

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

March 18, 2024

Recordings of all meetings can be found on the Library Board of Control page of the Lafayette Public Library website.

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 March 18, 2024. Daniel Kelly, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

I. Roll Call and Invocation

Board Members Present: Daniel Kelly, Board President; Stephanie Armbruster, Board Vice President; Ella Arsement; Robert Judge; Allan Moore; Erasto Padron; James Thomas

Other Staff Present: Sarah Monroe, Interim Library Director; Larry Angelle, Library Operations Manager

The invocation was led by Robert Judge.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Daniel Kelly led the board in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2024 Regular Board Meeting with discussed changes was made by Ella Arsement and seconded by James Thomas.

Yeas: Armbruster, Arsement, Judge, Kelly, Moore, Padron, Thomas

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

The motion carries.

IV. Comments from the Library Board

There were no comments from the Board.

V. Interim Director's Report & Comments

Staff changes and vacancies were reported to the board.

The library officially migrated its eBook and eAudiobook collections to cloudLibrary on March 13. The interim Director spoke on this last month but wanted to revisit the reasoning behind this decision.

First and foremost, it was very cost-effective to switch from Libby to cloudLibrary. The library paid \$12,000 for the OverDrive/Libby platform, and will be paying \$3,000 for cloudLibrary. While the price is similar for NewsStand versus Flipster, NewsStand gives patrons access to over 7,500 magazine and newspapers. Financially, the library is in a really good spot to operate not only the current branches, but the Northeast Library in 5 years. However, as has been seen in recent years, that is not a guarantee. Administration wants to be fiscally responsible with the library's funds and make sure the library continues to stay financially stable. Especially in an economy where the price of everything is constantly increasing. Ultimately, being able to offer more for less made the most sense.

Cost was not the only thing looked at, though. Statistics were taken into account. Looking at e-checkout trends over the past 5 years, audiobooks are steadily increasing and Kindle checkouts are slowly dropping. More people are listening or reading on their phones or tablets versus dedicated eReaders like a Kindle.

When looking at all e-checkouts for last year, Kindle checkouts accounted for only 19.3% of all checkouts in Libby. There have been a lot of comments saying that Kindle users account for 70% of all Libby users, but that's not what the statistics show. It's the opposite. Looking at the bigger picture of how all LPL patrons prefer to read their books, print books are still the most popular choice by far, at almost 75% of all book checkouts.

Other comments that have been made make it sound like Kindle is the only way to read on an e-ink e-reader. It may be the most well-known, but there are many well reviewed options for e-ink readers beyond the Kindle at varying price points. There's the NOOK GlowLight, Kobo has several options like the Nia or Clara, and there's the Boox Page. By no means is the Library recommending that patrons have to go purchase a new e-reader, but there are options out there for those interested.

Administration recognizes that the Libby app has some features that cloudLibrary doesn't, and these features have been requested to be added. From the sound of it, cloudLibrary is already working on adding some of them as LPL is not the only library to request it. The Libby app was not always what it is now. There has been a fair share of complaints about the usability of the Libby app throughout the years. Features get requested, updates are rolled out, and improvements are made. cloudLibrary, as it is right now, is a perfectly good app, but there's always room for improvement. Library Administration anticipates future changes that will make LPL patrons happy.

Ultimately, administration understands the frustration of Kindle readers but reiterates that this decision not only makes sense financially but is backed by statistics. It is understandable that some people are upset, but patrons have yelled at staff, left rude

Facebook comments, and sent ugly emails. Administration asks that patrons please don't yell at LPL staff.

To wrap up, the library recognized patrons at the 2023 100 Book Club ceremony. The interim Director attended both Parish Council Meetings as purchasing the land for the Northeast Library was introduced and adopted in February. Finally, the interim Director attended the Friends and Foundation board meetings, as well as the Foundation's Strategic Planning Retreat.

VI. Facilities Update & Financial Report

Plans and specifications for the South Regional Library Renovations Project are passing through the final signature process and will then be dropped off to the Purchasing Department for final review. Once approved by the Purchasing Department, the project will be sent out to bid.

Design Development plans and cost estimates for the North Regional Library Renovations Project are estimated to be sent to the Library and Public Works the first week of April but will exclude any Civil Site details. Proposal for Civil Site Engineering Services was reviewed by Architect, Library, and Public Works. The Library Operations Manager and Public Works recommended to proceed. The Architect had issues with cost/payment structure to the Architect. The Library Operations Manager and Public Works identified contract terms in place with Architect. Architect agreed to proceed.

Ordinance authorizing the purchase of the 6-acre tract was approved by the Parish Council in order to build the Northeast Library on. Mayor-President has signed/approved the Ordinance. Legal is working on getting the Purchase Agreement executed. Once the Purchase Agreement is signed, a 45-day due diligence process begins. Legal is hoping to finalize the purchase by the end of the month. Once the purchase is finalized we will need to start the information gathering process so that our Library Consultant can start developing a Library Building Program.

