

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

July 25, 2022

The special meeting of the Lafayette Public Library Board of Control was held in the Meeting Room of the South Regional Library at 6101 Johnston St. on July 25, 2022. Robert Judge, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 5:11 PM.

**I. Roll Call and Invocation**

Board Members Present: Robert Judge, Board President; Landon Boudreaux, Vice-President; Stephanie Armbruster; James Thomas; Shane Landers; David Pitre; Daniel Kelly

Board Members Absent: Joan Wingate

Other Staff Present: Sarah Monroe, Assistant Director; Larry Angelle, Library Operations Manager; Danielle Breaux, Director's Executive Secretary

Members of the Public: Paige Beyt, Oats & Marino; Lynette Mejia; Pablo Mejia; Aimee' Dominique; Anne Hollier; Jim Bass; Andrew Duhon; Holly Best; Melanie Brevis; Melany Champagne; Mary Lib Guercio; Aimee Robinson; Roxanne Guillory; Nadine Melancon; Hannah Guillory; Jared Eubanks; William Myers; William Veillon; Alex LaGrange; Lessie LeBlanc; Robert M. Schmidt; Alice C. Ferguson; Anna Gauthier; Amanda Anderson; Katherine Salts; Seth Roy; Constance Milton; Rene' Sonnier; Evan Fullington; Will Thiele; Frank Crocco

The invocation was led by Daniel Kelly.

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

**II. New Business**

Per Louisiana Open Meetings Law, Cara Chance elected to have the Board discuss her evaluation of employment status in an open meeting and not in Executive Session.

It was stated that Cara Chance's employment status was being evaluated for willful insubordination.

Robert Judge stated that Danny Gillane rightly recused himself because of an inactionable claim of harassment made by Chance and that left this matter to the Board.

It was stated that the law that gave the Board this power over library staff other than the Director was Ordinance 54.2 which referenced Louisiana Revised Statute 25:215.

Robert Judge stated that if the Board fails to act in termination of Cara Chance's employment with the library system, then the Board has taken the position that Danny Gillane does not have the authority vested in him to run the library system and they have effectively elevated the subordinates to override any decision he may make should she not agree with him. This has the effect of inviting other employees to the same, the groundwork to which he has laid as evidenced by the numerous signatures of other employees.

A motion was made by Robert Judge to terminate Cara Chance's employment with the Lafayette Public Library and that the termination be effective immediately. This was seconded by Stephanie Armbruster.

Shane Landers stated that Danny Gillane had expressed in an email his desire for the Board to take no action. Landers stated his support of the Director making any employment decisions, and stated that even if the Board does have the authority, this was setting a dangerous precedent.

James Thomas reiterated what was said by Landers and stated that he could not make a decision on someone's livelihood without more information.

David Pitre stated that he had no patience with insubordination but believed in a systematic due process.

A motion to table the matter until next month was made by Stephanie Armbruster and seconded by David Pitre.

Andrew Duhon asked for clarification on if he would be able to speak on Agenda Item III.

Holly Best stated that her family will be leaving Louisiana as it is turning into a fascist state. She asked that the Board worry about the thousands of illiterate children in Louisiana.

Mary Lib Guercio stated that this reflected poor decision making from the Board. She stated that there was a process and a due process for employees to follow, and that no one should be summarily disciplined and terminated without going through a due process system.

Hannah Guillory asked how far in advance the location would be announced for the next meeting and what would be done to address the questions of due process that had come up.

Jared Eubanks stated his support in tabling the motion. He said that not doing something is not the same as actively recusing the ability to say something. He stated it outrageous the lack of people involved in the decision.

Robert M. Schmidt, legal counsel for Cara Chance, spoke in support of tabling the motion. He stated that she was not informed of the accusation of insubordination until the meeting and as a civil service employee had the right to know the charges against her ahead of time. He stated that she was not given any notice of the action being proposed or of any misconduct of which she was accused of engaging.

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

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Wingate

### **Executive Session**

A motion to enter into executive session to discuss the character and professional competence of the Library Director and take action on continuation of contract of employment was made by Robert Judge and seconded by James Thomas.

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

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Wingate

A motion to adjourn executive session to resume regular business was made by James Thomas and seconded by Stephanie Armbruster.

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

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Wingate

A motion was made by Robert Judge to continue the employment of Danny Gillane, Library Director. This was seconded by Stephanie Armbruster.

Yeas: Judge, Armbruster, Thomas, Landers, Pitre, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Wingate, Boudreaux

### **III. Comments from the public on any other matter not on this agenda**

Lynette Mejia

Pablo Mejia

Melanie Brevis

Anna Gauthier spoke on the Louisiana Library Association's code of ethics, and stated that Cara spoke for her and ventured to say for other librarians.

Amanda Anderson

Katherine Salts

Seth Roy stated that threatening to fire Cara Chance was an intimidation tactic to silence those that may be inclined to speak out.

Constance Milton spoke of the saying that Libraries are for Everyone and stated that it was demoralizing to come to work and not practice what was preached.

Rene' Sonnier

Andrew Duhon

Jim Bass

William Myers

Evan Fullington

Jared Eubanks stated that this was not about neutrality, but about erasing LGBTQ representation from the government.

Will Thiele asked that the display policy be repealed as it represented censorship.

Mary Lib Guercio

Frank Crocco, President of Move the Mindset, spoke on their statement regarding the book display policy. He stated that the book display policy did not avoid situations where a certain groups or situations would avoid a political backlash.

**IV. Closing Prayer, Adjournment**

David Pitre led the Board in a closing prayer.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sarah Monroe, Acting Secretary