly.

- Q: If elected, what will you do to protect and extend LGBTQ equality? Do you feel like books featuring transgender and/or queer characters belong in our libraries?

Parish President

Candidates

Mike Cooper, (R)
Greg Cromer, (R)

Mike Cooper

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	4
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Greg Cromer

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Council District 1

Candidates

Patti Elish, (R)
Bryan "Hutch" Hutchinson (withdrew), (R)
Rick Smith, (R)

Patti Elish

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I would proceed to get all the facts. The Board of Library Control is in place to govern the affairs of our Parish Library according to the applicable statutes and laws, its own bylaws, as well as the duties assigned by resolutions or ordinances of the St. Tammany Parish Council. I do not support the banning of books. I would, however, ask that the material deemed unsuitable for young children be placed in a location that is only accessible by adults. As a Parish Council member, we have the ability to appoint to the Library Board of Control. If an issue arises that requires the Parish Council to provide further direction, a resolution or ordinance can be utilized.

SMA Survey: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 5) *Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Mel Manuel, Congressional Candidate District LA-1

Question only asked of District 1 candidates.

If elected, what will you do to protect and extend LGBTQ equality? Do you feel like books featuring transgender and/or queer characters belong in our libraries?

For those who know me, I realize we haven't met yet, I am passionate about equality for everyone, regardless of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin. Your specific question references LGBTQ equality. I believe that education is powerful and yes, I support books on this issue being in our libraries. It can be an excellent source of education for those who seek more information.

Mel, I also believe actions speak louder than words. My record at St. Tammany hospital demonstrates that commitment of workforce inclusivity with policies in place that protect LGBTQ+ employees from discrimination and harassment.

I am also against bullying of any kind. I know that hurt first hand.

Lastly Community engagement is at the heart of my campaign. I have and will openly support LGBTQ rights and will continue to do so whether I am elected to office or not.

Council District 1, cont.

Rick Smith

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

My position is not to ban books, but I would insist on removing any pornographic material from public display and / or being accessible to any children visiting our public libraries. The Council has the responsibility of appointing library board members. As an elected parish council member, It is your responsibility to have due diligence when vetting a potential appointee. I want to ensure that appointees have the same values as those living in our communities.

SMA Survey: *1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree*

<u>S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.</u>	<u>4</u>

Mel Manuel, Congressional Candidate District LA-1

Question only asked of District 1 candidates.

If elected, what will you do to protect and extend LGBTQ equality? Do you feel like books featuring transgender and/or queer characters belong in our libraries?

I believe the LGBTQ community deserves the same personal rights as every other U. S. Citizen. I will always advocate for individual rights in this country.

In regards to the library, I will advocate for appropriate display and access of the books you've mentioned, but don't advocate for any banishment.

I do not want young children being exposed to material that is inappropriate for them, and would expect the professional library staff to ensure that does not happen.

Council District 2

Candidates

Dave Fitzgerald, (R)
Larry Rolling, (R)
Erin Riecke Rowan, (D)

Dave Fitzgerald

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	4
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	4

Larry Rolling

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I believe the Library board should be the reflection of our values of our districts and the Parish. I believe that our public libraries should be a safe place for our children to learn and educate there skills in a safe environment free from exposure to materials which appear to or incite unreasonably sexually explicit themes. The current council should have done a better job selecting some of the current members. The council must to their homework on future appointees.

SMA Survey: No response

Erin Riecke Rowan

- STLA Survey:**
- 1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?**
No
a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
 - 2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?**
No
a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
 - 3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?**
Yes
a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

Council District 2, cont.

Erin Riecke Rowan, cont.

4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?
Yes
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?
 - a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.
Yes
 - b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.
Yes
 - c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.
Yes
 - d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.
Yes
 - e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.
Yes
 - f. If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.
6. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.
1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important
 - a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives
1
 - b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)
2
 - c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)
4
 - d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)
3
 - e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc
5
7. Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?
Yes
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
I do not believe government entities should have the authority to ban books. There are already existing precedents from the Supreme Court over what materials are considered outside of the realms of free speech, and I think that is enough.
8. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?
I would fight any additional restrictions on the Library Board of Control to make decisions on what materials belong in the library and I would vote against any removal of funding from the library, if things were to escalate to that point.
9. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.
No.
10. Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?
Yes
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

Council District 2, cont.

