

**St. Tammany Parish Library
Board of Control Meeting
March 24, 2025
St. Tammany Parish Council Chambers
21490 Koop Dr.,
Mandeville, LA 70471
6:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

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

Present: Charles (Chuck) Branton, Pam Georges, Tamarah Myers, Ann Shaw
Absent: Parish President Mike Cooper, Jill Kesler, Dinah Thanars

Emily Couvillon with the Civil Division of the District Attorney's Office was also present as legal counsel for the library.

A. Shaw explained the meeting rules and the rules for public comment. Resolutions will not be read aloud since they are posted online. If an off-the-floor item is added to the agenda, the resolution will be read aloud.

C. Branton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Library Board of Control that was held on February 24, 2025. (Shaw/Georges)

C. Branton moved to approve the minutes. It was seconded by P. Georges.

K. LaRocca noted that there were three clerical corrections made to the minutes after the board packet was posted on the website. She stated that the minutes contained in the board member's binders are corrected. The online board packet was also corrected.

Public Comment:

James Prentice – He referenced his question about a shortfall that he inquired about at the previous board meeting. He stated that K. LaRocca's response was an explanation of accrual accounting. He stated that he searched for a better explanation and read it aloud. He thanked K. LaRocca for last month's transparent explanation of the forecasted future expenditures and proposed projects to expand library services and departments. He asked if she plans to give greater explanations of those plans for the next 15 years and looks forward to more transparency.

David Cogle – He stated that he does not believe the minutes accurately reflect what happened at the last meeting in relation to the repeated and vicious personal attacks on C. Branton. He stated that some of the attacks were led by an individual who reportedly led a campaign in 2023 to censor and shut down a private newspaper in Slidell. He stated that this type of extremism is not representative of the Parish. He addressed A. Shaw and stated that he realizes that it is difficult to run the Board, particularly during

contentious issues. He stated that he appreciates the work she is doing in leading the Board. He mentioned the audience disruptions at last month's meeting, noting that no one was removed, and recalled that he was once removed from a board meeting two years ago. He stated that the policy to remove disruptive individuals is completely reasonable and asked that A. Shaw employ that policy at board meetings.

Discussion: There was no Board discussion.

Vote: Prior to public comment, a motion to approve the minutes was made by C. Branton and was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Branton: Yes Cooper: Absent Georges: Yes Kesler: Absent
Myers: Yes Thanars: Absent Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Financial Report – February 2025 (Shaw/LaRocca)

K. LaRocca reported that the library received \$12,130,560.20 in Ad Valorem Revenue in February, which is the majority of what is expected for the year. The library has also received State Revenue Sharing in the amount of \$89,698.26. This is one third of three equal payments that are expected throughout the year. K. LaRocca explained that the revenue figures show as zero on the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures because the library's millage expired in December 2024. The Ad Valorem Revenue line is credited in twelfths for the funds that we receive for 2025. Due to the millage not yet being renewed, the budget line must reflect zero funds. K. LaRocca clarified that the Ad Valorem Revenue received in February 2025 was from the property taxes collected for 2024. K. LaRocca emphasized that there is no Ad Valorem income for 2025 unless the voters choose to continue the millage. The budget percentage for February should be around 16.66%. Revenues are at .93% due to no Ad Valorem Revenue, and expenditures are at 15.84%.

K. LaRocca gave explanations for any lines that were over or under budget. Some lines are expended early or late in the year, depending on when the expenses are due, but they will be in balance by the end of the year. Noteworthy expenditure line explanations are as follows: The Signage line is at 88% due to signage for the library millage renewal. The Voice line is at 20% due to adding the phone for the Mobile Library. The Vehicle Repairs line is at 37% due to needing new tires for some of the library vehicles. The Polaris Maintenance line is at 100% due to paying for the circulation system subscription for the year. The Consultants line is at 62% due to the vehicle consultant for the book hauler van. The Web Design Consultant line is at 88.9% due to paying for the majority of the cost of the website for the year. The Insurance lines vary due to paying for insurance throughout the year. The PC Network line is at 82% due to purchasing the majority of the computers in our five-year replacement cycle this year. The Lease/Purchase Books line is at 96% due to paying for the lease of popular titles for the year.

Public Comment:

Kevin Marino – Mandeville, LA. He stated there has been confusion about accrual accounting, noting that some have stated that it is misleading or incorrect. He suggested for K. LaRocca to explain the basics of accrual accounting and how it works.

