

St. Tammany Parish Library
Board of Control Meeting
July 28, 2020
Library Administrative Office
1112 W. 21st Ave.
Covington, LA 70433
Zoom meeting streaming on Facebook Live
6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Becky Taylor, President. Kelly LaRocca, Director, called the roll and declared that a quorum was present.

Present: Carmen Butler, Dr. Argiro Morgan, Mary Reneau, Ann Shaw, Becky Taylor
Absent: Bill Allin, John Danjean

1. Approval of the minutes of the meetings of the Library Board of Control that were held on June 30, 2020 and July 14, 2020.

B. Taylor asked the board to review the two sets of minutes for corrections and stated that the phone number for public comment is 985-871-1219 extension 2007. K. LaRocca stated that the board packet is available on the website for the public to view. There was a two-minute public comment period for each set of minutes. There were no corrections and no public comment. M. Reneau moved to accept the minutes from the meeting held on June 30, 2020. It was seconded by A. Shaw. Five were in favor, two were absent, and none opposed. Motion carried. Dr. A. Morgan moved to accept the minutes from the special meeting held on July 14, 2020. It was seconded by M. Reneau. Five were in favor, two were absent, and none opposed. Motion carried.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Financial Reports – June 2020

K. LaRocca reported that the library received \$142,675.79 in Ad Valorem Revenue in July. The total received to date is \$10,305,537.16. That is 99.5% of what was budgeted for the year. The budget percentage should be at 50% at this point in the year. The revenue percentage is at 50.11% and expenditures are at 48.02%. We have received more funds than we have spent and are on target for this point in the year.

Kelly stated that since the budget was amended at the last meeting many of the lines are on target. She explained that any of the lines that are over budget are because those lines include items that are paid at the beginning of the year. The lines that are under budget are due to not spending those funds yet this year. The Library Salaries line is at 46% due to raises that are realized throughout the year, and there is still one more month with 3 paychecks this year.

A. Shaw asked about the Book Binding line and whether or not it will be used later in the year. Kelly explained that the bindery has a minimum size order limit and it depends on if we have a large enough shipment to send. Dr. A. Morgan asked who does the binding. Kelly stated that it is a company in Tennessee. Dr. A Morgan asked if the Web Design Consulting is complete and who maintains the website. Kelly said that it is complete and staff maintains the website. Kelly added that they are in the testing phase of adding a new app this year. There will be more to discuss about the app at the next board meeting.

B. Taylor asked for questions from the board and called for a two-minute public comment period. There was no public comment.

Dr. A. Morgan moved to accept the June 2020 Financial Report. It was seconded by A. Shaw. Five were in favor, two were absent, and none opposed. Motion carried.

B. Technology Upgrade Report – Kelly LaRocca

K. LaRocca shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the details of the technology upgrade. She stated that a technology upgrade is one of the projects on our capital improvements list that was presented to the Parish Council. The library had originally budgeted \$1,300,000 for the project. In 2019 the library began working with Carson Block, a library technology consultant, to learn about and develop a technology plan. The two technology improvements on this plan are people counters and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID).

The first technology upgrade Kelly spoke about was the people counters. She explained that we currently have simple people counters in our branches. The sensor counts the number of people that pass through the door as they enter and exit the building. At the end of the day, a staff member checks the number, divides it by two, and enters it onto a statistics spreadsheet. It is a manual process with room for error. Kelly stated that the library has a census committee that was meeting quarterly prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee looks at statistics to determine the busiest and slowest times of day. These statistics help determine when to staff the circulation desk and when to adjust hours of operation. A modern automated people counting system has the capability to track these statistics and information. It has real-time monitoring of occupancy which is very important during the COVID-19 pandemic. The system can show the

breakdown of hours, days, and weeks for census data. It has a centralized dashboard of data which allows branch-to-branch comparisons. Kelly stated that Administration looked at projects that were completed at other libraries in the United States. The estimated cost is \$36,051.60 based on those recently completed projects. Kelly explained that having this technology will help the library make better planning decisions with real-time data.