Erin Riecke Rowan, cont.

ANL Survey: What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?

I support our libraries whole-heartedly and I feel like they already do a fantastic job at offering parents options for controlling what materials their children have access to. More importantly, our libraries are pivotal to the success and growth of our community as a hub of resources and education that so many residents need and love. For that reason, I think it's a culture-war issue that is distracting us from more significant matters like our budget crisis, lack of infrastructure and proper drainage due to overdevelopment, and the conflict within our local government that has become a major obstacle to progress.

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 3

Candidate

Martha Cazaubon, (R)

Martha Cazaubon

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 4

Candidates

Keith Dennis, (R)
Gary Leonard, (R)
Kathy Seiden, (R)
Tim Smith, (R)

Keith Dennis

STLA Survey: 1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?

Yes

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

I believe only age appropriate books should be available to children. If the book is inappropriate then it should not be available. St Tammany Library system has a robust process in place to protect children but it is also important for parents to monitor their children. If a parent objects to a book then the parent should say no to the child. If the content is truly questionable then the parent should complete the paperwork to have the book reviewed by librarians.

2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?

Yes

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

I believe age appropriate books should be available to children. If the book is inappropriate then it should not be available. St Tammany Library system has a robust process in place to protect children but it is also important for parents to monitor their children. If a parent objects to a book then the parent should say no to the child. If the content is truly questionable then the parent should complete the paperwork to have the book reviewed by librarians.

3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?

Yes

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

Overall monitoring of children is the parent's responsibility. However, it is reasonable for a parent to expect age appropriate books to be the only books available in the children's section of the library.

4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?

Yes

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

While I believe librarians should make collection decisions, I also believe there should be a legitimate way for a parent to raise concerns if a book appears to be inappropriate. There should not be inappropriate reading material available to children. There needs to be a clear standard as to what is considered appropriate for different age levels.

5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?

a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.

Yes

b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.

Yes, No

c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.

Yes, No

d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.

Yes

e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.

Yes

f. If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.

While I agree that each parent should make the decision for their children, I also believe there should be a standard for what content is considered age appropriate. One parent may have a different view of what is age appropriate so having a common understanding is important. For

Council District 4, cont.

Keith Dennis, cont.

books that don't meet the standard, a parent could access the book on behalf of their child. Straight out banning books is not generally beneficial to society as a whole. It should go without saying that anything classified as pornography should NEVER be found in the library but it is also important to understand many adult books contain sexually explicit content that may be appropriate in the book's context and for an adult reader. Cherry picking sections of adult books and calling them pornography doesn't benefit society as a whole.

- 6. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.**
1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important
- a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives**
1
 - b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)**
2
 - c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)**
4
 - d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)**
3
 - e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc**
5
- 7. Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?**
No
- a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
Decision making should be at the community level. A library should reflect the community they serve.
- 8. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?**
St. Tammany Parish Library System is among the best in our state. I met with the library director and have great confidence in her abilities. Our library has established a system that should give every parent confidence that age appropriate material is only available to children. Additionally, if a parent wants a book that isn't available on the shelf then the librarians can access the book for the parent. The library has several defense mechanisms in place to prevent a child from accessing inappropriate material.
- 9. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.**
Books of a sexual nature should not be available to children. If a parent wants such a book for their child then the parent should access the book. Pornography should not be available in the library. However, it's important to remember a book is not necessarily pornography just because it has adult sexual content in the context of a story. Such books should only be available in the adult section.
- 10. Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?**
Yes
- a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
ALA is a professional organization similar to the American Medical Association (AMA). ALA does not force opinions on members. ALA does not mandate books to members. The ALA does not give orders or directives to members.

ANL Survey: No response to this question

Council District 4, cont.

Keith Dennis, cont.

SMA Survey: 1) *Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Gary Leonard

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I am extremely concerned about the current availability of certain reading materials to the very young and impressionable children of our Parish. My first act will be to call a Tax Summit between all leaders of the Parish however, my second act will be to remove the current library board and replace it with Citizens who are more responsive to the Community's wishes. My role is to help pick qualified, independent thinking members to the new library board.

