

St. Tammany Parish Library
Board of Control Meeting
August 24, 2021
Library Administrative Office
1112 W. 21st Avenue
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: Bill Allin, Carmen Butler, Dr. Argiro Morgan, Ann Shaw, Becky Taylor

Absent: Mary Reneau

K. LaRocca stated that public comments can be made by calling 985-871-1219 extension 2007 or by commenting on the Facebook Live stream.

1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Library Board of Control that was held on July 27, 2021.

There were no suggested corrections to the minutes. B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. There was no public comment. Dr. A. Morgan moved to approve the minutes. It was seconded by A. Shaw. All were in favor, none were opposed, and one was absent. Motion carried.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Financial Reports – July 2021

K. LaRocca reported that \$102,670.55 in ad valorem taxes was received on July 28, 2021. The total received this year is \$11,168,346.38. The budget percentage should be 58% at this point in the year. Kelly noted that the expenditures are at 51% due to paying \$675,000 for the Times-Picayune Digital Archive after August 1st.

Kelly went through the financial statements and gave explanations for any lines that were under or over budget. Some lines are over budget due to spending the funds earlier in the year. Some

lines are under budget due to not yet spending the funds. The lines will be in balance by the end of the year. The Library Salaries line is below budget due to a 3-paycheck month coming up and open positions. The line will be in balance as positions are filled. The Health Trust line is at 72% due to higher staff utilization after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Advertising, Printing, and Promotional Production lines will be in balance as we advertise during the strategic planning process. The Custodial and Janitorial line is over budget due to charges that belong in the Grounds/Lawn Maintenance line. Those charges will be moved and both lines will be in balance.

The Programming lines are under budget due to less in-person programming due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. The lines under Capital Outlay Non-Book Acquisitions will be in balance as the funds are spent on landscaping and improvement projects later in the year.

B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. Dr. A. Morgan commented that the Parish is expanding and collecting more taxes from new residents. She pointed out that the increase in taxes received might lead to a questioning of the millage renewal at the present rate. Dr. A. Morgan explained that the Parish might recognize that the library may be receiving more money and may question how we are using those funds to provide services to the additional taxpaying residents of the Parish. She stated that there needs to be a balance between the new residents and the services that the library offers and this should be a part of the upcoming strategic plan. B. Allin and B. Taylor agreed that Dr. A. Morgan made a good point.

B. Allin moved to approve the July 2021 Financial Reports. It was seconded by C. Butler. All were in favor, none were opposed, and one was absent. Motion carried.

B. Presentation of the 2022 Budget

K. LaRocca presented the 2022 Budget. An additional \$302,325 in ad valorem taxes is expected. There was no change to the expected amount of state revenue sharing. The ARPA and LEH grants were removed, as we are not expecting those grants in 2022. The Donations line was reduced by \$11,000, as there is not currently an expected large project that will be funded by the Friends or Foundation groups in 2022.

Kelly reviewed the proposed changes in expenditures. She noted that Library Salaries is increased by 2.7% to account for open positions and merit raises. Lines under Employee Benefits were increased to account for filling open positions and an expected increase in utilization of the health plan. The Membership Dues line is increased due to moving some charges from the Conventions & Seminars line so that the funds are in the appropriate line. The Network Utility Software line is increased to make upgrades to our security software. The Plumbing, Heating, and Air Conditioning line is increased for expected air conditioning repairs and maintenance

contracts. The Conventions & Seminars line is increased in anticipation of sending staff to the Public Library Association Conference in 2022. If the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic prevents the in-person conference from happening, the funds will be moved. The Programming lines are increased in anticipation of having more in-person programming next year. The Improvements to Physical Plant line is increased to cover the cost of the Slidell Branch roof repair, painting and stucco repair at the Madisonville Branch, painting and waterproofing the South Slidell Branch, and various concrete repairs throughout the system. Various lines were increased under Library Resource Acquisitions to expand our collection and fulfill patron requests.

There are no long-term capital expenditures budgeted for next year at this time. The next capital project will depend on the timeline of the strategic plan. We will be spending \$260,401 less in the 2022 Proposed Budget compared to the 2021 Summer Budget Amendment. The 2022 Budget proposes a savings of \$504,017. Kelly referenced the savings spreadsheet and reviewed the dedicated savings funds. The total dedicated savings is \$4,667,000. The total unassigned savings is \$3,573.

B. Taylor asked if the Slidell roof will be recoated during the project. Kelly explained that the project includes recoating, replacement of damaged metal in spots, and general maintenance of the roof.

B. Allin moved to open the public hearing on the 2022 Budget. It was seconded by C. Butler. B. Taylor asked for the public to submit questions about the proposed budget. B. McHugh asked for clarification on the Library Salaries percentage increase that includes merit raises. Kelly confirmed that it is 2.7%. B. Taylor asked for clarification that merit raises are given following an annual evaluation and not automatically given across the board. Kelly confirmed that is correct. There was no further public comment. A. Shaw moved to close the public hearing. It was seconded by C. Butler.

B. Taylor read the 2022 Budget Resolution aloud. B. Allin moved to adopt the 2022 Operational Budget. It was seconded by A. Shaw. All were in favor, none were opposed, and one was absent. Motion carried.

