

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

September 21, 2020

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 September 21, 2020. Andrew Duhon, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 5:17 PM.

I. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance

Board Members Present: Andrew Duhon, President; Yung-Hsing Wu, Vice-President; Doug Palombo; Hilda Edmond; Adele Blue; Joan Wingate; Stephanie Armbruster; James Thomas

Other Staff Present: Teresa Elberson, Director; Terry Roy, Library Administrator; Larry Angelle, Library Operations Manager; Danielle Breaux, Director's Executive Secretary; Benton St. Romain, Library Budget Analyst; Duane Prejean (arrived 7:04, left 7:15)

Members of the Public: Landon Boudreaux

Andrew Duhon led the board in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board and staff members introduced themselves and provided a brief biographical statement.

II. New Business

A. Approval of Minutes

Stephanie Armbruster stated that she had sent in suggestions to change the minutes of the August 17, 2020 minutes before the meeting. A date was corrected and the minutes were changed to reflect discussion of the roof design for the North Regional Expansion.

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2020 Regular Board Meeting was made by Yung-Hsing Wu and seconded by Joan Wingate.

Yeas: Duhon, Wu, Palombo, Edmond, Blue, Wingate, Armbruster, Thomas
Nays: None
Abstained: None
Absent: None

III. Comments from the Library Board

A. Lafayette Public Library Foundation report

Joan Wingate announced that the Foundation had been fairly stagnant since the onset of COVID-19. There was a recent officer change. The Foundation is currently working on an educational PR program. The annual luncheon was canceled for 2020, and the planning process has begun for the April 2021 luncheon. The luncheon acts as both a fundraiser and an awards program.

Andrew Duhon gave a basic explanation of the roles of the Lafayette Public Library Board of Control, the Lafayette Public Library Foundation, and the Friends of the Lafayette Public Library.

IV. Director's Report and Comments

Staff changes were announced to the board.

The Library is now in Phase III. Spacing of open computer workstations has been reconfigured allowing more computers to be used at each location. Items are no longer being quarantined for three days. There is no evidence to suggest that the virus is spread by books so work flow is back to normal. Most furniture is back in place and staff is slowly being moved around so that meeting spaces can be reopened. The Makerspace is now open at Main. Programs will remain virtual and contact free at this time.

First time checkout numbers, which count checkouts done in the building, was down 33% and electronic checkouts were up 10% over August 2019. This brings system wide monthly circulation down 25%. This is an improvement over July 2020 numbers by 3%. The library was closed for three days in August for Hurricane Laura. Library visits were down 55% for the month with no programs or meeting rooms in use. Drive thru uses were up 151% over last August.

Library card designs are on billboards throughout Lafayette promoting library card sign up month in September. Full service fine free library cards good for 6 months are being given to residents of Jefferson Davis, Calcasieu, and Cameron Parishes who have been displaced by Hurricane Laura and who are momentarily living in Lafayette Parish. As of 9/15/20, 124 Hurricane cards were issued.

The community was challenged this year to read over 3 million minutes for the Summer Reading Program. That goal was not quite met, yet 2,989,571 minutes is the most ever logged. There was an amazing level of engagement from patrons.

Patrons checked out 367,245 books across various formats including physical and digital audiobooks. 157,062 TV shows and movies were checked out between June 1 and August 31.

In 2020, staff began producing video programming in response to COVID-19. Over 40,250 minutes of new videos were watched. These included digital story times, crafts, and educational content.

The library has provided dedicated spaces for students at all regional locations and Main. Use is not high, but it has not yet been promoted.

Fourteen MiFi hotspots are now available for checkout to patrons. This consists of the wireless device itself, as well as its charger (cord & plug) and bag. The device provides access to high speed internet service anywhere a cell phone service can be received for up to 15 devices.

Hotspot devices and services are paid for through December 31, 2020 by CARES ACT/IMLS funding from the state.

The Friends of the Lafayette Public Library will be hosting a curb-side sale at the South Regional Library on Saturday, September 26 from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Bags can be pre-ordered in certain areas of fiction and non-fiction.

All four parishes that had library millage renewals on ballots in July passed their renewals. All millages were set higher than the LPL millages.