SMA Survey: No response

Kathy Seiden

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

The library has turned away from its original purpose. I'll cite the ALA's own website of part of their mission: "educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole." The current situation seems as if the focus has turned from advancing society as a whole. I would like to see an age appropriate section for each age group as well as installing new programs that turn the focus back to learning and make the library a safe place where parents can feel secure allowing their young children to explore without fear.

Council District 4, cont.

Kathy Seiden, cont.

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	4
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	4
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Tim Smith

- STLA Survey:
- 1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?**

Yes

 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**

Sexually explicit material intended to provoke arousal should not be allowed in the library. Material intended to provoke hate and rage should not be allowed. Material that would be considered extremely dangerous shouldn't be allowed, such as things like this, "Mycologists warn of 'life or death' consequences as foraging guides written with A.I. chatbots crop up", there is a certain cookbook I won't mention that shouldn't be available as it is dangerous to people who try to follow its guidance.
 - 2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?**

Yes

 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**

Sexually explicit material intended to provoke arousal should not be allowed. Material intended to provoke hate and rage should not be allowed. Material that would be considered extremely dangerous by majority of the population shouldn't be allowed, such as things like this, "Mycologists warn of 'life or death' consequences as foraging guides written with A.I. chatbots crop up", there is a certain cookbook I won't mention that shouldn't be available as it is dangerous to people who try to follow its guidance.
 - 3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?**

Yes

 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**

It is a parents responsibility to monitor and protect their child regardless of where they are. Parents need to take ownership and keep up with their kids.
 - 4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?**

Yes

 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**

They are the professionals specifically educated and trained to make such decisions.
 - 5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?**
 - a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.**

Yes
 - b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.**

Yes

Council District 4, cont.

Tim Smith, cont.

- c. **Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.**
No
- d. **Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.**
Yes
- e. **Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.**
Yes
- f. **If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.**
Adolescents should not be trusted to make their own decisions on what to read as there is too much inappropriate material out there that they could access.
6. **Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.**
1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important
- a. **Physical books, Magazines, Archives**
5
- b. **Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)**
5
- c. **Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)**
5
- d. **Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)**
5
- e. **Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc**
5
7. **Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?**
No
- a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
There must be checks and balances allowing for local governments to be part of the decision making in their community. It'd be taxation without representation if we can't have local input into these decisions.
8. **If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?**
I would fight for the rights of all individuals to have access to a variety of perspectives as long as they are inline with the laws set forth .
9. **Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.**
All books that do not conform to the laws set forth should be censored or removed in accordance with those requirements.
10. **Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?**
No
- a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I do not support continuing any memberships until I've had a chance to hear intelligent insight on both the pros and cons from both sides, so that I can fully endorse this one way or another.

ANL Survey:

What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?

Unequivocally NO pornographic material should ever be available to children in our parish libraries!!! As parish council member I will support smart measures to ensure children only have access to age-appropriate material, without limiting parental rights.

Their role is to appoint the best and the brightest, community oriented and community-based board members that "Help Ever, Hurt Never".

Council District 4, cont.

Tim Smith, cont.

SMA Survey: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 5) *Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	3
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Council District 5

Candidates

Doug Ferrer, (R)

Pat Phillips, (R)

Rykert Toledano, Jr, (R)

Warren Seher II (withdrew), (I)

Doug Ferrer

- STLA Survey:**
- 1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?**
Maybe
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I support the public library system and don't believe in book banning. I do support restricted access of sexually explicit material to minors (under the age of 18), without parental consent.
 - 2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?**
Maybe
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I do not support banning of books. I do support prior written consent from parents for minors (under the age of 18) to have access to sexual explicit material.
 - 3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?**
Yes
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
In my opinion, parents should be responsible to monitor their children at all times. However, unless we require minors (under the age of 18) to be accompanied by an adult before entering the library, I don't think library officials can assume the parents are monitoring the child's activity.
 - 4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?**
Yes
 - a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
Again, I don't want to ban any books within the library system, therefore librarians and the Library Board should make the decisions on collection. My concern remains in access to minors without parental consent.
 - 5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?**
 - a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.**
Yes
 - b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.**
Yes, No
 - c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.**
Yes
 - d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.**
Yes
 - e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.**
Yes, No
 - f. If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.**
Your survey is obviously slanted towards 100% control by the librarians. While I support that when it comes to adults, I do NOT agree with your choice of words "young people" without clarification. Yes, all information and printed words should be available to all citizens that can contract / consent in the State of Louisiana. However, Louisiana law does not recognize the ability to contract / consent for "young people" (below the age of 18).