The second technology upgrade is Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). Kelly explained the functions of an RFID tag on a book. It identifies the title of the item, tracks the status of an item, provides security from loss or theft, and ensures accuracy and efficiency. A big benefit is that it improves the speed and accuracy of item processing and checking in and out materials. Several items can be checked in and out at once using RFID technology. It improves the accuracy of inventory by using RFID wands that can be used to scan the shelves for items.

It also provides self-service options during peak library hours. Kelly explained that the goal is to improve the circulation and flow of materials, create a better user experience, and enhance person-to-person communication between staff and patrons. A benefit of the self-serve option is to reduce the handling of materials, which is very important with the current COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, we have make-shift self-checkouts set up at the branches. There are tables set up with scanners so that patrons can check out their materials without anyone else touching their library cards and materials. It is not the easiest or most ideal long-term method. RFID would be an easier and more efficient solution. Kelly explained that RFID gates are a good replacement for the library's aging electromagnetic security gates. RFID security gates are less expensive than the electromagnetic gates. Kelly discussed the benefits of RFID in conjunction with our strategic planning process. Remote pickup lockers and other innovative opportunities are possible with RFID.

Kelly summarized the conversion process. The cost of labor is included. If there is not enough library staff to allow for an extra dedicated team of staff to tag all of the items in the library, then there are companies that can be contracted to tag the materials. Other libraries in our area such as East Baton Rouge Parish and Jefferson Parish have used outside labor for their tagging. Kelly explained that she included labor in the budget to cover all bases so that there would be no surprises in the cost.

Kelly stated that there is still more work to be done during the planning phase, but she wanted to introduce the project to the board to give them an idea of what it would cost. Kelly referenced the spreadsheet on her slideshow. It shows a total cost of \$804,278.67. There is another column that shows the total cost with extra self-checkouts included. That total cost is \$923,078.67. Kelly explained that she did not previously anticipate putting self-checkouts in the small branches due to the size of the buildings and face-to-face interactions are what make our small branches so

special. In the COVID-19 era, many of our patrons want to check out materials themselves and interact with staff from 6-feet away due to social distancing guidelines.

Kelly concluded that the next steps are to refine the equipment needs due to COVID-19, decide whether to use current library staff or contract with a company to handle the tagging process, refine the final budget, board approval, dedication of capital funds, and the bidding process.

Dr. A. Morgan asked which surrounding parishes have this technology. Kelly said that Jefferson, Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and Lafayette Parishes have RFID. Livingston Parish will be adopting it soon. There was public comment from Bill McHugh. He asked approximately how many materials will need to be tagged. Kelly said that the collection is around 426,000 items. He asked how the tag is placed on the books. Kelly summarized that process. Dr. A. Morgan asked how CDs are tagged. Kelly said that a tag can be placed on the CD itself or on the case. A. Shaw asked Kelly if she has spoken to other library directors to see if they are satisfied with RFID. Kelly confirmed that she spoke to several directors at the Louisiana Library Association conference that was held last year. She said the feedback was positive overall.

B. Taylor commented that RFID and people counters are current technology in the library world at this point. M. Reneau asked if the installation of this system would cause any interruption of library services. Kelly explained that any disruption would be to the area near the doors. She said they would plan for that by scheduling the installation while the library is closed or on the weekend. The self-checkout machines are not very big and would be installed at the circulation desk. One side can be used while the other side is undergoing the installation. We would not have to close the library to install.

