

St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control Meeting

April 20, 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. Roll was called and a quorum was established.

Present (7): Glenn Baham, Chuck Branton, Councilman Patrick Burke (designated by Parish President Mike Cooper), 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.

T. Thompson led the Pledge of Allegiance. C. Branton led the Invocation.

C. Branton explained the meeting rules, the rules for public comment, and the Statements of Concern (SOC) appeals process.

1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Library Board of Control that was held on March 23, 2026.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

MOTION: P. Petrie moved to approve the minutes. It was seconded by T. Myers.

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

RESULT: Motion carried. (Unanimous)

2. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Financial Report – March 2026

T. Collings reported that an additional \$307,460.72 in ad valorem revenue was received on April 1, 2026, bringing the year-to-date total to \$12,628,729.26. Total State Revenue Sharing received to date is \$75,076.17. He reviewed the general fund balance sheet, including assets and liabilities. Revenue percentages are where they should be for the year. He gave explanations for expenditure lines that were over budget. Most are expected to be in balance by year-end, and others will be adjusted. Notable line items discussed included Data Lines, Network Utility Software, Polaris Maintenance, PC

Maintenance and Repair, Consultants, Security, Web Design Consultants, PC Network, Lease/Purchase Books, Juvenile Reference, and Internet Database Subscription.

G. Baham asked about the Movers line. T. Collings explained it will be used if collections or other items need to be moved during capital projects. G. Baham asked about the progress of the Mandeville Branch renovations. T. Collings stated that the bid package should be going out soon.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

MOTION: G. Baham moved to approve the March 2026 financial report. It was seconded by T. Thompson.

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

RESULT: Motion carried. (Unanimous)

B. Director's Report

T. Collings reported updates to I.T. projects, maintenance projects, capital projects (Mandeville renovation – Bid package should open on April 29, 2026; Lacombe replacement – Administration met with architects; and Slidell renovation – Architect is working on utility surveys, property lines, and drainage), marketing and outreach efforts, professional development, program highlights, contracts, public records requests, Statements of Concern, and the transition of materials from the Young Adult (YA) collection to the Teen and Adult collections. He reviewed the March 2026 and year-to-date statistics.

C. Resolution #26-009 to Set Amount of Time on Graphic Novel Appeals (Branton)

C. Branton explained that the Board must set a time limit for Kevin Marino to speak regarding his appeals of 63 titles, which the Board has previously approved for consolidation. These titles were reviewed and decided on by library staff, and K. Marino is appealing the staff's recommendations.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kevin Marino – Mandeville, LA. He stated he had prepared a slide presentation but was not approved to use the A/V equipment. He requested one hour of speaking time but said he would try to limit his comments to 30 minutes.

Devin McGee – Madisonville, LA. He was in favor of a single, set speaking time rather than more than five hours. He stated that complainants should be able to state their concerns in a timely manner.

Roxanne Newman – Mandeville, LA. She supported granting K. Marino one hour, though she recommends five minutes per book. She also stated that members of the public should be allowed three minutes of public comment per speaker per book.

Erin Kennedy – Folsom, LA. She expressed concerns about restricting access to the graphic novels under appeal. She opposed restricting the books and urged the Board to reconsider.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She expressed concern about restricting access, stating that all of the books are located on the regular shelves in other peer-selected library systems. She disagreed with the process for granting speaking time, calling it unfair and punitive toward K. Marino.

Rebecca Bohm – Mandeville, LA. She supported allowing K. Marino two hours of speaking time and 20 minutes of public comment per member of the public. She suggested a break for K. Marino to reorganize his presentation and questioned whether the Board had read all the books.

Two public commenters who did not wish to speak opposed the resolution.

Board members suggested time limits for K. Marino to speak: P. Burke proposed one hour; T. Myers proposed 30 minutes with a short recess to regroup; and P. Petrie, D. Thanars, and T. Thompson each proposed 30 minutes. Board members and K. Marino further discussed the amount of time needed.

MOTION: T. Myers moved to grant K. Marino 30 minutes of speaking time following a 10-minute recess. It was seconded by P. Petrie.

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

RESULT: Motion carried. (Unanimous)

After a 10-minute recess, C. Branton called the meeting back to order.

D. Resolution #26-010 to Adjudicate Consolidated Appeals on Graphic Novel Titles (Branton)

Kevin Marino presented his case, using a poster displaying all 63 book covers. All 63 books were available on hand, and a QR code was provided for public access to his slideshow. He had previously emailed a copy of the presentation to Board members. He spoke about several of the graphic novels under appeal. When the 30-minute time limit was reached, K. Marino requested additional time to continue speaking.

MOTION: T. Thompson moved to grant K. Marino 10 additional minutes of speaking time. It was seconded by P. Burke.

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

RESULT: Motion carried. (Unanimous)

K. Marino continued presenting his case, addressing several of the graphic novels under appeal.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Devin McGee – He spoke about the content in the book *Gender Queer*. He expressed his reasons for supporting restriction of the graphic novels and spoke about content curation.

Roxanne Newman – She said the graphic novels should be moved from behind the desk, calling the restrictions censorship and red flagging. She spoke about the book *Three Rocks*.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She said the books had been shelved appropriately before librarians restricted them under duress and out of fear of prosecution. She spoke in opposition to restricting the graphic novels.

Rebecca Bohm – She spoke in opposition to restricting the books behind the desk and in favor of shelving them in the Adult section of the library. She continued expressing her concerns, giving an example of a book that contained kissing and not sexual conduct.

C. Branton gave a brief summary of the graphic novel resolution, LA R.S. 25:225, and why the graphic novels in question are located behind the circulation desk. He reiterated that these are appeals of the staff's decision to place the books behind the desk. He noted that K. Marino did not reference the content of the books in his original SOCs. He stated that librarians spent countless hours reviewing the books from cover to cover and their recommendation was for these to be restricted behind the desk.

MOTION #1: A standing motion was made by C. Branton and seconded by G. Baham to affirm the staff committee's decision that all 63 titles remain shelved behind the circulation desk.

E. Couvillon clarified that this motion would apply as each title is voted on individually. Any board member wishing to take a different action on a specific title would need to make a separate motion for that title.

VOTE: All 63 titles were read aloud and voted on. Five board members voted in favor (G. Baham, T. Myers, P. Petrie, T. Thompson, and C. Branton), one opposed (D. Thanars), and one abstained (P. Burke). T. Myers voted in favor of all titles except *Emma 2*, for which she moved to postpone consideration.

RESULT: The motion carried for all titles except *Emma 2*.

MOTION #2: T. Myers moved to postpone consideration of *Emma 2* until the May 2026 board meeting. The motion was seconded by P. Petrie.

VOTE: Baham: No Burke: Yes Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: Yes Thompson: No Branton: No

RESULT: Motion to postpone *Emma 2* carried. (Yes – 4 | No – 3)

T. Thompson said most of the books were very graphic and that he reviewed K. Marino's presentation. He said the books contained lewd sexual content not appropriate for children and that the page numbers cited by staff accurately identified the material.

C. Branton thanked the staff members who spent many hours over several days reviewing the books cover to cover, noting that their recommendations followed a thorough review. C. Branton reminded the public that the next LBOC meeting will be at the Slidell Branch on May 18, 2026.

4. Adjournment

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

APPROVAL:



Tamarah Myers, Board Secretary/Treasurer