Council District 5, cont.

Doug Ferrer, cont.

6. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.
1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important
- a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives
2
 - b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)
1
 - c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)
2
 - d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)
2
 - e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc
3
7. Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?
Yes
- a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
I do not support banning books and/or materials by government agencies. I support parental consent for minors (under the age of 18).
8. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?
I will vote against all book banning and, if in the position to appoint a member of the library board, I will select an individual that shares my point of view.
9. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.
None
10. Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?
Yes
- a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
I support the ALA using the same regulations as stated. However, we must adhere to CIPA and provide protection for minors (via parental consent) under LA Civil Code art. 29.

ANL Survey: What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?

I support the library system and do not support any form of book banning. If the material within a publication is deemed inappropriate for minor (under 18) the books and publications should be in a restricted area, only accessible to adults.

I believe the council should continue to appoint library board members with a focus on parents rights, community rights, federal regulations and diversity.

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	4
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	4
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Council District 5, cont.

Pat Phillips

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

My primary concern is the protection of our children.

My next concern is the parents have the ultimate say so on the Who, What, When, Where, and Why concerning their children.

The Parish Council has the duty to screen applicants appointed to the Library Board.

I believe the Special Parish Council meeting schedule on Wednesday 30 August 2023 is initially a way to proceed concerning library issues. It is scheduled after this questionnaire is to be submitted.

SMA Survey: No response

Rykert Toledano, Jr

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

This is a complicated issue overlapping many laws and the interest of many people in our community. Suffice to say that I believe in a common sense approach to the library issues including a restricted or limited access policy for certain materials that should not be on the open shelf. I have taken the time to meet with our library director as well as attend board meetings to observe for myself what is taking place. Our role is to appoint responsible library board members that represents the interest of our community. As I understand it the card system presently in place by the library is a restricted access policy. That is to say that there are certain materials after having been reviewed may only be accessed by minors if allowed so by the parents via their library card. A portion of this problem I believe is the failure to communicate with the public as to exactly how that system works. I would set about an education plan for parents and the general public that would explain how the library administration monitors reading material that by its nature should be restricted for certain ages. The difficult balance raised in this question is the overriding constitutional issues that we banter about such as free speech, banning books, and other such words that cause people to loose site of the basic issues. Simply put people with common sense understand that there are certain material although prohibited to be banned but never less should be restricted so that a young immature child should not have access to such material. I firmly believe there is a way to assure that those protections are afforded these children and the library card system requiring certain levels of parental permission is a start in the right direction.

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 6

Candidates

Dennis Galloway, Jr, (R)
Bruce Lowrey, (R)
Cheryl Tanner, (R)

Dennis Galloway

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

Concerning the issues relating to the library, I want to explore my options in regards to dismantling the current library board and replace it with a new board which has measures in place that allow a wide range of the residents to have their voices heard so as to create a board which keeps the values of the parents at their core. I believe that parental advisories should be placed on books that potentially have sensitive or inappropriate materials in them. as well as having a policy in place that will notify a students parent if such a book is checked out by them.

SMA Survey: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 5) *Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Bruce Lowrey

STLA Survey: 1. **Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?**

Maybe

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

I do not believe in any form of book banning. I believe that books which include graphical depictions of sexuality and/or address the topic of gender transition should be restricted to those who have attained an age at which it is appropriate for them to review this material.

2. **Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?**

Maybe

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

I do not believe in any form of book banning. I believe that books which include graphical depictions of sexuality and/or address the topic of gender transition should be restricted to those who have attained an age at which it is appropriate for them to review this material

Council District 6, cont.

Bruce Lowrey, cont.

3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?

