

Minutes of the Meeting of the
Lafayette Public Library Board of Control

February 21, 2022

The regular meeting of the Lafayette Public Library Board of Control was held in the meeting room on the 2nd floor of the Main Library at 301 West Congress Street on February 21, 2022. Robert Judge, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

I. Roll Call and Invocation

Board Members Present: Robert Judge, Board President; Landon Boudreaux, Vice – President; Joan Wingate; Stephanie Armbruster; James Thomas, Shane Landers, David Pitre

Board Members Absent: Doug Palombo

Other Staff Present: Danny Gillane, Library Director; Terry Roy, Library Administrator; Larry Angelle, Library Operations Manager; Danielle Breaux, Director’s Executive Secretary

Members of the Public: Michael Hebert, Assistant City-Parish Attorney; Mary Lib Guercio; Alton Trahan; Lynette Mejia; Mitzi Moss Duhon; Andrew Duhon; Anne Swanson; Forrest Chiasson; Nureaka Ross; Wayne Colvin; Matthew Humphrey; Marja Broussard; Khadijah Rashad; Nadiyah Bonnette; M. Christian Green; Cara Chance; Michael Lunsford; Nadine Melancon; Michael Smith; Lena Selph; Joseph Abraham, MD; Sharon Patterson; Roch Judice; Nick Richert; Jason Peterson; Ken Broussard; Katelyn Stewart

The invocation was led by Joan Wingate.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Robert Judge led the board in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. New Business

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2022 Regular Board Meeting was made by Landon Boudreaux and seconded by Joan Wingate.

Yeas: Judge, Boudreaux, Wingate, Armbruster, Thomas, Landers, Pitre

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Palombo

IV. President's Brief Discussion on Robert's Rules of Order

Robert Judge reviewed Robert's Rules of Order, focusing on order of discussion, recognition to speak, and procedure to take action on an item.

V. Comments from the Library Board

The Lafayette Public Library Foundation is a generous sponsor for the Lafayette Reads Together program. Thanks to the Lafayette Public Library Foundation, free copies of the chosen book are distributed to all interested patrons, allowing everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status, educational background, race, and age, a chance to participate in the community read. Lafayette Reads Together has become an annual event with book discussions and LRT-related programs scheduled from January through March each year. The 2022 book selection is *Clues to the Universe* by **Christina Li**.

New board members will be installed in April. The Lafayette Public Library Foundation is currently working on a strategy to expand endowments over the next several years. Annual luncheon plans will be announced soon.

The Friends of the Lafayette Public Library will be hosting their Spring Book Sale at the Heymann Center March 23-26.

VI. Director's Report and Comments

Staff changes were announced to the Board.

3M has been cut from the capital budget and approximately \$413,300 from operations thus far.

Preliminary evaluation of changes due to library closings on Sundays indicate that the estimates of \$250,00-\$300,000 in savings will be accurate. The library will save \$30,000 per year on janitorial services yearly.

Director attended Northeast Library Steering Committee meeting in February.

Director attended a meeting of the Bayouland Library System.

The Library continues the process of centralizing the receiving and processing of new materials. The NRL and ERL books and AV materials began coming to Main in January. WRL and Duson materials began coming to Main in February. South Regional materials will be last and probably will not be switched until summer. This may result in cost savings in the future.

Director interviewed by KATC, KADN, and KLFY.

Director attended Youngsville City Council meeting to express gratitude for the support of Youngsville elected officials and residents.

Library has created pages on its site to provide information on the Northeast Library Exploratory Committee and Sunday hours change.

Library will be signing a one-year contract to provide Hoopla to our patrons. Hoopla will provide access to downloadable audio content on a pay-as-we-go basis. The library will commit between \$20,000 and \$30,000 to the service but may spend less. These funds are coming from a \$78,000 reduction to our A-V funds (not reported to the Board yet). We are hoping that Hoopla will provide a more cost-effective way to provide downloadable audiobooks.