Vote: C. Branton moved to approve the February 2025 financial reports. It was seconded by T. Myers.

Roll call vote: Branton: Yes Cooper: Absent Georges: Yes Kesler: Absent
Myers: Yes Thanars: Absent Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

B. Director's Report

K. LaRocca reported on updates to library facilities and technology. There was underground electric repair work done for parking lot lights at the Slidell Branch. Security camera systems were repaired. A new sewer was installed at the Abita Springs Branch. Parking lot striping was repainted at the Covington and Slidell branches. All computers at the small branches were upgraded to Windows 11. The computers at the Pearl River Branch were replaced.

K. LaRocca reported on marketing, outreach, and professional development efforts. Staff promoted the library on The Lake and The Highway radio stations. Staff offered outreach to the following events and organizations: Mardi Paws, Pontchartrain Elementary's Cultural Arts Day, Krewe du Pooch, Slidell Rotary Club's Magic of Reading Event, Parenting Center, Pearl River COAST Center, and Slidell COAST Center. Mobile Library outreach services were provided to Fitzgerald Methodist Church, St. Benedict's, and the Lacombe, Slidell, Covington, and Pearl River COAST Centers. Staff performed storytime at the following schools: Fontainebleau Children's Academy, Tiny Tumblers, Kidz Klubhouse, Children's College, Charlotte's Web Preschool, Honeycomb Preschool, Helping Hands Preschool, Bayou Woods Elementary's STEM Night, and Brock Elementary. Staff attended the following webinars, conferences, and meetings: Library 2.0 – A.I. and Libraries, Library Makerspaces Research Showcase, Louisiana Student Resources, RootsTech genealogy conference, Leadership Northshore Government and Healthcare days, Innovative Users Group annual meeting, Louisiana Library Association conference, SELA Youth Services meeting, and the St. Tammany Commission on Families meeting.

K. LaRocca thanked board members Jill Kesler, Ann Shaw, and Chuck Branton for joining her in speaking about the library's upcoming millage renewal election at various meetings and events throughout the Parish. She thanked the staff who spoke at meetings while she was attending other meetings, as multiple speaking engagements were taking place simultaneously. In total, there were 47 speaking engagements prior to the board meeting, with five more scheduled before the election.

K. LaRocca reviewed new contracts and contract renewals. The book hauler vehicle has been delivered and the library will be piloting "Lobby Stop" service to COAST Facilities before expanding to assisted living and nursing facilities across the Parish.

K. LaRocca thanked the Friends and Foundation groups for their recent generous donations. The Friends of the Slidell Library provided \$5,000 for 1,000-yard signs to assist with the educational effort for the millage. The St. Tammany Library Foundation and the West St. Tammany Friends of the Library donated

funds for the Musical Garden at the Covington branch. The St. Tammany Library Foundation donated \$25,000 to assist with millage education mailers, branch signage, and 500-yard signs.

The library received and answered one public records request since the last meeting. There is one public records request at the District Attorney's Office for review. The library currently has 110 statements of concern on 107 titles. Since the last meeting, one statement of concern has been filed. Library staff continue to read titles, hold meetings, and make recommendations.

Staff continue working on and implementing the strategic planning goals. A wheelchair accessible picnic table and a sensory calming room was installed at the Covington Branch. The official ribbon cutting for the calming room will be in April. The Mobile Library Lobby Stop service will begin at the end of March or beginning of April. The library received a grant for two outdoor trash cans from Keep Louisiana Beautiful for the South Slidell and Slidell branches. We will host a Love the Boot program, to be part of Keep Louisiana Beautiful's annual clean-up and recycling campaign.

There were three books moved to Adult Fiction due to sexual conduct. There were 25 books reviewed that will remain in Teen Fiction due to not containing sexual conduct.

K. LaRocca gave a millage election update. Staff are reminding patrons of the millage election upon checkout and every library program begins with staff reminding patrons of the millage election. There are banners donated by the Library Foundation advertising the millage at several library branches. A large wooden sign for the Lacombe land has been donated by Covington Printworks. Yard signs donated by the Friends of the Slidell Library and the Library Foundation are available at all branches and there is a yard sign on each book drop. By the day of the election, K. LaRocca, library staff, and board members will have spoken to over 50 different groups to educate the community about the library millage. K. LaRocca thanked the Library Foundation for sponsoring the promotional mailers that were sent out.