No

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

I don't believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor most children 100% of the time while visiting almost anywhere, within reason - libraries included. As a parent, who would have time for that? On the other hand, if a child were confident that a visit to a library may result in their unbridled freedom to behave or misbehave in any fashion they chose, then maybe some kind of parental monitoring is a good idea. But not for every child and every parent during every visit. Perhaps a "well-qualified, well-trusted, disciplined and accredited" librarian could perform the monitoring task for parents in their absence.

4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?

Yes

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

I think librarians do a fine job at being librarians, and I respect their input in that arena. I don't necessarily agree that librarians are the only individuals who should be involved in making decisions for public and school libraries. I believe school boards and administrators, parents and voting citizens should also have an equally strong role in making decisions for public and school libraries.

5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?

a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.

Yes

b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.

Yes

c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.

Yes

d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.

No

e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.

No

f. If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.

I was inclined to answer "yes" to all the questions. However, they were not framed in a way that would easily allow me to do so. As stated above, I believe that books which include graphical depictions of sexuality and/or address the topic of gender transition should be restricted to those who have attained an age at which it is appropriate for them to review this material. And I wish to reiterate my comment that I think librarians do a fine job at being librarians, and I respect and defer to their decision-making in that arena. However, I don't agree that librarians are the only individuals who should be involved in making decisions for public and school libraries. I believe school boards and administrators, parents and voting citizens should also have an equally strong role in making decisions for public and school libraries.

6. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.

1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important

a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives

1

b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)

1

c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)

1

d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)

3

e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc

2

Council District 6, cont.

Bruce Lowrey, cont.

7. **Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?**

No

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

I support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials, subject to certain, common-sense limitations which were contained in the explanation I provided with the first question on page 1 of this survey.

8. **If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?**

It is often stated that young people do not reach full mental development until they reach an age of approximately 25 years old. That's a fundamental understanding that we should keep more in the forefront of discussions such as this. I'm 72 years old, and I can say without any uncertainty that more than half of the most critical errors I have ever made in my life, I made before I was 25 years old; and some of those have resulted in unfortunate impacts which are still with me today.

I don't know how to establish the kind of standards governing access to books which I would like to see in place, because I have not researched this matter with the required thoroughness. As a general rule, I believe there should be access standards in place, however I am not prepared to define them here. I would have to study and assess the effectiveness of any precedents which are now in place or are planned for in the near future.

9. **Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.**

Not that I have awareness to as of now, although further research on this topic may change my answer.

10. **Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?**

No

a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.

After further research, I understand that the American Library Association supports values which are not well aligned with the beliefs of the vast majority of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish. Indeed, the American Library Association has apparently given advice to Ms. Kelly LaRocca regarding the means and methods to circumvent recently enacted State of Louisiana laws regarding the restriction of certain books to age appropriate readers.

I believe the American Library Association is contributing to the obstruction of State of Louisiana, Governor-signed legislation.

That being the case, I cannot support the continuation of this relationship, and I suggest the State of Louisiana and St. Tammany Parish withdraw, separate or dissolve any continuing relationship or membership with the American Library Association immediately. Where the American Library Association promotes the circumvention of State Law, there exist grounds for charges ranging from obstruction to outright illegal behavior at the State level. It is completely unacceptable and should not be allowed to continue. Laws have consequences, elections have consequences. Ms. LaRocca should be relieved of her position for ignoring and countermanding State Law.

Council District 6, cont.

Bruce Lowrey, cont.

ANL Survey: What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?

I am in favor of the separation and age-restriction of explicit sexual and gender-themed materials in our libraries.

When it comes to the Library Board, I have been puzzled and disappointed that the members of our current Parish Council have not yet found the necessary motivation to remove those members of our Library Board who don't represent our clear community values. I believe it is the Parish Council membership's responsibility to do so. The library should be a reflection of the belief systems overwhelmingly held by St. Tammany Parish citizens, and not those held in San Francisco or any other progressive enclave.

St. Tammany is strongly Conservative in its leanings. The composition of the Library Board should lean in the same direction. I understand a special Council session has been called to review the matter in the near future. I hope the Council members will understand their duty and perform it.

