

St. Tammany Parish Library
Board of Control Meeting
September 22, 2020
Causeway Branch Library
3457 Highway 190
Mandeville Louisiana
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: Bill Allin, Carmen Butler, Dr. Argiro Morgan, Mary Reneau, Ann Shaw, Becky Taylor

Absent: John Danjean

1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Library Board of Control which was held on September 2, 2020.

B. Allin asked for a change on page 4, 3rd paragraph. He asked for the 2nd sentence to be reworded as follows: "He expressed that he would like to find a consultant that has experience in creatively involving community stakeholders in the strategic planning process and has assisted in millage renewals."

B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. K. LaRocca stated that the public can comment via Facebook Live or call 985-871-1219 extension 2007. There was no public comment regarding the minutes.

B. Allin moved to approve the minutes with the stated correction. It was seconded by M. Reneau. Six were in favor, none opposed, and one was absent. Motion carried.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Financial Reports – August 2020 – Kelly LaRocca

K. LaRocca reported that a payment in the amount of \$145,471 in ad valorem taxes was received on September 3rd. We have received all of the funds anticipated for the year. The total was within 1% of what was budgeted. All state revenue sharing has been received for the year. The budget

percentage for this time of year is 66%. Revenues are on target at 66.75%. More Fines and Fees were received than anticipated. Interest Income is under budget due to low interest rates. Donations are under budget due to not soliciting donations for events and projects from the Foundation and Friends groups during the pandemic.

K. LaRocca referenced the Schedule of Expenditures. She stated that some lines are over budget because they have been expended at this point in the year. Some lines are under budget due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Library Salaries line is at 60% due to open positions and another month with 3 paychecks in October. The Retirement Contributions line is under budget due to paying those contributions quarterly. The Signage line is at 92% and will have to be amended in October. The Promotional Materials line is under budget due to purchasing those materials towards the end of the year.

The Electricity line is under budget due to the library's hours being shorter. That will change once we return to pre-pandemic hours. The PC Network Maintenance and Repair line is at 97% due to spending the funds earlier in the year. Funds will need to be added to that line for replacement laptops and new barcode scanners. The Carpet Cleaning line is under budget due to paying for it at the end of the year. There are funds in the Legal line in case they are needed, but otherwise the line stays at 17%. The Capital Outlay Library Resource Acquisitions lines are at 62% overall. Collection materials are being purchased at this time.

B. Taylor asked for questions from the board regarding the financial reports. There were no questions. B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. There was no public comment.

Dr. A. Morgan moved to approve the financial reports. It was seconded by M. Reneau. Six were in favor, none opposed, and one was absent.

B. 2021 Budget – Kelly LaRocca

K. LaRocca stated that after checking with the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's Office, going forward we will need to adopt the fiscal year budget and all budget amendments by resolution. The resolution does not have to be read aloud. A board member can move to adopt the budget resolution. The board votes and the budget is then adopted. The Fiscal Year 2021 Operational Budget Adoption Resolution was provided for the board's review and will need to be adopted.

K. LaRocca noted that the budget was created in July and was meant to be presented for adoption at the August 25, 2020 board meeting which was delayed due to weather. The library had to re-advertise the 2021 budget and public hearing for another 3 weeks. That is why the 2021 budget

presentation is happening a month later than usual. Kelly explained that the budget will need to be amended as needed since it was originally created so far in advance.

K. LaRocca stated that the expected revenue numbers provided by the Assessor's Office and the St. Tammany Parish Department of Finance are estimates. Kelly stated that the revenue numbers are budgeted conservatively. Expected expenditures are based on the 3 previous years and budget discussions held with each library department. Kelly stated that the library will operate on a revenue of \$10,940,946. The primary source of the library's 2021 income is the 5.78 mil property tax millage. The millage rate has been adjusted downward for 2021 as 2020 is a re-assessment year. The millage adjustment keeps the library from unduly benefiting from the rise in the value of assessments. The library will be getting the same amount of money. The remaining 5% of the library's income comes from state revenue sharing, fines and fees, interest, state aid, and donations. The Fines and Fees line is adjusted upward to indicate that we will be charging fines again in 2021. The Interest Income line is adjusted downward to reflect the falling interest rates. The Donations line is adjusted upward with the possibility of the pandemic winding down. Overall, there is an increase of \$274,612 in revenue.

K. LaRocca stated that many of the increases and decreases in expenditures will be due to the implications of the pandemic and the possibility of restoring pre-pandemic levels of service. Kelly presented the 2021 budget and highlighted the necessary adjustments. The Library Salaries and Employee Benefits lines will increase for 2021. There is enough funding in the salary line to cover merit raises. There is flexibility to allow the Director to create a new position or add hours if needed. The Health Trust line is reduced due to better prescription drug pricing. The Advertising and Signage lines are reduced. Small branches will switch over to voice-over IP, which will reduce the Voice line. The Data line will increase due to the switch, but it is a significant savings overall. The Maintenance Supplies line is increased to reflect normal usage in 2021. The Vehicle Repair line is reduced due to having younger vehicles with no expected significant repairs.