C. Summer Reading Wrap Up

K. LaRocca played the 2021 Summer Reading Highlights video created by Benny Bruce. Programming coordinators, Jillian Boudreaux, Jennifer Rifino, and Jenny Mayer, each spoke about the highlights of this year's summer reading experience. This year's theme was "Tails and Tales". It was noted that staff and patrons have gotten comfortable with virtual programming this year compared to last year. Registration statistics were close to the in-person statistics of the 2019 summer reading challenge. Each coordinator highlighted the variety of programs that were offered and all programs were well-attended by children, teens, and adults. There was a mix of

virtual and in-person outdoor programming. Storytime outside was a success and was highly attended by children throughout the Parish. The library partnered with several local museums and other community partners to deliver quality programming for children, teens, and adults. Next year's theme is "Oceans of Possibilities".

B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. B. Allin commented on the variety of activities offered and stated that from a strategic planning perspective, it is a great way to serve the underserved. He said it is a terrific opportunity for children to grow, learn, and discover new possibilities.

A. Shaw asked if the video was available to play on a repeating loop inside the branches. Kelly said that the video is available on the library's YouTube channel, but we can certainly look into playing it on a loop inside the branches.

D. RFP Committee Update / Contract Approval for Strategic Planning Consultant

The District Attorney's Office reviewed the contract and adjustments were made that revised or added to the contract. The committee met to review adjustments to clarify and refine the scope of work. Carson Block and Susan Kent agreed to all of the adjustments, clarifications, and revisions. After review, the RFP committee recommended the contract and scope of work for adoption by the Board. The Board was provided with marked-up and clean copies of the contract and scope of work. B. Allin commented that we have a good contract. His main concerns were to include environmental data analysis as a platform from which to build upon and to make every effort to address the needs of the underserved and non-users of the community.

B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. B. McHugh asked Kelly if she expects the project to start in September and finish in June 2022. Kelly confirmed that is the current timeline. B. McHugh asked for clarification on the time-frame that the strategic plan itself will cover. Kelly explained that once the plan is approved by the Board, it will begin from that point through December 2026.

A. Shaw moved to approve the strategic planning contract. It was seconded by B. Allin. All were in favor, none were opposed, and one was absent. Motion carried.

E. Library Board of Control Strategic Planning Committee

K. LaRocca explained that an official strategic planning committee should be formed to work with our consultant and help facilitate the planning process. The committee will consist of Library Board members, Library Administration, and Library Staff. Members may be dropped or

added depending on the expertise needed for the task at hand. Subcommittees may be formed to ensure the involvement of as many Board members, community advisors, and staff as possible. B. Allin offered to serve on the committee.

B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. There was no public comment. A resolution of the board is required to form the committee. B. Taylor read the resolution aloud. B. Allin moved to adopt the resolution to form a strategic planning committee. It was seconded by A. Shaw. All were in favor, none were opposed, and one was absent. Motion carried.

F. Director's Report

K. LaRocca reported that masks are still required in all library branches as per the Governor's statewide indoor mask mandate issued August 4, 2021. The library does not require employees to get vaccinated, but it is recommended for their safety. Plans to open small branches on Wednesday evenings have been postponed to ensure adequate staffing at all library branches. Library programming will be a hybrid combination of in-person outdoor and virtual programming for the foreseeable future. Administration is actively monitoring the situation and will make changes as needed.

September is Library Card Sign-up Month and we are doing Food For Fines. Librarians and library staff gave presentations at several community organizations throughout the Parish, as well as local radio station interviews. Several staff members are serving on association committees, attending meetings, virtual conferences, and webinars.

Susan Badon will be the new Children's Librarian at the Madisonville Branch. Leidy Cook will be leaving in two weeks to begin a job as a researcher with CNN. Eight new library associates have been hired. The 2021 Summer Reading Challenge final statistics are: 3,859 registered participants, 951,961 collective minutes read and logged, and 34,134 badges earned. The library hosted 242 programs.

Kelly reviewed the plans for the new parking lot at the Slidell Branch and the outdoor renovation plans at the Covington Branch. The Board was provided with copies of the plans. Kelly answered questions about lighting, walkways, and parking spaces.

B. Taylor asked for a two-minute public comment period. B. McHugh asked how many parking spaces are in the proposed plan for the Slidell parking lot. Kelly said approximately 91, but will get back to him to confirm. B. McHugh asked about the start date for the Slidell project. Kelly hopes to begin construction by this winter.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. Rules and Regulations Committee Update

The committee met in August and worked on the Library's financial policies. The policies under review are disbursements, credit cards, the budget process, inventory, and capital assets. The committee is awaiting clarification from the District Attorney's office on the contracting and purchasing policy. The committee will be refining changes and will present any options to the Board at upcoming meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. via Zoom.

B. St. Tammany Library Foundation Update

A. Shaw reported that the Distinguished Speaker event is postponed until March 24, 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Foundation will be sending information to sponsors. The Art Auction is being revisited and plans will be announced soon.

C. Friends of the Library Report

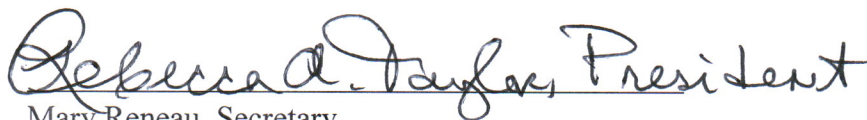
There was no report from the Friends groups.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by A. Shaw and seconded by C. Butler. The motion carried.


Mary Reneau, Secretary