

St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control Meeting
February 23, 2026
St. Tammany Parish Council Chambers
21490 Koop Dr., Mandeville, LA 70471
6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Charles (Chuck) Branton, Board President. Trevor Collings, Director, called the roll and declared that a quorum was present.

Present (7): Glenn Baham, Chuck Branton, Councilman Patrick Burke (Parish President designee. Arrived after roll call), Tamarah Myers, Pennie Petrie, Dinah Thanars, Travis Thompson
Absent (0): None

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

G. Baham led the Invocation. T. Collings led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Branton and the Board expressed their appreciation to Brent Geiger and Tanya DiMaggio for their service as Co-Interim Directors and presented each of them with a plaque in recognition of their leadership. C. Branton introduced Trevor Collings as the new Library Director and welcomed him to the Library.

C. Branton explained the meeting rules and the rules for public comment.

1. Approval of the minutes of the meetings of the Library Board of Control (LBOC) that were held on December 15, 2025 and January 21, 2026

MOTION: P. Petrie moved to approve the minutes from the LBOC meetings held on December 15, 2025 and January 21, 2026. It was seconded by G. Baham.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lisa Rustemeyer – Mandeville, LA. She referenced public comments made at a previous meeting that she did not believe were related to the agenda item. C. Branton reminded her that comments on the minutes must pertain only to corrections. She requested that the comments she referenced be stricken from the minutes.

Kevin Marino – Mandeville, LA. He stated that emailed public comments should be included in the minutes and stated that his emailed public comments were not read aloud during the meeting.

There was discussion regarding where emailed public comments should be included, and Board members stated they would look into the matter further.

VOTE: Baham: Yes Branton: Yes Burke: Yes Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: Yes Thompson: Yes
RESULT: Motion to approve both sets of minutes carried. (Unanimous – 7)

2. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Financial Reports – December 2025 and January 2026

T. DiMaggio reviewed the December 2025 and January 2026 financial reports. The library has received the majority of its Ad Valorem Revenue for the year and has received the first of three State Revenue Sharing payments. As of December 31, 2025, the library had received 101.54% of its projected revenue, slightly exceeding projections, while expenditures were at 99.14%. Any line items that are out of balance remain within the acceptable 5% variance. T. DiMaggio explained that some line items may be adjusted by the auditor when funds are moved due to expenditures that span two fiscal years, such as contracts. She gave explanations for the variances in the Signage, Health Trust, and Staff Travel lines.

The budget percentage for the end of January should be 8%. Revenues are at 8.27% and expenditures are at 8.22%. Line items such as Polaris Maintenance that are over budget can be adjusted through a budget amendment.

DISCUSSION: C. Branton asked about the remainder of the anticipated revenue that is expected before the end of the year. T. DiMaggio expects to receive at least another \$3 million.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

MOTION: G. Baham moved to approve the financial reports. It was seconded by D. Thanars.

VOTE: Baham: Yes Branton: Yes Burke: Yes Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: Yes Thompson: Yes

RESULT: Motion to approve the financial reports carried. (Unanimous – 7)

B. Director's Report

T. Collings reported updates to facilities, I.T., capital projects (Mandeville renovation, Lacombe replacement, and Slidell renovation), marketing and outreach efforts, professional development, program highlights, contracts, strategic planning implementation, public records requests, Statements of Concern (SOC), and the transition of materials from the Young Adult collection to the Teen and Adult collections. He reviewed the December 2025 and January 2026 statistics as well as the 2025 yearly statistics.

C. Resolution #26-002 - Board Meeting Locations, Scheduling, and Public Engagement (Thompson)

T. Thompson presented the proposed Resolution 26-002 on board meeting locations, scheduling, and public engagement. He noted that board meetings have been held in the Parish Council Chambers on

Koop Drive for some time, but in the past, meetings were also held in Slidell. To improve accessibility for residents on both sides of the Parish, the LBOC proposes moving the June 1 and December 14, 2026 meetings to May 18 and November 16, respectively, and hold both at the Slidell Branch Library on Robert Blvd.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Devin McGee – Madisonville, LA. He spoke in support of the resolution.

Kristen Luchsinger – She spoke in support of the resolution, but expressed concern about security for meetings at the Slidell Branch.

Joseph Montelepre – Slidell, LA. He spoke in support of the resolution and in holding meetings in Slidell.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She spoke in opposition to selecting Slidell as the only alternate meeting location.

Kevin Marino – Mandeville, LA. He spoke in support of the resolution, but expressed concern about safety and security. He suggested holding meetings at other branches throughout the Parish.

Trey Brownfield – Slidell City Councilmember. He spoke in support of the resolution and encouraged holding meetings at Slidell and other branches throughout the Parish.

Becky Bohm – She spoke in support of holding meetings throughout the Parish and also expressed concerns about safety and security.

Board members discussed security options for branch meetings, including the use of police detail officers, and potential meeting locations such as the Slidell City Council Chambers and the Madisonville Branch meeting room. It was noted that the Slidell Branch building will be unavailable during its renovation, and board members are coordinating with the City of Slidell regarding possible use of the City Council Chambers.

MOTION: P. Petrie moved to adopt Res. 26-002. It was seconded by T. Myers.