Library will be sending approximately 10,700 discarded A-V items and 10,000 discarded magazine issues to LCG for auction or disposal. Nearly all of the A-V materials are damaged. The library only keeps between 6 months and a year of magazine issues. This process differs from book discards. It follows the same procedure as getting rid of a piece of furniture; whereas, there is a specific law that pertains to the disposition of library books.

Due to some vendor issues, the library does not have complete statistics for January. In the first two months of the fiscal year, programs offered are up by nearly 100%, and attendance is up over 30%. Circulation is down 6%; however, audiobook circulation is up nearly 10%. Library visits are up 4%, but drive-through use is down 20%. Public computer use is up 12%, and the number of people using public computers is up 14%. Electronic resource use is up 60%. Meeting space use is up over 200%, and study room use is up 13%.

Director provided clarification on lost M.I.Bravy instruments. These instruments are paid for by an outside source. If lost, the patron does incur the cost of the instrument on their library record.

Director provided clarification on patrons unable to access materials as St. Landry Parish considered leaving Bayouland.

VII. Facilities Update & Financial Report

Progress has been made by the architect on the Main Library Roof Replacement Project plans and specifications.

Library administration was approached with a possible American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding opportunity related to replacing the Main Library Roof. Library Administration will discuss and compile the details with Public Works for consideration.

Updated pricing estimate for the South Regional Upgrades based on the revised scope of work and alternates were reviewed by Library Administration.

Library Administration will plan on requesting the Library Board of Control to vote on moving forward with the next phase of this project at the March Board meeting.

Schematic Design (SD) preliminary review meeting for the North Regional Library Upgrades scheduled for Thursday February 17, 2022.

Updated SD plans and pricing estimate are planned on being presented to the Library Board of Control at the March Board meeting while also requesting the Library Board of Control vote on moving forward with the next phase of the project.

The Library Warehouse lease amendment to reduce the square footage and establish a new lease has been approved by legal as of February 14, 2022. The amendment documents have been sent to the Lessor for signature. After the Lessor has executed, the documents will be forwarded to the LCG Purchasing office for final review and then sent for signature by LCG's administration and Mayor-President.

Library Administration drafted an RFP for both land and facility lease scenario. The RFPs were presented to the Northeast Library Exploratory Committee. Library Operations Manager and Library Director participated in discussion and voted on the motions related to RFPs. An RFP for Land is to be considered by board.

Library Administration worked with Architect and subcontractors to address an ongoing leak above the vending area at the East Regional Library. No leaks reported after the last few rains. Will continue monitoring. Windows in meeting room reported as leaking. Worked with Architect and subcontractor to address. Water test was performed and two areas were identified as leaking (bottom seal had a crack and will be reworked, middle horizontal cross bars had bad seals at the pressure plates). Contractor will correct under warranty.

Maintenance staff have started their annual preventative maintenance (changing belts, changing filters, cleaning HVAC drain lines, greasing bearings, changing backup batteries, performing maintenance on generators, and HVAC equipment, etc.).

Maintenance staff have also started their annual inspections (fire alarm inspections, fire sprinkler inspections, fire extinguisher inspections, backflow preventer inspections, etc.).

2021 revenues are at 10.8M and expenses are at 11.3M. These are not yet finalized and pending annual audit.

2022 revenues are currently 10.2M (Note: Current millage rates are 2.91 & 1.97. The 1.97 millage will go down to the renewal rate of 1.84 next fiscal year). Expenses are at 3.9M.

In 2021, the annual budget process started in mid-March. Revenue estimates, Retirement Polling, and Personnel Changes/Promotion items were due to LCG by early April. O&M requested budgeted expenses and new Capital requests were due to LCG by late May. The Library Board of Control Budget meeting is scheduled for May 16th. LCG Administrative meetings were conducted with each LCG department during the month of June. LCG Administration then introduced the proposed budget to the Council in late July. Library staff answered budget questions before the council in mid-August. Budget was adopted by Council early September.