K. LaRocca reviewed the 2024 service statistics by percentage, which was inadvertently left out of last month's board packet. She reviewed the February 2025 and year-to-date service statistics. The year-to-date statistics show total circulation (148,129), computer usage (12,969), door count (87,526), wireless inside (13,747), and wireless outside (13,099). There were 1,232 new patrons registered.

K. LaRocca stated that board members have asked her to make a presentation about changes to library policy and procedures since 2022. K. LaRocca presented a slideshow highlighting and explaining all of the changes that are currently in effect. The library created a Tiered Juvenile Card System in November 2022. The card system was used as the model for libraries in then Attorney General Jeff Landry's Protecting Innocence report. The State Legislature modeled their legislation (LA R.S. 25:225) after our system to be used in libraries across the state. In February 2023, the LBOC passed the "Graphic Novel Resolution," which places any graphic novels containing sexual conduct behind the circulation desk, requiring either an Adult library card or an Unrestricted Juvenile library card to check out the materials. A full review of the Children's Collection was conducted in the Fall of 2023, and any material with conduct defined in LA R.S. 25:225 was moved to the Adult Collection. The library launched the Kid's Catalog in December 2023, which only includes the Children's Collection. In April 2024, the LBOC ordered the library to review the Teen Collection (previously titled Young Adult). Items will either be categorized as Teen (no sexual conduct present) or will be moved to the Adult Collection. In the Fall of 2024, monitoring of all areas of the library was increased during after school hours. Monitoring was expanded to all hours of operation in February 2025.

C. Branton asked when the completion of the review of the Teen Collection is expected. K. LaRocca answered that she originally estimated August 2025. She clarified that the remaining books must be reviewed manually, as no online resources are available to determine whether these specific titles contain sexual conduct. There are approximately 2,000 out of 4,000 books left to review.

C. Resolution No. 25-007 Resolution to Amend Rules and Regulations of the St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control Section 109 Regarding Public Speaking Time (Branton)

C. Branton explained that the resolution aligns with the Parish Council's policy that limits public comment time to one minute for procedural motions, such as those to amend or postpone. The comments must be limited to the specific procedural motion being discussed. He believes this will help the meetings run in an efficient manner and will not stifle discussion. The resolution has been reviewed by the District Attorney's Office. C. Branton moved to adopt resolution 25-007.

E. Couvillon clarified that everything in the resolution is part of a prior resolution adopted by the LBOC in 2022. The resolution codifies existing practices and introduces a one-minute speaking time on procedural motions. She emphasized that when items are up for adoption, the public will always have three minutes to speak on the substantive topic before the Board can adopt any resolution.

Public Comment:

James Prentice – He referenced the statement in the resolution that states that "Speakers shall direct all comments to the Board President or the person conducting the meeting." He stated that all board members have varying backgrounds and skillsets. He would like to direct his questions to the board members who can best answer his questions.

David Cogle – He spoke in support of the resolution, stating that this policy has worked out very well for Parish Council meetings. He mentioned that there will be time to speak on the main issue at a later date when the item is up for adoption again. He noted that this may help keep comments on the topic of the procedural motion, rather than stray off topic.

Roxanne Newman – Mandeville, LA. She spoke in opposition to the resolution, stating that one minute is insufficient time to voice opinions on a matter. She stated that it is not always clear which matters are substantive and which are procedural. She spoke against the requirement that speakers should submit a comment card prior to the beginning of the public comment portion of the agenda item discussion. She explained that sometimes people decide to comment after hearing other public comments. She acknowledged a provision allowing additional speaking time at the discretion of the Chairperson but said it rarely happens. She is concerned that the provision may be applied unfairly based on the content of the comments.

Kevin Marino – Mandeville, LA. He referred to the portion of the policy that requires speakers to direct their questions to the Board President. He stated that many of his comments are directed to board members, the Library Director, or anyone with expertise on the subject matter. He suggested adding a statement allowing the Board President to use their discretion in permitting people to submit a comment card after the agenda item has started. He provided the Board with handouts that list definitions for procedural motions, and suggested that the policy should define these motions. He suggested having a Rules and Regulations committee meeting to discuss concerns before bringing policy changes to a board meeting.