Air conditioning maintenance contracts are being moved out of the Physical Plant line and into the Plumbing, Heating, and Air Conditioner line. The Insurance and Claims lines are increased to reflect costs from 2020. The Travel and Continuing Education lines were reduced in the 2020 Summer Amendment due to less travel during the pandemic. Those lines will remain the same for 2021 and will be re-evaluated next year as the pandemic winds down. The Office Equipment/Furniture and Shelving line is decreased as we are only planning to replace broken chairs and tables. Any major furniture purchase will come from the capital funds or our savings. Some of the Library Resource Acquisitions lines are increased due to the expected purchase of more materials.

K. LaRocca reviewed the library's savings and explained that any unused money at the end of the year becomes Prior Years' Operating Revenue. The cash on-hand or savings that is estimated for December 31, 2020 is \$4,845,241. These savings are dedicated to specific purposes, such as operational reserves and disaster and emergency funds. This leaves an unassigned savings of \$510,241. This puts the library in an excellent position to fund furniture projects at Causeway, Mandeville, and Slidell. This also assures funding for the strategic planning process.

K. LaRocca concluded that we have a balanced operational budget for the 2021 year. Each library department was allocated the funds to enable their plans. Kelly is confident that there are adequate funds to meet next year's goals.

B. Allin asked if there is an accounting reason why the Professional Services lines are not kept as-is. Instead, money is pulled from it and added back. K. LaRocca explained that she bases the budget off of the previous 3 years. The Legal line usually has \$1,000 as a placeholder amount, so that line will be adjusted back to \$1,000. There are years where we do not use the line at all. This year we used \$250. Kelly explained that the Consultants line was decreased because the strategic planning consultant funds will come out of our savings. She explained that according to other Library Directors across the state, a consultant for strategic planning could cost anywhere between \$10,000 to \$80,000. It would be considered a special project that does not fit into the normal operational amount that would be spent on consultants. Once it is determined how much is needed for the strategic planning consultant, we would present that to the board for approval.

Dr. A. Morgan moved to open the public hearing for the 2021 budget. It was seconded by B. Allin. B. Taylor declared that the public hearing was open. K. LaRocca stated that the phone number for public comment is 985-871-1219 extension 2007. Comments can also be made via Facebook Live. There was no public comment.

M. Reneau moved to close the public hearing. It was seconded by A. Shaw. B. Taylor declared that the public hearing was closed.

B. Allin moved to adopt the budget resolution for the Fiscal Year 2021 Operational Budget. It was seconded by A. Shaw. Six were in favor, none opposed, and one was absent.

C. Director's Report

Maintenance is working with the Parish on the installation of Mandeville and South Slidell's new roofs. Maintenance completed storm preparations at branches prior to anticipated weather events. The group In My Hometown: Discussions About Race borrowed a second book club box. Jennifer Rifino and Charlene Barrett attended the State Library's Teen Summer Reading Wrap-

up. Tanya DiMaggio attended the Collaborative Summer Library Program Budget Committee meeting, and the ALSC Managing Children's Services Committee meeting. Several staff attended virtual training webinars. Jenny Mayer and Crissie Molina are handling social media for the Louisiana Library Association.

Governor Edwards announced that the state would move into Phase 3 on September 10th. We are making changes to our branch furniture, staff workspaces, and library hours. We will resume our pre-pandemic hours at large branches on October 5th. Small branches will continue curbside service and will have inside service by appointment to ensure adequate social distancing. We have created over 1900 eAccess library cards since March. We have begun to mail all in-parish cards to patrons who have not picked up their card.

There was public comment via email. A patron, Devon King, asked why patrons are allowed to take their masks off after entering the library and passing the greeting station. The patron commented that it seems unsafe for staff and at-risk patrons. K. LaRocca explained that the Governor's mask mandate states that you must wear a mask when entering a public facility. When the mask mandate started, we stationed a staff member at the greeting table to check for masks upon entry. Due to working with half-staffed teams, not every station has been manned at all times. On October 5th all of the staff will be back to working together on a regular schedule. At that point, we should be able to have all greeting stations manned at all times. Kelly explained that there are some exceptions to the Governor's mandate. If a person tells us that they have a mental or physical illness that prevents them from wearing a mask we have to accept their explanation and not request any further proof. A patron may see one of those people in the library without a mask.

In other cases, a person's mask may slip down or the patron pulls it down. Kelly stated that if the person is in close proximity to a staff member, that staff member can ask the patron to put their mask back on. We also have other safeguards in place for the safety of patrons and staff. We are required by the State Fire Marshall to provide 6 feet of social distancing between people in the library. The circulation desks have a table in front of them to enforce 6 feet of distance between patrons and staff. The tables, chairs, and computers in the library have been moved and rearranged to allow for 6 feet of social distancing. Kelly stated that patrons can let a staff member know if they have concerns about tables and chairs being too close or tables needing cleaning between patrons. We will take care of that to ensure a safe experience for our patrons. Kelly asked if the board had any questions about the mask mandate or the library's efforts to ensure safety. B. Allin commented that it is odd that the mandate requires a person to wear a mask when entering a building, but they are not required to keep it on while inside. Kelly explained that a person is supposed to wear it while inside a public building. The mandate lists exceptions to mask-wearing, which includes mental or physical illnesses. We have many

different people in different situations who use the library. There may be people in the library not wearing a mask for one of the reasons listed as an exception in the mandate. For that reason, we ensure that there is safety in other ways.