VIII. New Business

A. Northeast Library Exploratory Committee Report

Landon Boudreaux stated that the committee was presented a draft RFP for land and a draft RFP for lease. The committee voted to move forward with purchasing land and not moving forward with the RFP for lease.

A motion was made by James Thomas that the Library Board move forward with the RFP for land as per the recommendation by the Northeast Library Exploratory Committee. This was seconded by David Pitre.

An amendment was made by Landon Boudreaux to move forward with the RFP for land as per the recommendation by the Northeast Library Exploratory Committee, and also move forward with the RFP for lease. This was seconded by Stephanie Armbruster.

Mary Lib Guercio urged the Board move forward as a build, specifically on the Holy Rosary property.

Alton Trahan stated that the Board has committed to putting a library in place. The committee recommended the RFP for land. He stated that an RFP for lease would waste money.

Lynette Mejia reiterated her support for a brick-and-mortar building.

Mitzi Moss Duhon stated that as a community member, she would be insulted if a makeshift property was used rather than building.

Andrew Duhon stated that it is very important that this library be built to the standards the community deserves. He recommended reaching out to property owners in the area. He stated his support for a brick-and-mortar building.

Anne Swanson spoke in favor of the Northeast library, and against the amendment. She supports the committee in their decision to move forward with the RFP for land.

Forrest Chiasson stated that Kenneth Boudreaux secured 8M in 2019 to build this library. He stated that there was no forward movement until pressured by the community. The ad hoc committee voted to move forward on the RFP for land. He stated his support for a brick-and-mortar building, specifically around Infinity College.

Nureaka Ross stated that the majority vote of the committee was to move forward with the RFP for land. She stated her support for a brick-and-mortar building.

Wayne Colvin asked for data on who would use this library, and how often. He stated that trend data has trended downward in the last ten years. He asked that the Board consider trend data and said that the district is shrinking in population.

Matthew Humphrey stated that the amendment was meant to bog down the vote from the committee. He stated his support for building the library.

Marja Broussard stated that the amendment made goes against the committee vote. She asked that the Board move forward with building the library. She stated that if the Board decides to use it, Holy Rosary will donate the land.

Kadijah Rashad and her granddaughter Nadiyah Bonnette asked that the Board defeat the amendment and move forward with building.

Stephanie Armbruster stated that her concern is cost for operation. She asked if there was a plan to operate existing operations and a new building. Landon Boudreaux stated that the committee did not discuss ways to come up with operational monies. Discussion was held on when the committee would be disbanded.

David Pitre asked if a lease service would provide some sort of service for the area before a build was complete. James Thomas asked that the Board not waste money on a lease.

Yeas: Armbruster, Boudreaux, Judge
Nays: Pitre, Thomas, Wingate, Landers
Abstained: None
Absent: Palombo

The amendment did not pass.

Mary Lib Guercio stated that donated land could speed up the process, and asked that the Board speak to staff that has more experience in these matters. She asked that the Board consider increasing property values. She urged the Board build within budget.

Alton Trahan commended the Board members that voted down the amendment. He stated that the committee should not disband, as they will have to evaluate the RFP. He asked that the Board and committee perform charrettes to get ideas from the community.

Lynette Mejia stated that she understood the committee should work through the proposals received to make recommendation to the Board. She asked that the Board follow the committee recommendation to move forward with the RFP for land.

Andrew Duhon asked that the Board rely on library staff for timeline on the project and budgetary constraints. He stated his support for the motion.

Anne Swanson stated her support of the motion.

Forrest Chiasson stated that as the Fire Marshall, he can state that the library will not take seven years to be built. He expounded on his support for building in the Infinity College area.

Nureaka Ross stated that the Board can extend the Northeast Library Exploratory Committee. She noted that a majority of the members of the committee voted to move forward with the RFP for land. She stated that those not in favor were not residents of the community. She stated that operating costs were discussed during the committee meeting. She stated that Councilman Glenn Lazard was supportive of the RFP for land, and that anything other would not be within the best interest of the Northside.