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Cheryl Tanner

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 7

Candidates

Noreen DeBlanc, (I)
Joe Impastato, (R)
Keith McFarland, (D)
Dewey Spies, (R)

Noreen DeBlanc

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I have attended Library meetings and the books they presented and read was once considered pornography. I feel those type books should not have been purchase without a review. Books of that contant should be locked up and not easily accessible to children. Parents should be the decision maker on what their children can read in our public Library.

SMA Survey: *1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	4
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Joe Impastato

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I need to better understand this issue more, but I do believe that we should protect our children and I have conservative views.

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 7, cont.

Keith McFarland

- STLA Survey:
1. **Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
Everything has to be age appropriate. That applies to cigarettes, alcohol, certain magazines, driving, etc.
 2. **Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
Certain materials do not belong in a library that's geared for elementary and jr high students.
 3. **Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
Parents must be a visible and viable part of their child's learning experience.
 4. **Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
Librarians should given the opportunity to explain the why and why not of certain genre of reading material that's found in our public schools library.
 5. **Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?**
 - a. **Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.**
Yes
 - b. **Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.**
Yes
 - c. **Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.**
Yes
 - d. **Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.**
Yes
 - e. **Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.**
Yes
 - f. **If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.**
 6. **Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.**
1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important
 - a. **Physical books, Magazines, Archives**
3
 - b. **Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)**
1
 - c. **Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)**
3
 - d. **Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)**
3
 - e. **Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc**
3
 7. **Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?**
No
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
We need book bans the same way we have warning labels of explicit music.

Council District 7, cont.

Keith McFarland, cont.

8. **If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?**

Everything could either be number coded or color coded. Simple as that.

9. **Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.**

The ones that are too descriptive with words and pictures that crosses over into porn.

10. **Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?**

Yes

- a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**

That's an elite title to hold. I have the utmost respect for those learned individuals.

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

As an educator, this will be discussed with other educators, librarians, and concerned parents so that ALL can participate in coming to a reasonable resounding solution.

SMA Survey: No response

Dewey Spies

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

Councilman should appoint library board members who are responsible and share the same beliefs as the community. I firmly believe that the controversy of the sexual books should be reviewed.

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 8

Candidates

Pat Burke III, (R)
Chris Smail, (R)

Pat Burke III

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Chris Smail

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

My position on the library issue is: I do not understand how our Conservative Parish Council voted for two left wing Library board members. I do not understand how we cannot all agree that children should not have access to sexually explicit books. Our Library Board should reflect and respect the wishes of our community. Instead, the Library Board seems to be controlled or influenced by out-of-town people and Associations that do not care about the values of our community. The Parish Council should be able to remove any library board members that do not reflect the wishes of our community.

I believe parents are the ones that should have control over what their children see or read.

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Council District 9

Candidates

David Cogle, (R)
Jason Livingston, (R)
Mike Smith, (R)

David Cogle

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I have been leading on the library issue in our parish since last October. This is one reason I have regularly been interviewed and discussed in the Slidell Independent and other media. Myself and some colleagues were largely responsible for pushing the library crisis to the forefront, resulting in the November RPEC forum in Slidell where the Attorney General spoke, which ended up being the largest public meeting in Slidell history. This was followed by a bill the Attorney General's office wrote which eventually became Act 436, which offers some protections for children in our library system. In addition, as our parish council kept telling the public that they couldn't do anything about the library situation, I worked with the Attorney General's office to draft HB25, which would have given them authority similar to what Jefferson parish has, ensuring our elected leaders had adequate oversight of the \$12 million per year taxpayers provide to our library system.

It's important to note that the New Orleans media refused to show pictures from many of the challenged materials because they were so sexually explicit, and Facebook took down examples that were being posted from the challenged materials because they said they violated their community standards.

If elected, I would ensure that our library system adequately reflected and respected community standards instead of challenging them, work to end the inappropriate relationship between our library system and the Chicago-based American Library Association, and remove library board members that refused to respect community standards, advocate unconstitutional positions like viewpoint discrimination and refused to enforce their own resolutions. In addition, I would work with our state delegation to enact some form of the bill I wrote, HB25, to give elected oversight to the parish council over our \$12 million annual library tax.