Lisa Rustemeyer – Mandeville, LA. She spoke in opposition to the resolution. She stated that many people spent a lot of time reviewing the resolutions last month, and she feels it was fair for them to have had the opportunity to speak. She asked for clarification on the meaning of substantive and procedural motions. She believes that comment cards should be permitted even after the agenda item has started.

Becky Bohm – Mandeville, LA. She spoke in opposition to the resolution. She stated that one minute is inadequate time to discuss procedural changes. She stated that citizens attend meetings in their free time and should be given ample time to speak. She agrees with previous statements regarding addressing other members of the Board besides the Board President.

Kristen Luchsinger – She spoke in opposition to the resolution. She stated that with the complexities and drama surrounding the library's recent issues, it is important for the Board to hear from the public. She believes that if the Board limits speech on procedural matters, it will set a dangerous precedent, and she is concerned about what might come next.

Ruth Terry Sipos – Abita Springs, LA. She stated that she is concerned about the requirement that speakers should submit a comment card prior to the public comment portion of the agenda item discussion. She explained that hearing others' comments often triggers her to share her own. She does not want her voice silenced because she did not think of a comment ahead of time. She said she misses public comment after the Director's Report because it gave her the chance to praise the Abita Springs Branch.

There was one public comment from an individual who did not wish to speak and they were against shortening the speaking time to one minute.

E. Couvillon addressed some of the comments that were made. She appreciates the feedback and agrees that "procedural" could be better defined. Procedural motions are very limited motions that are procedural under Robert's Rules of Order, such as a motion to table or postpone. She considers a motion to amend as substantive, not procedural. Procedural motions would not affect the Rules and Regulations of the Library Board of Control (LBOC).

E. Couvillon clarified that the Board President is the person who conducts the meeting and can give the floor to someone else to respond to a question. It does not mean that the public cannot ask questions or comment to anyone else seated behind the dais. She reiterated that, under Robert's Rules of Order, it is the Board President who has the authority to grant someone the floor to respond. She explained that this has been part of the Rules and Regulations since 2022, and the Board is now codifying it.

C. Branton stated that he understands that people may not feel the need to speak until they hear someone else's comments, but the Board is trying to conduct an orderly meeting in which people can voice their opinions. He noted that the agenda is published in advance and the board packet is available prior to a meeting. He clarified that the comment card only needs to be submitted before the agenda item is called, not before the meeting starts. C. Branton moved to adopt resolution 25-007.

T. Myers asked for clarification on whether these rules are already in effect and if this is simply turning them into a policy. E. Couvillon clarified that the only addition to policy was the second sentence in Section E, Item 3, which states, "Speaking time shall be limited to one minute for procedural motions."

A. Shaw asked for clarification on whether the Parish Council follows this policy. C. Branton stated that Councilman Corbin suggested this resolution for the Parish Council and E. Couvillon confirmed that it has worked well for the council meetings.

Vote: A motion to adopt resolution 25-007 was made by C. Branton and was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Branton: Yes Cooper: Absent Georges: Yes Kesler: Absent
Myers: Yes Thanars: Absent Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

D. Resolution No. 25-008 Resolution to extend time to allow for procedural due process of undecided statements of concern (Shaw/LaRocca)

K. LaRocca explained that the previous extension that the LBOC granted has expired. She stated that there are 110 Statements of Concern (SOC) on 107 titles. She explained that one reason the Board has been unable to review and make decisions on books is that they were unable to meet for an extended period last year. Additionally, time was needed for the training and onboarding of new board members over the past year. K. LaRocca stated that there are four books that the committee has reviewed and are ready for the Board to read. Copies of the books were available at the meeting for board members to take with them.

K. LaRocca explained that staff discussed and strategized how to best approach reviewing the remaining SOC's. They agreed that prioritizing the review of books behind the circulation desk was important, so they reviewed 62 out of 66 SOC's submitted by Kevin Marino. The four books that have not been reviewed were checked out. The books, committee reports, and book resumes on the 62 titles will soon be ready for the Board to review.

The resolution extends the 45-day time limit for responding to pending SOC's to 120 days from the date of this resolution. This extension includes all pending SOC's and any new SOC that will be received until the next LBOC meeting scheduled for April 28, 2025. K. LaRocca noted a correction that needs to be made on the resolution. It should state that there are 107 remaining titles, not 112. She explained that there were titles that were part of various series that were moved behind the circulation desk, but the individual books did not contain sexual conduct. Those items were moved back to the shelves and the SOC's for those items were closed.