Matthew Humphrey stated his support for building a library.

Marja Broussard thanked Board members for voting down the amendment. She stated her hope in moving forward with the project.

Kadijah Rashad reiterated thanks for those that voted down the amendment. She stated the importance of the library being built for the community.

The motion was re-read to the Board, stating that the Library Board move forward with the RFP for land as per the recommendation by the Northeast Library Exploratory Committee.

Yeas: Pitre, Thomas, Armbruster, Wingate, Landers, Boudreaux, Judge
Nays: None
Abstained: None
Absent: Palombo

The motion passed.

The Board called a recess at 7:03, and reconvened at 7:22.

B. Library Card Policy

A motion was made by Robert Judge to create a restricted library card for minors 14 years of age and younger to be implemented no later than May 30, 2022 with a provision that parents and/or legal guardians of the minor can opt out. This was seconded by David Pitre.

Mary Lib Guercio stated that this was a major decision and that there had been no discussion. She stated that parents need to exercise their responsibility. She stated that one should not have to opt out of something with such a big impact. She asked that it be tabled without further discussion.

Lynette Mejia stated that this motion had been discussed, and continuously bringing it up was a waste of taxpayer monies and Board and staff time. She stated that children under 14 would still be able to sit in the stacks and look at content even if they were not able to check out the item. She stated that a card that forced parents to opt out will anger parents.

M. Christian Green stated a strong opposition to a youth card of which parents would have to opt out. She stated her opposition of anything that would not be an opt in.

Cara Chance asked for clarification on who would categorize items not able to be checked out by children. She stated that opt out cards would put undue burden on parents. She stated that there would also be educational implications.

Michael Lunsford read passages from the book *The V-Word* by Amber J. Keyser. He stated that this book had been checked out by a 10-year old girl from the Lafayette Public Library.

Mitzi Moss Duhon asked for explanation of the proposal. She read passages from the Book of Genesis. She stated that it is the parents' responsibility to educate their child.

Andrew Duhon stated that an opt out revision would be seen as control from the government. He asked that the Board relied on library staff. He stated that it wasn't the role of the Board to protect others. He stated his support for an opt in if the policy were to change.

Nadine Melancon stated her opposition to this motion. She said that she does not want her kids to be restricted or an opt out. She stated that she felt this was government overreach. She stated that her daughter has to take AR tests on her reading level, and these cards would not allow her to check out cards on her reading level.

Michael Smith urged the Board to reject this motion. He stated this will create unnecessary contention. He asked if they absolutely must change the policy, to make the card opt in.

Lena Selph questioned the impact of the motion.

Joseph Abraham, MD, stated that children can find bootleg copies of books through the internet. He stated that this motion was unnecessary and rushed.

Sharon Patterson stated that the Board was overreaching their control, instead of making access to education more possible. She stated that censorship was the responsibility of the parent.

Marja Broussard stated that she along with the NAACP was against censorship and any proposal aimed at limiting access. She asked that the Board reject the motion.

A motion was made by Joan Wingate to table the item. This was seconded by James Thomas.

Yeas: Judge, Boudreaux, Wingate, Armbruster, Thomas, Landers, Pitre

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Palombo

C. Collection Development Policy

The Collection Development Policy, Section X., reads as follows:

X. Request for Reconsideration of Materials The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials is not made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the basis of the principles set forth in this policy. One objective of the public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view. The library does not endorse particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item imply endorsement of the viewpoint of the author. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents.

The library welcomes citizens' expressions of opinion concerning purchased materials. Requests to remove materials will be considered within the context of this policy. Anyone who wishes to request that a specific item be considered for reclassification or for removal from inclusion in the collection is asked to complete and sign the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form. This form is available online or at any library location at any service desk.

The form is sent to the Library Director. The Director then gives the form to the library's Reconsideration Committee*. The questioned material and information provided on the form will be reviewed in its entirety by the Reconsideration Committee. Once a decision has been made regarding the retention, reclassification, or removal of the material, a letter will be sent by the Library Director to the person. If the person is dissatisfied with the resolution, he or she may appeal to the Library Board of Control. The Library Board will reconsider the decision as an agenda item at a regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Library Board's decision will be final.