The parish council is ultimately responsible for our library board of control. They appointed them, and our Attorney General has said they can remove them, as Livingston Parish has done. It was shocking to us that after months of this controversy, in June, our parish council voted in two far-left ideologues instead of the other two candidates that adequately represented the community. Despite how disappointing this was, it just served as a reminder that our current parish council has failed to do its job and needs to be replaced.

SMA Survey: *1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Council District 9, cont.

Jason Livingston

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I'm against sexual material, homosexual or heterosexual being available to children. I'm in favor of the oversight board placed by the council and president.

SMA Survey: *1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Mike Smith

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 10

Candidates

Maureen "MO" O'Brien, (R)
Donald Villere, (R)

Maureen "MO" O'Brien

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

Council members are looking at how Act 436 may change current policies and procedures. Listening to my constituents, I do see many want a reserve area for books that are very graphic or violent, and I agree that would be appropriate for books that meet the criteria in the new law. With very few exceptions, I do not hear of any requests to ban anything.

As I recall, the Library Director had discussed having a reserve area at the end of last year. I understand recently, the librarians had recommended one particular book, that had been evaluated, remain in a reserve area. The new law also takes into account community standards.

Parish Council members nominate most board members. In my opinion, Library Board nominees should be fair, transparent, will encourage open discussion regarding topics of concern to constituents, will protect first amendment rights, and respect the rights and concerns of all.

SMA Survey: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 5) *Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Donald Villere

STLA Survey: 1. **Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?**

No

a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**

I do not believe in book banning. I do believe that books should be placed in age selected areas based on their content and sensitivity.

2. **Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?**

No

a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**

same answer as above

3. **Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?**

Yes

a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**

Children under the age of consent should be accompanied by a parent or restricted to the age appropriate area.

Council District 10, cont.

Donald Villere, cont.

4. **Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
Trained librarians should be the ones to select books for the library.
5. **Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?**
 - a. **Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.**
Yes
 - b. **Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.**
Yes
 - c. **Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.**
No
 - d. **Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.**
Yes
 - e. **Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.**
No
 - f. **If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.**
Age appropriate is a good rule to follow in limiting the books available and parental involvement in the selection of books and in the decision as to their right to see themselves reflected in a library book.
6. **Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.**
1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important
 - a. **Physical books, Magazines, Archives**
2
 - b. **Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)**
1
 - c. **Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)**
2
 - d. **Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)**
2
 - e. **Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc**
3
7. **Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I would support prohibiting book bans because each parent has the right to raise their child with the information they choose to provide or not provide to their child.
8. **If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?**
I would allow the current process for selecting books to continue with proper placement in the library.
9. **Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.**
I would have concern with books that are graphic in nature that could not be controlled in the adult section of the library.
10. **Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I would continue the membership as long as the association is not promoting books that would injure children.

Council District 10, cont.

Donald Villere, cont.

ANL Survey: What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?

I would encourage the library board to place questionable material out of view of minors to the extent the law allows.

SMA Survey: 1) Strongly Disagree to 5) Strongly Agree

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Council District 11

Candidates

Brice Lanier, (R)

Arthur Laughlin, (R)

Brice Lanier

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: No response

Arthur Laughlin

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 12

Candidates

Jerry Binder, (R)

Mark "Choppy" Daeumer, (R)

Jerry Binder

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response to this question

SMA Survey: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 5) *Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Mark "Choppy" Daeumer

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 13

Candidates

Jeff Corbin, (R)
Chris Houlihan, (R)
Kevin Petruska, (R)

Jeff Corbin

STLA Survey:

1. **Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?**
Maybe
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I do not believe in book banning or censorship. I believe the current public library approach of putting some books in a restricted section for children to access only with parental approval is a reasonable approach to ensuring children do not have ready access to books that may not be widely viewed as appropriate. I also believe parents should be fully aware of what their children are reading and that they have the ultimate responsibility for deciding what their children should or should not read.
2. **Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?**
Maybe
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I do not believe in book banning or censorship. I believe school libraries should contain books that are age appropriate and responsive to the needs and interests of the students they serve and the local community and that collection decisions should be consistent with direction provided by the school board. I also believe parents should be fully aware of what their children are reading and that they have the ultimate responsibility for deciding what their children should and should or read.
3. **Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I believe parents should be fully aware of what their children are reading and that they have the ultimate responsibility for deciding what their children should and should not read.
4. **Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?**
Yes
 - a. **Give a brief explanation of your answer.**
I believe professionally trained and certified librarians have a responsibility to be aware of and understand the disparate needs of the local community. I believe they are best qualified to make collection decisions that meet and reflect the needs of all the members of the local community.
5. **Do you agree with the following statements of principle (Y/N)?**
 - a. **Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.**
Yes
 - b. **Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.**
Yes
 - c. **Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.**
Yes
 - d. **Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.**
Yes
 - e. **Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.**
Yes
 - f. **If you answered no to any of the above questions, please give a brief explanation below.**