Public Comment:

James Prentice – He views the extension of time as a way to delay things until the millage vote or until the Parish Council finds a reason to remove Jill Kesler from the Board and replace her with a liberal person. He stated that unmanaged, premeditated placement of psychologically damaging reading material for teens could be the reason the library is in this predicament. He noted that the new board has only been allowed to consider two out of 110 books. He spoke of a book that he raised concerns about 25 years ago where a princess was referred to as a "slut." He stated that was the first time his daughter encountered a derogatory term about women. He stated that his concerns about the book were brushed off at that time, and noted the irony that it has come back to bite the library and jeopardize the millage renewal.

Kevin Marino – He stated that he understands the need for this. He said there are over 100 books in the Graphic Novel Restricted (GNR) category. He stated that restricted means banned from the public eye and is a violation of the First Amendment. He asked the Board to rescind the February 2023 graphic novel resolution and put the books back on the shelves.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She spoke about graphic novels, their format, placement on the shelves, and how the spine looks like any other book on the shelf. She does not think that graphic novels should be behind the desk, especially ones that are in the Adult collection. She understands the need for an extension of time and is in favor of the resolution.

Becky Bohm – She stated that she submitted four SOC's in February 2024. They were for books about puberty and the endocrine system and she thinks it is a travesty that they were moved to the Adult Non-Fiction section. She mentioned the October 2023 resolution regarding the temporary disposition of challenged materials, and noted that it states that an item shall remain classified and shelved in its current location until a decision is made concerning the item's disposition. She showed pictures from the books and stated there is no sexually explicit material in the books, only educational illustrations of the human body.

Vote: A motion to adopt resolution 25-008 was made by T. Myers and was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Branton: Yes Cooper: Absent Georges: Yes Kesler: Absent
Myers: Yes Thanars: Absent Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

E. Resolution No. 25-009 Resolution Regarding Surplus Property (Shaw/LaRocca)

K. LaRocca reported that the I.T. Department has equipment that has been determined outdated and is no longer under warranty. A resolution is required so the items can be sold at the next scheduled Government Surplus auction at ServCorp Auctions in Slidell, Louisiana. A sample resolution and list of items was provided to the Board for consideration.

Vote: A motion to adopt resolution 25-009 was made by P. Georges and was seconded by T. Myers.

Roll call vote: Branton: Yes Cooper: Absent Georges: Yes Kesler: Absent
Myers: Yes Thanars: Absent Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

3. OLD BUSINESS

F. Resolution No. 25-003 Resolution to Amend Rules and Regulations of the St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control Section 202 Regarding Privacy Policy (Branton)

C. Branton stated that this policy provision has been legally reviewed by the District Attorney's Office. He stated that there is a difference between a policy and a procedure. The library has a privacy policy in place that needs to be updated. The policy pertains to the confidentiality of patron information and the

dissemination of that information. He explained that the policy makes it clear to everyone that there are legal ways to obtain the information via public records requests, subpoenas, other court orders, or patron authorization. A motion to adopt resolution 25-003 was made by C. Branton and was seconded by T. Myers.

Public Comment:

Joan Simon – Covington, LA. She understands the need for privacy, but regarding SOC's, not providing a name can raise questions about what someone might be hiding. She mentioned that over 150 SOC's were submitted by one person and all of the personal information besides the name was redacted. She believes this is unnecessary and objects to the resolution.

James Prentice – He provided a handout to the Board and stated that books he checked out are now visible to all library staff in his record. He asked if this resolution will prevent the dissemination of any of his SOC's or lists by what he referred to as "some woke librarian SS." He shared that during a previous LBOC meeting, his attendance led someone to call his local librarian before the meeting had adjourned, presumably to interrogate and discover his identity and association with the library. He questioned how the resolution will prevent overreach into his personal record. He asked whether the board would ever leave a child alone in a garage with power tools or in a house with a loaded gun on the coffee table. He questioned why they would let children be unsupervised in the same room as what he referred to as "open book thoughts of transgender groomers, pedophiles, sycophants, and graphic artists."