*The Reconsideration Committee is an ad hoc committee that conducts business in a closed meeting. It is composed of two library staff members appointed by the Library Director and one Library Board member.

A motion was made by Robert Judge to change the policy to state *The Reconsideration Committee is an ad hoc committee that conducts business in a closed meeting. It is composed of three Library Board members. This was not seconded.

A motion was made by David Pitre to change the policy to state *The Reconsideration Committee is an ad hoc committee that conducts business in a closed meeting. It is composed of two Library Board Members and one librarian appointed by the Library Director. This was seconded by Stephanie Armbruster.

Lynette Mejia stated that she was recently diagnosed with epilepsy. She said that she will get a referral to an epilepsy specialist to find out from experts in the field to find out what she should know on the topic. She stated that she would not ask the board of directors for their input.

Andrew Duhon asked that the Board rely on the library staff.

Mitzi Moss Duhon stated that the decisions of the Board have long-term impact.

Cara Chance asked for an explanation of the motion to change the makeup of the Reconsideration Committee.

Nadine Melancon stated that she trusted the librarians to make these decisions.

Anne Swanson spoke against changing the policy. She asked that the Board be more transparent.

Nureaka Ross questioned the qualifications of Board members to be on this committee. She stated this change was unnecessary.

Nick Richert asked that the Board be more transparent. He asked that the Board trust and rely on library staff.

Jason Peterson stated there was no reason to move forward with this motion. He asked that the Board be more transparent.

Ken Broussard asked why the change was proposed. He asked the qualifications of the Board.

An amendment was made by James Thomas to change the policy to state *The Reconsideration Committee is an ad hoc committee that conducts business in a closed meeting. It is composed of three library staff members appointed by the Library Director and two Library Board members. This was seconded by Joan Wingate.

Lynette Mejia asked that the Board follow the current policy, which provides for the full Board to hear any appeal.

Andrew Duhon stated that the motion was a waste of time and a distraction.

Cara Chance stated her support in leaving the policy as is.

Nadine Melancon stated her support in leaving the policy as is.

Anne Swanson asked that the Board stop doing this.

Nureaka Ross asked that the Board rely on library staff and leave policy as is.

Jason Peterson stated his support of the amendment, and also his support of keeping the policy as is.

Ken Broussard asked that all amendments be withdrawn. He stated that the Board does not get to impose their sense of morality on others. He stated his support in leaving the policy as is.

Yeas: Pitre, Thomas, Wingate

Nays: Armbruster, Judge, Boudreaux, Landers

Abstained: None

Absent: Palombo

The amendment did not pass.

The motion by Pitre was voted on as follows:

Yeas: Pitre, Armbruster, Judge, Boudreaux

Nays: Thomas, Wingate, Landers

Abstained: None

Absent: Palombo

IX. Announcements

- A. Creation of ad hoc committee to review the Mission Statement of the Lafayette Public Library
- B. Reminder that the next Library Board meeting will be Monday, March 21, 2022.
- C. Reminder that yearly ethics training and sexual harassment training must be completed before December 31, 2022.

X. Comments from the public on any other matter not on this agenda

Lynette Mejia thanked Joan Wingate for her comments on the Lafayette Reads Together initiative. She read 'An American Love Poem by Kwame Alexander, who was the author of the 2018 LRT book *The Crossover*.

Ken Broussard stated that the Board was wrong.

Wayne Colvin spoke of Sunday closures. He stated that Sunday is the busiest day of the week.

Katelyn Stewart thanked everyone for serving to make libraries better in the parish. She stated that libraries were a repository for knowledge and that all services offered by LPL are repositories for knowledge.

XI. Closing Prayer, Adjournment

David Pitre led the Board in a closing prayer.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Danny Gillane, Secretary