B. Taylor asked for questions from the board and asked for a two-minute public comment period. B. McHugh asked when this would be up for approval by the board. Kelly said that it would be at least two months before the library will be ready to ask the board for approval. B. McHugh asked when the project would start if it is approved. Kelly said that it could start at the beginning of next year. She reiterated that the people counters and RFID are two separate projects and do not have to be completed at the same time. Dr. A. Morgan commented that she read that a weeding of the collection should take place before RFID is installed. She asked when the library weeds their collection. Kelly explained that when an item is in poor condition it is replaced with a new copy. The discarded items are sent to the Friends of the Library for their book sales. Dr. A. Morgan asked who performs the weeding. Kelly explained that the circulation staff alerts the Branch Manager of an item in poor condition and the manager evaluates the item. The Collection Development Manager will replace the item if necessary. If the branch is running out of shelf space, the Collection Development Manager may reassign low circulating items to a different branch or discard items that are in outdated or poor condition.

B. Taylor asked for questions and public comment. There was no public comment. Becky stated that she looks forward to hearing more information about the technology upgrade in the future.

C. Director's Report

K. LaRocca reported that she, Tanya DiMaggio, Brent Geiger, Louanne Bertrand, and Amanda Soileau virtually met with Carson Block to finalize what the library would need for the technology upgrade. Kelly LaRocca and Tanya DiMaggio met with department heads in preparation for the 2021 budget. Facebook advertising was purchased to promote the COVID-19 Memory Project. Sally McKissack is the new Collection Development Manager. On a sad note, Kelly informed the board that staff member Juanita Grelle passed away yesterday. She was a long-time staff member at the Slidell Branch, and she will be greatly missed.

Jennifer Rifino, Charlene Barrett, and Abby Mayfield attended the virtual State Library Teen Services meeting. Kelly LaRocca and Tanya DiMaggio attended weekly virtual meetings for library administration. Governor Edwards has extended phase 2 through August 7th. We will remain at our current hours and staff schedules. The governor also required masks for all people entering a public place so we have adjusted our sanitizing stations to include monitoring for masks.

T. DiMaggio gave a summary of the COVID-19 Memory Project. She explained that Leidy Cook, Genealogy Librarian, had the idea to create an oral history project. Patrons can make an appointment to tell their COVID-19 quarantine story via Zoom. Leidy plans to interview emergency responders to include in the oral history. She has done 8 interviews so far with a variety of patrons. She is still scheduling individual sessions for those who wish to participate. Tanya said that this will be a great resource for anyone doing research in the future.

Kelly reported that the Children's Services Department offered 15 Zoom programs with 133 attendees since the last board meeting. Teen Services offered 6 Zoom events with 52 teen attendees. Adult Programming offered 8 Zoom programs with 118 attendees. The Reference Department offered 3 Zoom classes with 48 attendees. There will be a Summer Reading Challenge report at the next board meeting.

B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. There was no public comment.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. St. Tammany Parish Library Foundation Update

A. Shaw reported that the Foundation has continued to have their monthly meetings via Zoom. The membership drive is still in progress. The Distinguished Speaker event is still planned for Thursday, September 17th at the Tchefuncta Country Club. The speakers are the authors of the book *Building on the Past: Saving Historic New Orleans*. The venue can accommodate the event even if we are still in phase 2 of the state's reopening plan. Sponsorship information is available on the Foundation's website.

B. Friends of the Library Report

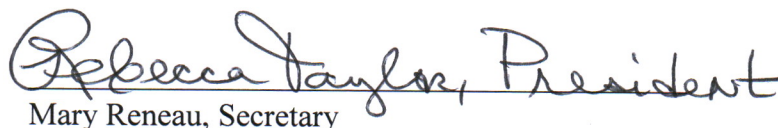
B. Geiger reported that the West St. Tammany Friends of the Library are getting their building ready and are installing shelving. There should be more information available at the next board meeting.

4. Public Comment

Bill McHugh complimented the staff and the board for how they are handling the hosting of the board meetings via Zoom. Kelly said that there may be a combination of Zoom and in-person board meetings for a while going forward. Kelly commented that another convenience that the library has adopted is curbside service. It has proven to be a helpful service that the library will probably continue after the pandemic. There was no further public comment.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Dr. A. Morgan and seconded by M. Reneau. The motion carried.


Mary Reneau, Secretary