David Cogle – He explained that when the controversy began in Summer 2022, the library advised concerned parents to submit a Statement of Concern form, but the form lacked a disclaimer noting it could be subject to public records requests or shared externally. He stated that library staff emails obtained via public records requests confirm that staff reached out to the American Library Association (ALA) in July 2022 and reported SOC's to ALA and EveryLibrary. He referenced an email from the ALA which indicated that they recommend libraries use a personal email address when submitting forms. He stated that an automated email from ALA was sent to K. LaRocca confirming that a challenge was sent in October 2022. He asked how many times this happened, who directed it, whether there is proof that personal identifiable information was redacted, whether residents' names remain in the confidential database, and if the SOC's were used in fundraising efforts. He mentioned that he is unsure whether this is still ongoing and stated that subsequent public records requests were unanswered.

Roxanne Newman – She stated that it is interesting that the Accountability Project does not want to hold people accountable for the books they have challenged. She stated that one of the first actions the Nazis took upon rising to power was to burn and banish books that they disagreed with. She clarified that ALA is a professional organization for librarians, similar to how the American Bar Association (ABA) is for lawyers and the American Medical Association (AMA) is for doctors. She is in favor of patron privacy, but strongly objects to hiding the names of those who submit SOC's.

Devin McGee – Madisonville, LA. He stated that there is no reason to share patron information with any public or private entity or individual. He mentioned a Mandeville councilman who was allegedly followed home by an activist after voting against a Pride parade. D. McGee said the same group targeted him after his first LBOC meeting, digging through his social media and questioning whether he lived in the Parish. He mentioned meeting with K. LaRocca, who noted that the library is not involved with the ALA. He spoke about the legal ramifications of sharing private information and stated that the process of discovery will expose those responsible and they will pay.

Kevin Marino – He spoke in opposition to the resolution, stating that it is limited in scope. He thinks it is a bad idea to require Board approval to share SOC's and that the process would take up a lot of time. He stated that there is a trust issue in the Parish, as both sides of the debate do not trust the Board, the Parish Council, or the system. He stated that one way to solve the issue of trust is to put facts in the public eye. Because the SOC's are available online, he learned that less than 10 people were submitting them. He encouraged everyone to read the SOC's that he submitted so they understand the concepts and can engage in healthy discussions.

Becky Bohm – She questioned whether the resolution was created to solve a problem that is not really an issue. She pointed out that, in the past, D. Cougle has spoken about the importance of accountability and transparency, yet this resolution will prevent both. She spoke about the earlier mention of aggressive activists and reminded the Board and audience that she was once attacked by the person who she believes caused this situation, which resulted in a permanent wrist injury. She stated that this needs to stop and the community needs to heal.

Kristen Luchsinger – She asked K. LaRocca if Connie Phillips' name has been given to the ALA. She understands that the library provides the ALA with the information about the book, such as the title and reason for the concern.

K. LaRocca confirmed that the ALA collects information such as the title and author of the book, along with general details about the type of person who submitted the SOC, such as whether they are a parent or an organization. She explained that the first challenges that the library received in 2022 were related to displays, followed by concerns about books. K. LaRocca stated that she did fill out the form, which is why it appears in the public records request that D. Cougle referenced. She later clarified that the form submission was regarding the first two challenged books.

K. LaRocca explained that the reason there were no additional findings from the public records request was because there were no further results to disclose, not because she used a personal email address. She emphasized that one cannot prove a negative and maintained that it simply did not happen. She explained that the library had received 150 SOC's in a short span of time and emphasized that she had no responsibility to the ALA, nor the time to send the information to them. K. LaRocca explained that we started receiving public records requests for the SOC's from multiple people. After consulting with legal counsel, it was decided to redact the documents and publish them on the website for the public to view. She added that there is a spreadsheet on the website containing hyperlinks to each SOC. The person's name is currently visible on the SOC, but the person's home address, phone number, email address, and any other personal information is redacted.

K. Luchsinger noted that it is now on record that there is no need for anyone to worry about their private information being leaked out of St. Tammany Parish. She asked C. Branton to clarify his intentions regarding the listing of the SOC's on the website and whether the names would be redacted. C. Branton said he will address questions after public comment. K. Luchsinger thanked the library for making the SOC's available online, which revealed that some objections were just against the LGBTQ community. K. Luchsinger clarified to D. McGee that she was the person at the Mandeville Council meeting he mentioned earlier, but none of the events he described happened. She stated that she said hello to the councilman, then she and her husband left the meeting and went home.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She is concerned that redacting the names could leave the system open to abuse. She stated that this happened when 150 complaints were made by one person and they did not show up to defend the books. She emphasized how much time and money was wasted. She noted that one complainant was from outside this Parish. She stated that without the SOC's being made available, she would not have known what was going on. She trusts the library with her privacy.

