

St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control Meeting
May 18, 2026
St. Tammany Parish Library Slidell Branch
555 Robert Blvd., Slidell, LA 70458
6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

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

Present (7): Glenn Baham, Chuck Branton, Councilman Jeff Corbin (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.

D. Thanars led the Pledge of Allegiance. T. Thompson led the Invocation. G. Baham read aloud a proclamation by Donald Trump, President of the United States of America, recognizing and celebrating 250 years of the nation's history and independence.

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

- 1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Library Board of Control that was held on April 20, 2026.**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lisa Rustemeyer – Mandeville, LA. She said that the minutes were not accurate, stating that K. Marino was appealing the fact that the books were behind the desk and that it was the Board's decision to place them there, not the staff.

Kevin Marino – Mandeville, LA. He clarified that he was appealing the policy, not staff decisions. He requested that the QR code or link to his presentation be included in the published minutes.

T. Collings, the Board, and legal counsel discussed whether to include a link to the presentation and determined that it would not be included due to the images depicting sexual conduct as defined in LA R.S. 25:225 and copyright concerns.

MOTION: A motion to approve the minutes was made by G. Baham, seconded by D. Thanars.

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

RESULT: Motion carried. (Unanimous)

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Resolution #26-011 to Adjudicate Remaining Title from Consolidated Appeals on Graphic Novel Titles (Branton)

T. Myers thanked the Board for postponing consideration of *Emma 2* to allow for further review and expressed appreciation for the public's presence, noting that despite differing views on the books, they share more in common than not. She stated that she believes the book is shelved appropriately in the Graphic Novel Restricted (GNR) collection.

MOTION: A motion to affirm the recommendation of the staff committee to place *Emma 2* in the GNR collection behind the circulation desk was made by T. Thompson, seconded by P. Petrie.

There was discussion regarding whether K. Marino would be permitted five minutes to speak on *Emma 2*. C. Branton clarified that K. Marino had spoken on the item at the previous meeting and would not be allotted additional time; however, he could address the Board for up to three minutes if he submitted a speaker card.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Devin McGee – Madisonville, LA. He stated that the materials speak for themselves and the Board is doing a good job.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She stated that she had difficulty obtaining a copy of the book from the library, expressed opposition to restricting the title, and supported its placement in the Adult collection.

Jean Wiggin – Abita Springs, LA. She read a quote aloud regarding book banning and restricting books from libraries.

Rebecca Bohm – Mandeville, LA. She stated that placing the book in the Adult collection complies with the law and expressed opposition to restricting the title.

Kevin Marino – He expressed disappointment that he was not granted use of the A/V equipment at the previous meeting and raised additional concerns regarding the process for reviewing and deliberating on books.

G. Baham stated that if the public seeks changes, those concerns should be addressed to the State Legislature, noting that the Board is required to follow the law. T. Myers addressed an earlier comment, clarifying that she had initially overlooked reviewing *Emma 2* before the previous meeting and subsequently reviewed the title prior to the current meeting.

VOTE: Baham: Yes Corbin: Abstained Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: No Thompson: Yes Branton: Yes
RESULT: Motion carried. (Yes – 5 | No – 1 | Abstained – 1)

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Summer Reading Presentation

Staff presented a promotional video featuring the Summer Reading Challenge. This year's theme is "Unearth a Story." The Youth Services Coordinator and Adult Programming Coordinator highlighted the details of the Summer Reading Challenge, including the 720-minute reading goal for patrons, and provided an overview of the programs, events, and activities planned for children, teens, and adults.

B. Financial Report – April 2026

T. Collings reported that additional Ad Valorem and State Revenue Sharing was received in April. He also provided an overview of the Fund Balance and referenced the balance sheet included in the financial report. He reviewed the Revenues and Expenditures, gave explanations for lines that were over or under budget, and noted that some lines will be adjusted in the proposed budget amendment. Notable lines mentioned were Electricity, Data Lines, Security, Consultants, PC Network, Lease/Purchase Books, Juvenile Reference, and Internet Database Subscriptions.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

MOTION: A motion to approve the financial report was made by D. Thanars, seconded by P. Petrie.

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

RESULT: Motion carried. (Unanimous)

C. Director's Report

T. Collings reported updates on I.T. and Maintenance projects; Capital Projects (Mandeville – bids to be opened June 3rd; Lacombe – RCL Architecture has received the signed contract from the Parish and is preparing construction documents and drawings; Slidell – Watermark Design Group is developing the preliminary design); marketing and outreach efforts; Mobile Library statistics; professional development; programming highlights; and the Strategic Plan (Makerspace anticipated to open at the end of July and the *Check It Out* podcast will relaunch later this month in a video format). Updates were also provided on contracts, public records requests, statements of concern, and the transition of materials from the Young Adult (YA) section to the Adult and Teen sections. He reviewed the April 2026 and year-to-date statistics.

G. Baham commended staff for effectively promoting the library within the community.

D. Resolution #26-012 to Amend St. Tammany Parish Library Rules and Regulations Section 407 "Statements of Concern about Library Resources" to Clarify Scope, Procedures, and Finality of Decisions (Branton)

T. Collings explained that the proposed amendments aim to clarify the scope and administration of Section 407 to ensure consistency with Louisiana law (LA R.S. 25:225) and improve administrative efficiency for staff and the Board. He noted that many revisions are procedural, addressing the handling

of reconsideration requests, and are intended to streamline workflow without limiting patrons' ability to raise concerns under the policy. T. Collings then reviewed the specific policy revisions, highlighting the addition of a Community Input Form to address general concerns related to classification, shelving, displays, programming, general content objections, or viewpoint disagreements. By comparison, the Statement of Concern form would be reserved for concerns that materials contain sexually explicit content as defined by LA R.S. 25:225.