Monthly branch reports, financials, and the Sept – Oct 2020 edition of the Book Talk were included in packets.

Andrew Duhon was honored with a black pin and two plated books for his years of service.

V. Construction and Facilities Update

An agreement for the Main Library roof repair has been negotiated and drafted. The architect will sign agreement and send to Public works to start the LCG signature process.

Hurricane Laura made landfall on August 27, 2020. The South Regional Library had three trees damaged. These trees will be removed, straightened, or trimmed. West Regional Library was impacted with water intrusion into the lobby area. Water was removed via shop vacuum and blowers. North Regional had a minor roof leak due to a few shingle roof caps being blown off. This was repaired quickly. All other branches and the warehouse had limited to no damage.

The library has worked with the architect for the South Regional Library Expansion to finalize outstanding questions for construction documents.

The Schematic Design meeting was held with 720 Design and Angelle Architects for the North Regional Library Expansion.

The expansion of the North Regional and South Regional branches also include mechanical system upgrades and do not include additional staffing costs. Expansion is needed sooner than expected because of an influx of population in a short amount of time after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The Library spoke with Maureen Arndt with 720 Design about the problem of not having the data needed to decide how to best provide library services to the northeast section of Lafayette Parish. A video conference was held with 720 Design and the Ivy Group to consider market research and information gathering options. Information gathered from this meeting was presented for consideration.

VI. Unfinished Business

A. FY 20/21 Budget and Millages

Andrew Duhon presented a slideshow entitled Lafayette Parish Public Library Financial Future. This encompassed present and recent setbacks as it stands in September 2020.

A millage was lost in the election of 2018. Voters defeated a 1.48 millage renewal. This led to a loss of about \$3M annually.

There was a transfer of Fund Balance in 2019. Voters approved a transfer of \$10M of Library Fund Balance for other Parish purposes.

A rollback of millage occurred in 2019. The rolled back millage was due to assessed value increases from voter-approved 2.0 mills to 1.84 mills. This 0.16 mill reduction resulted in revenue loss of about \$300,000 annually.

The present library condition as it stands shows the Ending Fund Balance for FY 20/21 at \$7,324,790. The change in Fund Balance, or Operating Loss, is (\$1,153,109).

The effect of not adjusting millages to maximum define the loss at approximately \$740,000.

Adding this amount to the \$1.1M annual loss results in the total estimated operating losses to be about \$1.84M.

Without some action the Fund Balance will be depleted in 3.97 years.

This situation will be further exacerbated by probable continued decreases in assessed values. Without millage adjustments, there will be probable larger annual operating losses and faster depletion of Fund Balance.

Options to balance the budget will be presented at future meetings.

VII. New Business

A. Library Book Discards

A motion for the library to discard 449 books having been out of use for over a year due to the books being superseded, obsolete, unused, or otherwise unnecessary was made by Hilda Edmond and seconded by Joan Wingate.

Yeas: Duhon, Wu, Palombo, Edmond, Blue, Wingate, Armbruster, Thomas

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

Stephanie Armbruster asked that the Lafayette Parish Board of Control bylaws be revisited, as they have not been updated since August 1998. She asked that updates in technology be reflected. Ordinance No. JO-023-2020 establishes the board, the number of members, and the method of appointment. It was asked that this information be included.

Monthly branch reports show positive comments from patrons. Board members asked that reports also cover any negative feedback or problem resolutions.

Main's informational displays were mentioned in the August 2020 branch report for Main, Chenier, and Butler. Stephanie Armbruster asked that the board be notified the month before of any displays planned.

Stephanie Armbruster also asked that the board get a copy of the BookTalk before it goes to print.

B. Election of Officers

A motion to elect Doug Palombo as Library Board President and Hilda Edmond as Library Board Vice – President was made by Joan Wingate and seconded by Stephanie Armbruster.

Yeas: Duhon, Wu, Palombo, Edmond, Blue, Wingate, Armbruster, Thomas
Nays: None
Abstained: None
Absent: None

VIII. Announcements

- A. Reminder that the next Library Board meeting will be Monday, September 21, 2020.
- B. Reminder that yearly ethics training and sexual harassment training must be completed before December 31, 2020.

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

There were no comments from the public.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Teresa Elberson, Secretary