Ruth Terry Sipos – She spoke in opposition to the resolution. She stated that many concerns have been raised for the Board to consider. She suggested that thinking about it another month might make a difference.

Jamie Segura – Covington, LA. She stated that LA R.S. 44:32 states that the public has a right to inspect all public records. She said that redactions are strictly limited. She supports protecting patron privacy, but believes that if someone infringes upon her right to read a book, their name should be made public. She believes this is an unnecessary measure to hide the actions of the mostly conservative LBOC, which is in conflict with the U.S. Constitution. She continued to speak about having access to all books and that parents should monitor what their children read. There was disruption from the audience.

There were five public comments from individuals who did not wish to speak and they were not in favor of the resolution.

C. Branton stated that the resolution was reviewed by District Attorney Collin Sims and Assistant District Attorney Emily Couvillon. He spoke of today's society and the role of social media, highlighting how some individuals use it to post nasty comments online. He stated that library staff did send information to the ALA, who then suggested using a personal email address to keep the submission hidden. He objects to the library using taxpayer time and dollars compiling and sending information to an organization that does not govern us and whose stated goals, he believes, do not align with the majority of the state. He reiterated that policies matter and this is a step towards putting policies in place to hold people accountable. He addressed K. Marino's concern about the ability to view the SOC's. He said this does not restrict the ability to submit a public records request for a SOC containing the patron's name. He referenced the public records law (LA R.S. 44:1). C. Branton restated his motion to adopt resolution 25-003.

E. Couvillon explained that the SOC's are currently on the website with all personal information redacted except for the patron's name. She explained that the SOC's were posted on the website due to a high volume of public records requests, all of which she is responsible for reviewing. She explained that, since she is only one person and this task represents just a small part of her overall job duties, it was decided to publish the records online with redactions. If this resolution passes, they will be removed from the website and will be available through public records requests.

A. Shaw questioned if that would place undue burden on the staff. K. LaRocca clarified that all of them are already redacted and just need the names redacted. She asked if they could leave the spreadsheet on the website, as it does not contain any patron information. T. DiMaggio confirmed that the spreadsheet only contains the title, author, shelf locations, and circulation statistics. K. LaRocca clarified that the spreadsheet currently has hyperlinks that lead to the SOC document. C. Branton said that he does not object to leaving the spreadsheet online as long as it does not contain the patron's name. He reiterated that the public can file a public records request to access the SOC's containing the patron's name.

The Board, along with E. Couvillon and K. LaRocca, discussed the technical details and options to ensure both patron privacy and the public's ability to view the SOC's. Following this discussion, E. Couvillon suggested amending the resolution to state that the Statement of Concern (SOC), which outlines the reasons for the challenge, will remain accessible via hyperlink, with the patron's name and other personal information redacted.

C. Branton questioned the need to amend the resolution if the spreadsheet is remaining on the website and does not contain patron names. T. DiMaggio clarified that the spreadsheet currently does not include the reason for each concern and asked whether the Board would like her to add that information. C. Branton was in favor of doing so, as it would not include personally identifiable information.

There were questions from the public, prompting A. Shaw to open the floor to additional public comment.

Roxanne Newman – She asked how the public is supposed to prepare to address what the concern is if the hyperlinks to the SOC's are removed. C. Branton stated that the reason for the concern can be included on the spreadsheet. R. Newman suggested just including the SOC with the name redacted, since everything but the name would be added to the spreadsheet.

T. DiMaggio reminded the Board that the SOC is included in the board packet when the SOC comes up for Board review. E. Couvillon clarified that is addressed in another section of the Rules and Regulations of the LBOC and is separate from what is being addressed here.

Joan Simon – She stated that when the book comes up for Board review, the patron's name will be made public, and she questioned the need for this resolution, describing it as nonsense.

Kristen Luchsinger – She asked if this only pertains to library patrons. E. Couvillon clarified that only library patrons can submit a SOC, under the current policy. K. Luchsinger stated that Connie Phillips did not have a library card when she submitted her SOC's. E. Couvillon explained that the policy was revised after LA R.S. 25:225 was enacted into law.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She believes that responding to multiple public records requests for the SOC's would be a strain on the library. She suggested keeping the hyperlink to the SOC with the name redacted. She suggested using a coding system to identify multiple SOC's submitted by the same person.