VOTE: Baham: Yes Branton: Yes Burke: Yes Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: Yes Thompson: Yes

RESULT: Motion to adopt Res. 26-002 carried. (Unanimous – 7)

D. Resolution #26-003 – To Amend St. Tammany Parish Library Rules and Regulations Section 407 “Statements of Concern about Library Resources” (Branton)

C. Branton presented the proposed Resolution 26-003 to amend the St. Tammany Parish Library Rules and Regulations Section 407 “Statements of Concern about Library Resources” to allow the LBOC to consolidate appeals on challenged materials. He referenced state law (LA R.S. 25:225), the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision (*Little v. Llano County*), and the recent Louisiana Attorney General’s opinion on the term “access.” He explained that the proposed change would allow the Board discretion to consolidate multiple appeals regarding the same title or challenges related to a single policy, while still allowing individuals a reasonable amount of time, as determined by the LBOC, to address the Board.

MOTION: C. Branton moved to adopt Res. 26-003. It was seconded by T. Thompson.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Devin McGee – He spoke in support of the resolution, asked how it would be facilitated, and offered suggestions.

Kristen Luchsinger – She spoke in opposition to the resolution, stating that individuals who challenge books deserve the opportunity to discuss each specific title.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She spoke in opposition to the resolution, stating that discussing each book individually helps participants better understand community standards and learn from one another.

Kevin Marino – He spoke in opposition to the resolution, stating he is entitled to five minutes of public comment for each of his 70 SOCs. He added that he is open to consolidating some SOCs, such as series, and would rescind his SOCs if the Board rescinds the Graphic Novel Resolution adopted on February 28, 2023.

J. Wiggin – Abita Springs, LA. She spoke in opposition to the resolution and agreed with K. Marino.

Becky Bohm – She spoke in opposition to the resolution. She acknowledged that the review process is time-consuming but noted that it is part of the responsibilities of serving on the LBOC.

E. Couvillon clarified that the Board would still be required to vote on each title individually. C. Branton further clarified that the Board would need to vote to consolidate any titles for review.

Board members and members of the public continued the discussion, asking questions and offering suggestions. Topics included whether complainants had read the books they challenged, whether certain complaints pertained to the books' location rather than their content, and whether complainants would have input on consolidating titles. The Board confirmed that there will be opportunity for public comment before the Board votes on consolidating any SOCs. A suggestion was made by the public to hold Rules and Regulations Committee meetings to further address these matters. Discussion between Board members and members of the public continued, with legal counsel providing guidance and clarification.

VOTE: Baham: Yes Branton: Yes Burke: Yes Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: Yes Thompson: Yes

RESULT: Motion to adopt Res. 26-003 carried. (Unanimous – 7)

E. Resolution #26-004 – To Amend St. Tammany Parish Library Rules and Regulations to Add Section 411 “Disposition of Graphic Novels” (Branton)

C. Branton explained that the resolution codifies the Graphic Novel Resolution adopted on February 28, 2023, and incorporates the provisions of LA R.S. 25:225 (B), effective August 1, 2023. The statute directs libraries to restrict minors' access to sexually explicit materials.

MOTION: C. Branton moved to adopt Res. 26-004. It was seconded by T. Myers.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Devin McGee – He stated that much of what he was observing at the meeting amounted to obstruction, stalling, and appeals to bureaucracy where he believed none were necessary.

Kristen Luchsinger – She distributed copies of and read aloud a letter from Tulane Law regarding the resolution, which argued that the measure would violate the First Amendment and be unconstitutional.

Jamie Segura – She stated that all books should be shelved where appropriate and that placing any book behind the circulation desk is censorship.

Kevin Marino – He asked the Board to rescind the February 28, 2023, resolution and reject Res. 26-004. He used profanity during remarks regarding being unable to check out the restricted graphic novels at a library branch. C. Branton asked K. Marino to moderate his remarks. K. Marino apologized. He suggested placing a sign in the graphic novel section to indicate the books’ restricted location if the resolution is adopted.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She distributed a photo of book spines to the Board and asked whether they could be identified as graphic novels by their spines. She summarized the controversy surrounding the February 28, 2023, resolution and stated that no children were harmed by graphic novels in the Adult section.

J. Wiggin – She spoke in opposition to the resolution, stating that parents are responsible for supervising their children. She asked if this is common practice for other libraries to “hide” books behind the desk.

Becky Bohm – She questioned why the books have not been returned to the Adult collection given the library’s tiered card system and expressed concern about First Amendment violations and viewpoint discrimination.

Board members addressed questions and materials referenced during public comment, including the photo of book spines and the letter from Tulane Law provided by speakers. C. Branton spoke about the *Little v. Llano County* Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision, LA R.S. 25:225, and the recent Attorney General opinion on the word “access.” T. DiMaggio stated that she was unsure why K. Marino was not allowed to check out the graphic novels and that B. Geiger would be investigating the matter.

VOTE: Baham: Yes Branton: Yes Burke: Yes Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: Yes Thompson: Yes

RESULT: Motion to adopt 26-004 carried. (Unanimous – 7)

4. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by G. Baham and was seconded by D. Thanars. All were in favor, none were opposed, and one member was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL:



Tamarah Myers, Board Secretary/Treasurer