

The regular meeting of the Lafayette Public Library Board of Control was called to order by President Adele Blue at 5:05 p.m. on February 17, 2014 in the Rosa Parks Transportation Center Multipurpose Conference Room. Board members present were Bennett Bernard, Suzanne Dardeau, Andrew Duhon, Vanessa Hill, Kay Theunissen, and Joan Wingate. Yung-Hsing Wu was not in attendance. Staff members present were Library Director Sona J. Dombourian, Library Administrator Teresa Elberson, and Director's Secretary Veronica Ryder. Denelle Wrightson, Senior Principal of Dewberry Architects, Inc. was a guest speaker. Jessica Cornay, representing LCG Public Works; Pat Logan, representing the City of Scott; Gail Smith, retired Library Director; Wayne Domingue and Steve Oubre, representing Architects Southwest; and Amy Goode, guest of Kay Theunissen, were in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bennett Bernard moved to accept the minutes of the January 13, 2014 Library Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Andrew Duhon and all were in favor.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT AND UPDATES

Ms. Dombourian provided an update about the Main Library construction. There have been slight delays due to the weather. Furniture deliveries are anticipated for July and a soft opening may be as early as November.

The East Regional Library slab is poured. Construction completion is expected by September 2014.

The property owners for the proposed West Regional Library location have agreed to the appraised value. The purchasing process continues to move forward with the next step having the site surveyed and platted for the acreage we are purchasing.

WEST REGIONAL LIBRARY BUILDING PROGRAM PLANNING – DENELLE WRIGHTSON, DEWBERRY ARCHITECTS

Mrs. Wrightson led a charette on planning the West Regional Library. She discussed various qualities and amenities that could be in the West Regional Library. The Board prioritized amenities within the following categories: site amenities, other amenities, sustainability, collection, self service, spaces, technology, reading areas, types of seating, children's and teen spaces, flexibility, and cultural interaction. Staff will work with Mrs. Wrightson in developing the building program for West Regional. The Board will receive the building program document for consideration later this year. The building program, once approved by the Board, will be given to the architect to use in the design process.

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSSION – BRANCH LIBRARIES

The Board continued discussion about maintaining the Broussard and/or Youngsville libraries after the opening of East Regional. Ms. Dombourian distributed an updated map prepared by LCG's GIS staff, showing populations with the targeted areas of the current and future libraries. She stated that while the current budget would sustain the smaller branches for the short term, future needs and costs to operate and maintain the renovated Main Library and the new Regionals should be the priority. The Library has had several requests for additional library service, including the Holy Rosary area, the area near the airport, the Pinhook/Kaliste Saloom area, and in Youngsville south of the area covered by East Regional where there is much population growth. We have estimated operating and maintenance costs for Main, but as we found out with North and South, there are many unknown and unpredictable new expenses related to the facilities.

Denelle Wrightson was asked what is happening in other places that have small libraries in areas with regionals. She stated that the trend is definitely towards larger regionals, that have longer travel distances than the ones in Lafayette Parish. She said that it is difficult to give the public meeting spaces, study rooms, teen areas and other spaces with less than 15,000 square feet. This is the average size most systems are considering and it seems to be the most efficient operating-wise. If a library is not open during the evening or weekends, it is missing the busiest times, so the money is being spent keeping a library open during the less busy times. This is not a cost effective use of the monies. Ms. Wrightson also said that Louisiana is unique in some ways, that historically

Louisiana had many of these small, “part time” libraries throughout the parishes. She suggested moving towards closing the smaller ones. She stated that it is difficult to ‘take away’ a service once you start it and that rather than look at starting new smaller libraries, to consider looking at alternative means of service, including kiosks and lockers for book delivery.

Vanessa Hill suggested that access to the Regionals might be achieved via brainstorming and cooperative arrangements with other governments and communities. As an example, she cited the recent addition of bicycle paths on St. Mary through campus. Andrew Duhon expressed concern for the Duson and Milton libraries that are not primarily covered by a Regional, especially if access is an issue and if that community is invested in the library, such as Duson. He also asked if the smaller libraries that are closer to a Regional would be underutilized once the Regional opened because those users would want the meeting rooms, weekend hours, library programs. Joan Wingate agreed with embracing the Regional concept. Mrs. Wingate, Adele Blue, and Bennett Bernard suggested PR about the new Regional and its features be promoted heavily to the users of the current small branches.

Gail Smith, former library director, was asked if the library plans included keeping or closing the smaller libraries once the Regionals were opened. Ms. Smith stated that when the financial spreadsheet for the expansion project was done, they projected staffing, maintenance, and other costs and it did not allow for keeping all of the small branches open. The projections in 2002 were based on salaries at that time, did not consider pay increases, and did not anticipate such huge jumps in medical and insurance costs. She suggested that it is better to close these small libraries when the Regional opens, see how the Regional impacts service, and expand other outreach and services as needed – such as the sending a roving children’s librarian out to the new community / sports centers in the smaller municipalities.

Suzanne Dardeau asked if there was political fallout when the Carencro Branch was closed. Ms. Dombourian said that the community expected the closure. The 2,500 square foot Carencro Branch was in a leased building that had been sold and the new owner knew that we were in the process of moving out. The land for the library was donated by the City and is on their multipurpose complex. The main difference is that there are two municipalities with small branches in the area covered by East Regional.

Teresa Elberson suggested that the Board visit the current Broussard and Youngsville Branch Libraries. The Broussard Branch – while in a historic building - is non-ADA compliant, services cannot be expanded, storytime attendance is low, and parking is a problem. Youngsville is in a shopping center that we expanded several years ago. It is not big enough for meeting or study rooms and current staffing is not adequate to expand to evening and weekend hours. People in those communities are using the South Regional Library during the evening and on weekends already. These users will likely use East Regional once it is open, although Mrs. Elberson stated that many patrons use multiple libraries.

Mrs. Blue thanked everyone for their input. She asked the Board to think about this issue and continue the discussion at the March meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE – MARCH 11-14, 2014, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Joan Wingate will attend the conference and represent the Board. Several library staff are also attending.

LLA CONFERENCE – MARCH 26-28, 2014, LAFAYETTE CAJUNDOME

Conference registration brochures have been mailed. Dombourian encouraged all Board Members to attend.

ALA CONFERENCE – JUNE 26-JULY 1, 2014, LAS VEGAS, NV

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Joan Wingate moved to adjourn at 7:03 p.m. The motion was seconded by Kay Theunissen and all were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sona J. Dombourian, Secretary