

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

April 19, 2021

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 April 19, 2021. Doug Palombo, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 5:18 PM.

I. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance

Board Members Present: Doug Palombo, Board President; Hilda Edmond, Board Vice-President; Joan Wingate; Adele Blue; Stephanie Armbruster; Landon Boudreaux; Robert Judge; James Thomas (arrived 5:19)

Other Staff Present: Danny Gillane, Interim Director; Terry Roy, Library Administrator; Larry Angelle, Library Operations Manager; Danielle Breaux, Director's Executive Secretary; Linda Broussard; Cara Chance; Clint Guillory; Michelle Lazarus-Primeaux; Duane Prejean; Benton St. Romain

Members of the Public: Michael Hebert, Assistant City-Parish Attorney; Jean Menard; Jarred Breaux; Lynette Mejia; Travis Gauthier; Clay Young; Claire Taylor

Doug Palombo led the board in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. New Business

A. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2021 Regular Board Meeting was made by Joan Wingate and seconded by Landon Boudreaux.

Yeas: Palombo, Edmond, Wingate, Blue, Boudreaux, Judge, Thomas

Nays: None

Abstained: Armbruster

Absent: None

III. Comments from the Library Board

A. Lafayette Public Library Foundation report

The informational campaign of the Foundation continues with a recently released commercial and a Facebook push. The Foundation Luncheon will be held on May 14 at City Club.

The Friends of the Lafayette Public Library will conduct a book sale at the Heymann Center June 16-19.

IV. Director's Report and Comments

Staff changes were announced to the Board.

The library is following the latest state guidelines. Masks are required to be worn by library staff and masks are still required for anyone entering the building.

Library has begun limited in-person programs.

Library Director attended meetings with Parish Council members Tabor, Guilbeau, and Rubin.

Library Director attended online millage class offered by the Legislative Auditor's office.

Library has joined in partnership with the Kiwanis reading incentive project.

Parish Proud will be using the West Regional Library parking lot as their staging area for a cleanup effort on US 90.

Proactive budget measures:

- The library will present a budget for the coming fiscal year that eliminates over \$150,000 in staff costs.
- The library is looking at redistributing certain parts of the selection process, shifting some tasks to other librarians. This would allow for the acquisitions librarians to take on some public service duties and for other librarians to participate in the selection process in a more structured fashion, providing valuable experience to the librarians and bringing more points of view to our selection processes. These actions will delay filling positions while we evaluate the success of the changes; and if viable, these changes could result in up to \$150,000 or more in additional savings in the current year and future years.

The library has closed the makerspace at the South Regional Library. Equipment has been moved to the Main Library and to programming at South Regional. The newly vacated room will become a multipurpose conference room available to the public.

Parish resolution No. PR-006-2021, Proposition No. 3 of 4 has the library millage renewal at 1.84 mills. The library was not asked for input.

Financials were included in packets. Revenues collected as of 4/14/2021 are 10.4M. Expenses as of 04/14/2021 are 5.6M.

V. Facilities Update

Insurance Requirements have been confirmed for the North Regional Library Shingle Roof Replacement. Larry Angelle will continue drafting specifications during or after the annual budget and inventory process.

A roof moisture survey occurred on Friday, March 12, 2021 for the Main Library Roof Coating Project. The library is waiting on the formal moisture survey report and recommendations from the architect.

Landscape maintenance quotes were received. Contract to be awarded to Rotolo Consultants, Inc. Estimated annual savings are \$2,300.

Bids were received for grass cutting through Geaux Mow for 38 cuts. Low bids by location are as follows: Main Library \$120/cut Grass Unlimited, North Regional Library \$350/cut Cajun Cultivation, East Regional Library \$220/cut Cajun Cultivation, West Regional Library \$320/cut Chris's Outdoor Services, LLC. & South Regional Library \$300/cut Chris's Outdoor Services, LLC.

Main and South Regional Libraries were cut with the new vendors. Inspections were done by Larry Angelle. Minor adjustments and corrections were needed at South Regional Library but the vendor returned and corrected the issues. The grass cutting of the Main Library was inspected and approved. Other locations were not yet cut with the new vendors due to the ongoing rains.

Estimated annual savings is \$9,000.

Someone vandalized one of the windows of the Main Library by throwing a rock at it. Video footage and incident details were given to authorities. Estimated repair cost \$2,050. Estimated replacement date week of April 19th or 26th.

Library Maintenance staff identified and replaced a burnt 1hp motor and cracked fan blade on North Regional Library Condensing Unit #2. The replacement motor and fan blade costs \$420. The North Regional Library has 3 Condensing Units, each unit having 2 motors and fans. A different fan blade broke and shut down this unit last summer. Limited damages occurred and the unit is still operable.

VI. Unfinished Business

A. Library Board of Control Bylaws

Jean Menard spoke on Article 3, Section 2, which states that a quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of four (4) members of the Board present in person. She stated that she believes this violated state law. She stated her concern that new board members perhaps have good intentions but may not have the training necessary. She said that public records requests have revealed political and partisan intentions.