David Cogle – He stated that the reporting form for the ALA asked for documents for their confidential database. He stated that the issue is that the burden is on the library to show that the redactions were made. He noted that the ALA skipped the legal step of submitting a public records request and was given the information immediately. He clarified that is what this needs to address.

Kevin Marino – He suggested taking the resolution back to the drawing board. He questioned why some are so obsessed with the ALA. He noted that the Library Director sent two out of hundreds of SOC's to them. He emphasized the value of being able to read the reasons a patron submitted a SOC, as it helps with understanding their point of view and intentions - such as wanting the book removed from the library.

C. Branton stated that, based on what he is hearing, we need to simply redact the patron's names from the SOC's. To clarify, he stated that the name and other personally identifiable information must be redacted; however, any individual may submit a public records request for the SOC containing the patron's unredacted name. He further clarified that this resolution does not address what is contained in the board packet, which will eventually be published and contain the patron's name.

A. Shaw asked for clarification that the spreadsheet would remain, along with hyperlinks to the SOC's, with the patron's name redacted. She noted that this helps maintain accountability and transparency, while keeping patron information private. A. Shaw asked E. Couvillon if the Board needs to amend the resolution. E. Couvillon recommended leaving the language as is and adding the following phrase to the end of Part C: "and except that Library Administration shall be allowed to publish statements of concern on the St. Tammany Parish website after redaction of all personally identifiable information."

Vote: A motion to amend resolution 25-003 was made by C. Branton and was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Branton: Yes Cooper: Absent Georges: Yes Kesler: Absent
Myers: Yes Thanars: Absent Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

Vote: A motion to adopt resolution 25-003 as amended was made by C. Branton and was seconded by T. Myers.

Roll call vote: Branton: Yes Cooper: Absent Georges: Yes Kesler: Absent
Myers: Yes Thanars: Absent Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

G. Election to fill vacancy of board position - Vice President (Shaw)

T. Myers moved to nominate C. Branton for Vice President. She noted how he has attended over a dozen meetings to promote the millage renewal. It was seconded by P. Georges.

Public Comment:

Joan Simon – She stated that it is unfortunate that only four board members were present to vote at the meeting. She appreciates C. Branton's service, but would have preferred someone who has been serving longer to take on this position. She suggested postponing the vote until all seven board members are present.

David Cougle – He stated that last month C. Branton was the only member who wanted to serve as Vice President. He spoke about the demands of a small, yet militant group with an active Facebook page, emphasizing that they do not reflect the views of the vast majority of the Parish. He stated that the group attacked LBOC members due to their religious views, attacked their spouses, mocked the Christian faith, attacked veterans with disabilities, and attacked a female Parish Councilmember in which someone called her a derogatory term. He stated that the Board should not concede to this group's demands.

Kevin Marino – He noted that only four out of seven board members were present and suggested postponing the vote until the full Board is present.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She is in favor of a postponement. She asked why D. Cougle was allowed to call the group names during a discussion on the topic of electing a Vice President. She stated that D. Cougle is very divisive and is very connected to C. Branton, which concerns her. She suggested that P. Georges would be better qualified.

Kathleen Wiley – She does not agree with postponing the vote. She supports C. Branton serving as Vice President, highlighting his Master's degree and extensive experience. She spoke out about people making ugly digs at others and called for the hate to stop, quoting the saying "ban hate." She reiterated C. Branton's experience, qualifications, and considers him a true servant.

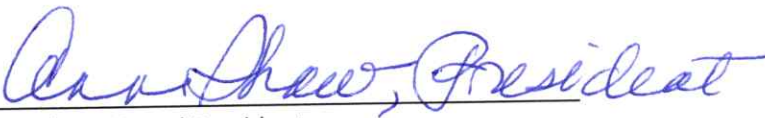
Vote: T. Myers moved to elect Charles (Chuck) Branton as Vice President. It was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Branton: Yes Cooper: Absent Georges: Yes Kesler: Absent
Myers: Yes Thanars: Absent Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

H. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by C. Branton and was seconded by P. Georges. All were in favor, none were opposed, and none were absent. Motion carried.



Ann Shaw, Board President