MOTION: A motion to adopt Res. 26-012 was made by G. Baham, seconded by P. Petrie.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Devin McGee – He alleged that there was an effort to introduce materials he described as radical into the library's collection under themes of acceptance, love, and tolerance.

J. Corbin raised a point of order, asking whether public comment should be limited to the proposed revisions in the resolution. C. Branton confirmed that is correct, while noting an effort to allow fair participation and encouraging commenters to remain on topic going forward.

Kristen Luchsinger – She requested input from legal counsel regarding the legality of the resolution's provisions prior to the Board's vote.

C. Branton explained that it is inappropriate to ask for legal advice from the Board's counsel. He explained that all resolutions are reviewed by legal counsel prior to Board meetings and noted that any legal advice provided by counsel is considered legal privilege.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She expressed opposition to the proposed changes, referenced Mr. Branton's sponsorship of the resolutions, suggested review by the Rules and Regulations Committee, cited LA R.S. 25:31, and commented on the meeting's opening proclamation.

Kevin Marino – He spoke in opposition to the resolution, stating that the Board was rushing through policy changes and suggested holding Rules and Regulations Committee meetings. He outlined his concerns about the resolution.

Jean Wiggin – She expressed concern about certain phrases being removed from the policy and read excerpts aloud. She spoke about the benefit of retaining the use of book resumes in the review process.

Rebecca Bohm – She also expressed concern about removing certain phrases, removing the use of book resumes, and limiting community involvement.

T. Collings reviewed the resolution again and provided explanations addressing the concerns that were raised. G. Baham noted that parents have the right to grant restricted or unrestricted access to library materials and he referenced the *Little v. Llano* ruling. J. Corbin suggested handling each individual substantive change separately rather than voting on the resolution as a whole.

G. Baham called the question. E. Couvillon instructed the Board to vote immediately and that a two-thirds vote was required to close debate.

VOTE: Baham: Yes Corbin: No Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: No Thompson: Yes Branton: Yes
RESULT: Motion carried. (Yes – 5 | No – 2)

The Board then proceeded to vote on the original motion to adopt Res. 26-012, made by G. Baham and seconded by P. Petrie.

VOTE: Baham: Yes Corbin: No Myers: Yes Petrie: Yes Thanars: No Thompson: Yes Branton: Yes
RESULT: Motion carried. (Yes – 5 | No – 2)

E. Resolution #26-013 to Request Maintaining the Library's Millage Rate (Branton)

T. Collings explained that the St. Tammany Parish Library ad valorem tax is currently levied at 4.35 mills with a legal maximum of 4.35 mills, as authorized by voters through 2040. T. Collings requested the Library Board of Control's permission to seek approval from the St. Tammany Parish Council to maintain the library's current millage rate of 4.35 mills for 2026.

A motion to put the agenda item on the floor for discussion was made by J. Corbin and, seconded by D. Thanars.

J. Corbin suggested a slight year-over-year reduction in the millage rate due to anticipated growth, in light of the Parish's current funding challenges. G. Baham and C. Branton noted that the millage had already been reduced from 5.35 mills to 4.35 mills, representing a decrease in funding of approximately \$3,000,000. Concerns were raised both in support of and in opposition to further reductions, including the potential impact on library services. T. Thompson clarified that millage reductions would not redirect funds to other taxing entities without voter approval. J. Corbin stated that the prior reduction primarily affected capital funding rather than operations. T. Myers inquired whether other taxing entities were considering reductions in their millage rates. The Board continued discussion, reflecting differing viewpoints.

D. Thanars inquired about tabling the discussion until the next board meeting. E. Couvillon explained that the resolution is a request to the Parish Council, which sets the library's millage rate, and noted that the matter would be introduced at the Council's June 4th meeting and considered for a vote in July, prior to the next board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

MOTION: A motion to adopt Res. 26-013 was made by C. Branton, seconded by T. Thompson.

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

RESULT: Motion carried. (Unanimous)

F. Resolution #26-014 to Adopt Spring Budget Amendment (Branton)

T. Collings reviewed the proposed changes in the Spring Budget Amendment and provided explanations for each adjustment. He also reviewed the Savings/Dedicated Funds, noting that the 2026 budget was approved prior to the final 2025 Budget Amendment and that those adjustments are reflected in the spreadsheet. The dedicated funds are for operational reserves, disaster/emergency funds, Mandeville

furniture, Slidell furniture, Lacombe furniture, fixtures, and equipment, 4th quarter accrued payroll liabilities, health claims, and capital contingency.

MOTION: A motion to adopt Res. 26-014 was made by G. Baham, seconded by T. Myers.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lisa Rustemeyer – She complimented the explanation pages in the budget amendment, inquired about the highlighted line items, and commended the teen video game collection. She also asked questions regarding moving costs, consultants, reductions in mileage, conventions, and DVDs.

Rebecca Bohm – She asked about the purpose of the \$20,000 budgeted for a consultant.

T. Collings addressed the comments and explained that the moving costs were estimates that could be reduced by utilizing trucks, the Maintenance Department, and existing staff, including himself. He explained that the consulting costs are associated with capital projects, including services provided by architects and interior designers, and noted that the use of such consultants has been standard practice for these types of projects. He clarified that the library is still purchasing popular DVDs.

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

RESULT: Motion carried. (Unanimous)

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 no one was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL:



Tamarah Myers, Board Secretary/Treasurer