Council District 13, cont.

Jeff Corbin, cont.

6. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for the community you plan to serve.
1 = Most Important to 5 = Least Important
- a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives
1
 - b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)
1
 - c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)
2
 - d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)
1
 - e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc
2
7. Would you support state legislation prohibiting government entities from enacting book bans or the censoring of library materials because of content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the materials?
Yes
- a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
I fully support the First Amendment.
8. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?
I will continue to support having professionally trained and certified librarians making collection decisions for our public library that are reflective of and responsive to the diverse needs of our community.
9. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in your community? Be as specific as possible.
None of which I am aware.
10. Do you support Louisiana libraries and librarians' continued membership in the American Library Association?
Yes
- a. Give a brief explanation of your answer.
Prior to answering this question, I took the time to review the stated Vision for, and Mission of, the American Library Association as documented on their website. I am aware that I my cursory review does not mean I am fully versed in the goals, purposes or objectives of the American Library Association. Until I have an opportunity to become more fully educated, I support the decisions made by professionally trained and certified Louisiana libraries and librarians in regard to their continued membership in the American Library Association.

ANL Survey:

What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?

I believe putting children's books, that are determined to be significantly inappropriate by a representative group of Parish residents or that deal with difficult subjects, behind a counter so they can't be accidentally viewed by children without parental consent, is a reasonable accommodation. At the same time, I believe this approach has to be balanced against the role a parent plays in deciding what is and isn't acceptable for their child to read given their unique family situation.

Council District 13, cont.

Jeff Corbin, cont.

SMA Survey: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 5) *Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	4
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Chris Houlihan

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I think that our children are the most important factor in this issue and that we should have mended this a long time ago.

I have attended a Library Board meeting in person to get a first hand account of the process. I have met with community leaders to gather information and get their opinions on the matter. It is a very emotion based topic that has unfortunately become political. If elected, I would proceed by following our existing state laws and ensuring that our Library Board is representative of the people of St Tammany Parish. I fault the current Parish Council for allowing this situation to devolve into what has become a very divisive issue. The role of a parish council member is to REPRESENT THE PEOPLE - even when it comes to the library board. Our children MUST be the top priority.

SMA Survey: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 5) *Strongly Agree*

S1) Abortion on Demand Should Not Be Permitted Unless To Save the Mother's Life.	5
S2) The Bible is the Absolute Final Source of All Moral Truth.	5
S3) There are only Two Genders: Male and Female.	5
S4) Sexually Explicit Books Should Not Be Available to Children in Our Libraries Without Parental Consent.	5
S5) Parent's Rights to a Child's Education Should Not Be Restricted.	5
S6) Prior to Gender Counseling and/or Changing Personal Pronouns for Children, Parents Must Be Notified.	5
S7) CRT Should Not be Taught in Our Schools	5
S8) Respect for Those We Disagree With is Vital to a Civil Society.	5

Council District 13, cont.

Kevin Petruska

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: **What is your position on the library issues facing this parish? If elected into this position, how would you proceed with the library concerns? What do you think is the role of a parish council member, when it comes to the library board?**

I do not feel the current issue at the library is up to our community standards. I would proceed with my colleagues as well as our constituents to come up with the correct solution for the local community. I think the role of the parish council is to represent the constituents and hold the community standards up.

SMA Survey: No response

Council District 14

Candidates

Ron Randolph (withdrew), (D)

Jimmy "Gumby" Strickland III, (D)

Jimmy "Gumby" Strickland

STLA Survey: No response

ANL Survey: No response

SMA Survey: No response