Pricing proposal has been received for the stairwell glass panel at the Main Library as of March 15 and is being reviewed by the Library Operations Manager. Purchase should occur soon.

Eight new leaks at the South Regional Library (3 in children's area, 1 in teen area, 4 around adult A/V area) were reported during a rain event the evening of February 28. The roofer was proactively onsite the morning of February 29 to inspect for any leaks and did address the new leaks.

In FY 23/24, the library has collected \$12.4 million and has spent \$4.7 million.

VII. New Business

A. Report of Director Search Committee

Stephanie Armbruster, committee chair, reported that the Director Search Committee met for the second time on March 15, 2024. The Committee decided to pay to advertise on INALJ (I Need A Library Job) for four weeks, as well as looking into paying to advertise the position on LinkedIn. In addition, the interim Director was asked to send the job posting to selected MLIS graduate programs in the southeastern states.

B. Library Book Discards January – February 2024

A motion to discard 2,480 books was made by Ella Arsement and seconded by Erasto Padron.

Yeas: Arsement, Judge, Kelly, Moore, Padron, Thomas

Nays: None

Abstained: Armbruster

Absent: None

The motion carries.

C. Library Book Display

Robert Judge made a motion to adopt the proposed display policy. There was no second, so the motion died.

After further discussion, Ella Arsement motioned that the following display policy be adopted:

It is the policy of the Lafayette Parish Public Library System that displayed items must be in accordance with the overall policy regarding sexually explicit materials. Since displays are designed by their very nature to highlight items, displayed items shall not contain sexually explicit material nor material that includes topics relating to human sexuality either on the outside cover of the book or located inside the book being displayed. Furthermore, in consideration of all people of Lafayette Parish, displays shall avoid political, social, or ideological topics and other topics considered to be controversial or potentially controversial.

Erasto Padron seconded the motion.

Discussion on the policy continued, and Ella Arsement withdrew her original motion. Allan Moore then motioned to strike the last sentence of the proposed display policy, add the verbiage proposed by Arsement, and join it with the 2022 display guidelines. Ella Arsement seconded the motion. The discard policy would read as follows:

The purpose of this document is to guide Library staff and to inform the public about the principles upon which display themes and materials are chosen.

Library displays are planned, organized, and implemented by Library staff. A display is defined as a selection of items that are pulled from their usual location in the collection and placed on designated display furniture or shelves. The purpose of Library displays is to highlight new materials; educate the public about a variety of subjects, genres, and formats offered; and to stimulate interest in the Library collections, services, and resources.

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The following criteria will be considered when making decisions about display topics, materials, and accompanying resources:

- Format and style are suitable for intended audience (e.g. adult materials will not be included in displays in the children's area).
- Relation to Library events and programming.
- Representation of genre or trend.
- Interests of patrons and the public.
- In addition, the library draws upon other community resources in developing displays and exhibits, and may partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored displays and exhibits.

The following guidelines will be followed when planning, organizing, and implementing displays:

- Themes and materials selected should represent a wide variety of interests and viewpoints.
- Heritage and Identity Months/Observances as well as federally recognized holidays should not be the sole focus or title of a display.
- When possible, staff should fill displays with materials that are inclusive and diverse with representation of different genders, races, orientations, etc.
- Materials should be in good condition.
- Displays should not promote a specific religion or political party.

Approval of displays:

- The branch or department manager is responsible for ensuring staff are following these guidelines.
- Patrons who request the reconsideration of library display materials will be asked to follow the procedures concerning reconsideration of library materials as outlined in the Lafayette Public Library’s Collection Development Policy.

Margaret Oelkers, Emily Broussard, Steven Lazarus, Don McIntyre, Cindi Fox, Mary Lib Guercio, Melany Champagne, Andrew Duhon, Cara Chance, Claire Delcambre, Lynette Mejia, Anne Swanson, Regina Champagne, M. Christian Green, Greg Ardoin, Jae Regan, and Francesco Crocco commented.

Yeas: Armbruster, Arsement, Judge, Kelly, Moore, Padron
Nays: None
Abstained: Thomas
Absent: None

The motion carries.

VIII. Announcements

- A. Reminder that the next Library Board Meeting will be Monday, April 15, 2024.
- B. Reminder that yearly ethics training and sexual harassment training must be completed before December 31, 2024.

IX. Public Comments on any Library business which is not an agenda item.

Mary Lib Guercio, Steven Lazarus, and Lynette Mejia commented.

X. Closing Prayer, Adjournment

The closing prayer was led by Erasto Padron. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sarah Monroe, Interim Secretary