Jarred Breaux stated that getting rid of parliamentary procedures such as Robert's Rules of Order may cause a major problem for the democratic process. He said that every legislative body has a parliamentary procedure that is adopted and followed; and if not, this leads to tyrannical government control. In Article 5, Section 1, the Board seeks to add the wording 'subject to the Board's direction and control' (of the Library Director). He stated this causes a problem between governance and management.

Lynette Mejia spoke of her concerns of taking the wording 'provided the proposed amendment was stated in the call for the meeting' from Article 9. Amendments. She says this feels that it was designed to keep the public from objecting to changes in any meaningful way. She respectfully asked that this article remain as written and that in the future the Board provide the proposed changes when the agenda is posted. She stated that the changes to Article 5, Section 1 were not clear, and asked that it be rewritten in the light of a search for a new Director. Article 4, Section 4 states that any Board Member who misses more than four (4) meetings in a twelve (12) month period shall be deemed to have resigned from the Board and shall be automatically deemed removed from the Board. She suggested that something be added stating that members are prohibited from utilizing any manner of proxy voting procedures, or any other means used to circumvent the intent of the Louisiana Open Meetings Law.

Landon Boudreaux stated that the Board has been working to revise the bylaws for sixth months and that former Director Teresa Elberson supported these changes because the bylaws were over twenty years old. Library Board Members take a yearly Ethics Training, and have to follow Open Meetings Laws. The bylaws revision includes a system of checks and balances for the Board. The word control has been included because the official title is the Lafayette Parish Library Board of Control.

A motion to approve the bylaws as presented with changes made by Legal was made by Landon Boudreaux and seconded by Stephanie Armbruster.

Yeas: Palombo, Edmond, Wingate, Blue, Armbruster, Boudreaux, Judge,

Thomas

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

B. Update on progress and status of search for permanent Library Director by the Director's Search Committee

The Director's Search Committee has posted an advertisement and job description on March 29, 2021. The closing date for receiving cover letter and resume for this position is April 30, 2021.

C. Mission Statement

The current Library Mission Statement is The mission of Lafayette Public Library is to enhance the quality of life of our community by providing free and equal access to high-quality, cost-effective library services that meet the needs and expectations of our diverse community for information, life-long learning, and cultural enrichment.

Robert Judge's proposed Mission Statement reads: The mission of the Lafayette Public Library is to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Lafayette Parish by promoting: literacy, life long learners, and access to information through various and diverse sources. To be an aid in research, use of technology and to enhance access to information and to provide adequate staff to facilitate each patron's journey to their educational goals. This mission is for the purpose of having an educated and informed public.

After discussion, it was decided that this be revisited at a later meeting.

- D. South Regional Library Expansion Project
- E. North Regional Library Expansion Project

It was asked that the library provide a third option for these projects. The Board asked to be provided with a list of critical needs vs. wants to be addressed at these locations.

Jean Menard suggested that the Board focus on millages. She pleaded for the Board to talk to the Council and to get the public involved. She said that it needed to be communicated to a very broad audience that this renewal will not fund current operations. Capital funds are available but not operating expenses. She said that the Board should be focused on expanding services.

- F. North Regional Library Roof Replacement

Larry Angelle stated that he did not have any new quotes on the Roof Replacement.

VII. New Business

- A. Library Book Discards for January – February 2021

A motion for the library to discard 803 books having been out of use for over a year due to the books being superseded, obsolete, unused, or otherwise unnecessary was made by Landon Boudreaux and seconded by Joan Wingate.

Yeas: Palombo, Edmond, Wingate, Blue, Armbruster, Boudreaux, Judge,
Thomas
Nays: None
Abstained: None
Absent: None

VIII. Announcements

- A. Reminder that the next Library Board meeting will be Monday, May 17, 2021.
- B. Reminder that yearly ethics training and sexual harassment training must be completed before December 31, 2021.

Doug Palombo announced that meetings will no longer be live-streamed on Facebook.

Joan Wingate reminded board members that their Annual Financial Disclosure is due on May 15.

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

Clay Young stated that it was his opinion that most of the residents of Lafayette Parish have supported recent decisions of the Board. He suggested narrowing the mission statement. He recommended avoiding politics and divisive cultural agendas that have come up in the past, stating that otherwise, the millage will never pass. He asked the Board to stick to the core mission of literacy, promoting reading, and being a welcoming place for the public to come in and read books and use facilities.

Lynette Mejia asked that Robert Judge state his support of the millage.

Robert Judge stated his support of the millage. He said that his deferral in answering was to educate himself, and to formulate an argument to be able to go to the public and explain why the millage is necessary.

Jean Menard stated that public records requests have revealed that people are engaging in partisan politics with the Parish Council. She stated that Board Members are trying to restrict access and want to promote their own agenda. She dispersed the Ethical Responsibility section of the Handbook for Louisiana Library Trustees to several Board Members.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Danny Gillane, Secretary