Children's Services has a Pen Pal program for area children to stay connected during COVID-19. The library is partnered with St. Tammany Parish Hospital to present virtual programs on health topics. Children's Services offered 3 Zoom programs with 78 attendees since the new session began September 8th. Teen Services offered 2 Zoom events with 17 attendees since the last board meeting. Adult Programming offered 8 Zoom programs with 178 attendees. The Reference Department offered 3 Zoom classes with 9 attendees.

Nearly 30,000 users visited the library's website during 57,578 sessions in August. The new STPL mobile app has been released on the Apple app store. We are working on the demonstration videos for patrons and staff before beginning the marketing campaign.

B. Taylor asked for public comment. Bill McHugh asked what branches are considered large branches. Kelly listed Covington, Causeway, Mandeville, Madisonville, Slidell, and South Slidell. B. McHugh asked what is a book club box. Kelly explained that it is a box of regular print, large print, and audiobook copies of a book. It also comes with a list of book club questions.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. Rules and Regulations Committee Update

K. LaRocca reported that the committee met on September 8th. They continued work on the board's bylaws by working on drafts of each section. The committee will be refining recommended changes and will present any options or choices that can be made to the board at upcoming meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for September 23rd at 3:00 p.m. The meeting is technically at the Administrative Office, but is held via Zoom.

B. Strategic Plan RFP Committee

K. LaRocca reported that the first committee meeting was on September 8th. The committee talked about what they needed to accomplish and assigned reading and note-taking on the likes and dislikes of different strategic plans. The committee met today at 4:30 p.m. and compared notes. The next meeting date is October 6th. They will look at sample Request for Proposals (RFPs). They will make a list of the qualifications for a consultant, and look at how the RFPs describe the strategic plans.

C. St. Tammany Parish Library Foundation Update

A. Shaw reported that the Foundation held the Distinguished Speaker event on September 17th via Zoom. The speakers were the authors and photojournalist of the book *Building on the Past: Saving Historic New Orleans*. Ann thanked Kelly for moderating the event, Benny for filming the Foundation's President and Chairman, Tanya for providing backup, and to Amy Strain for her help. She said they learned a lot by holding a virtual event. They do not know how much money was raised, but they expect it to be similar to last year's figures. Ann commented that the book was wonderful and the speakers did a great job presenting it. Anyone interested in purchasing the book can do so on the St. Tammany Library Foundation's website at www.sttammanylibraryfoundation.org through the Preservation Resource Center. The 2021 membership drive will begin in October. There will be an Art Auction this year with approximately 12 works of art on display at the Madisonville Library. The Art Auction is from September 7th to November 20th.

D. Friends of the Library Report

There was no Friends of the Library Report.

4. Executive Session for the Annual Review of the Director

B. Taylor explained that the board has not evaluated Kelly LaRocca since she was hired as Director in March 2019. Normally, there would have been an in-person executive session at the library board meeting in March 2020. Due to the pandemic, this evaluation is happening later than anticipated and is taking place via Zoom. Becky is hopeful that Kelly's next evaluation will be during her anniversary month of March 2021.

B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. There was no public comment. M. Reneau moved to go into executive session for the Annual Review of the library Director. It was seconded by A. Shaw. Six were in favor, none opposed, and one was absent. Motion carried.

The board members went into executive session via a separate Zoom meeting.

M. Reneau moved to come out of executive session. It was seconded by C. Butler. B. Taylor declared that the board was out of executive session. B. Taylor commented that the board is pleased with Kelly LaRocca's performance since she was hired as library Director. Becky stated that Kelly has conquered the immense hurdles of leading the library during the pandemic. The board is looking forward to great things in the future. Becky is happy with the progress made in such a short period of time. M. Reneau thanked Kelly and the staff for such a great group effort

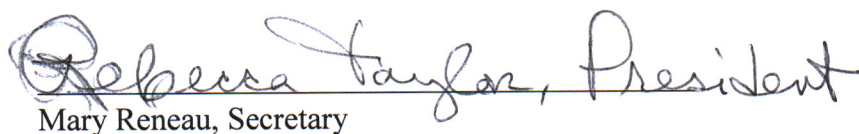
in keeping the library up and running during the conditions of the pandemic. A. Shaw commented that she appreciates Kelly's flexibility and problem-solving skills. The other board members agreed and thanked her for her efforts.

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by M. Reneau and seconded by A. Shaw. Six were in favor, none opposed, and one was absent. The motion carried.

Handwritten signature of Rebecca Taylor in cursive script, with the word "President" written in a larger, more prominent cursive font.

Mary Reneau, Secretary