

The Regular meeting of the Library Board of Control was held at the Lockport Branch on Monday, November 5, 2020 at 5:30pm with the following:

PRESENT: Robert Rome
Talisha Chiquet
Judy Bazare
Courtney Hubbell
Selma Malcombe
Bennie Smith
Archie Chiasson, Ex-Officio

ABSENT: Ruby LeBlanc
Daniel Lorraine, Council Liaison

Also present were Mrs. Laura Sanders, Director; Mrs. Sherry Lucas, Finance Manager; and Mrs. Dana Clement, Administrative Assistant, for Lafourche Parish Public Library.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said in unison.

Mr. Rome stated after roll call, we have a quorum and can move forward with our meeting.

Mr. Rome asked for a Unanimous Agenda Item to be added to the agenda to discuss changing full time employees to 35-40 hours and part-time employees to 20-29 hours weekly due to a recent cut to our millage by the Council. A motion was made by Mrs. Hubbell, seconded by Ms. Bazare, to add this new item to the agenda, and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to accept the LBC agenda was made by Ms. Bazare, seconded by Mrs. Chiquet, and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to accept the minutes of September 28, 2020 regular meeting was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Hubbell, and the motion carried unanimously.

Public wishing to address the Board: N/A

Andy Positerry of Weimer-Gros-Flores Architects gave a presentation addressing the revised cost estimate for the Lockport Entryway Modification Project. Per Mr. Positerry we were informed that there are some significant plumbing issues under the foundation. We had the sewerage line videoed and found at least two major issues under the building and several other issues under the parking lot, and we recommend the repairs be done as part of the project. Waiting to address these when the lines fail will be much costlier. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Chiquet, to deviate from the agenda to vote on this item, and the motion carried.

4. Discussion and approval of increasing the budget for the Lockport Branch Entryway Modification Project to include remediation of underground plumbing issues. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Hubbell, to increase the budget to \$700,000 for the Lockport Branch Modification Entryway to address underground plumbing issues and allow for additional contingency. A roll call vote was taken; Mr. Rome yes, Mrs. Chiquet yes, Ms. Bazare yes, Mrs. Hubbell yes, Mrs. Malcombe yes, and Ms. Smith yes. Mrs. LeBlanc was absent. The motion carried 6-0-1.

Finance Report:

Mrs. Lucas reported our fund balance today is \$10.1 million. The Council has been reviewing the Parish's Consolidated 2021 Budget, which includes the Library Budget. Our amended salary and payroll tax items were submitted for their consideration and are sponsored by Mr. Lorraine. The vote will be on Nov. 24. Current Projects-The Multi-Branch Project is complete at a total payout of \$716,494. The Thibodaux Addition has paid out \$2.3million to date of the \$4.25 million budget. The change order to add days to the project was approved, putting us at a construction end date of January 5, 2021. Furniture will be delivered the following week. The South Lafourche HVAC Project still has no billing to date out of the \$50K budget, and the change order was approved for additional days. We are waiting to hear that this project is complete. Lastly, our Lockport Entryway Modification Project has paid out \$18,037 to date. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Ms. Bazare, to accept the Finance Report. The motion carried unanimously.

Director Report:

Mrs. Sanders reported managing the daily operations of the library system; attended numerous construction, insurance, and other meetings. Attended a meeting with Councilman Adams on Oct 2; also present were Mr. Lorraine, Mr. Chiasson, Mr. Orgeron and Mr. Rome. Mrs. Sanders read over the notes from this meeting. On Oct 27, I attended a Council meeting where the MOU with the National Park Service was approved. At that meeting, the Council voted to levy millage -017 that we agreed to roll back to 3.00 mills. However, they voted down amending our second millage -014 without any discussion. With Mr. Robert's permission, I asked the DA to clarify whether the millage would default to the Sept 1 ordinance or some other rate. We received a DA opinion today that indicated millage -014 would not be levied at all for 2020. We will be short approximately \$2.5mil to fund the 2021 budget. Between the two cuts, we have lost 40% of funding that the people voted for us to have. We will talk more about this in our unanimous agenda item. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Malcombe, to accept the Director's Report. The motion carried unanimously.

Special Orders:

1. Election of Officers for 2021:

Mrs. Sanders opened the Election of Officers for 2021 for the Library Board of Control. Mr. Rome nominated Bennie Smith for President. Mrs. Sanders asked Ms. Smith if she accepted, and she agreed. After asking 3 times if there were any more nominees for President and there were none, Mrs. Sanders announced Bennie Smith as the President for 2021.

Again, in a repeated effect, Mrs. Sanders opened the floor for Vice-President. Ms. Smith nominated Talisha Chiquet for Vice-President, and she rejected the nomination but thanked the Board. Ms. Smith nominated Courtney Hubbell for Vice-President. Mrs. Sanders asked Mrs. Hubbell if she accepted, and she agreed. Mrs. Sanders asked 3 times if there were any more nominees for Vice-President, and there were none. Mrs. Sanders announced Courtney Hubbell as the Vice-President for 2021. Both Mr. Rome and Mrs. Chiquet thanked the Board for their support and confidence, and they both look forward to supporting Ms. Smith and Mrs. Hubbell as the newly elected officers for 2021. (a picture was taken for the LPPL Newsletter)

Unfinished Business:

1. Discussion and approval of merit increase: Mrs. Sanders indicted the funding for this has been removed from the budget. Mr. Rome read the agenda item and with no Board member making a motion, the item failed.
2. Discussion and approval of seeking Legal Opinion from the District Attorney's office: Mrs. Sanders indicated that Parish Administration already obtained a DA opinion on Library financial controls. Mr. Rome read the agenda item and with no Board member making a motion, the item failed.

New Business:

1. Discussion and approval of LPPL cost share of 2021 employee insurance coverage: Mrs. Sanders explained to the Board, Sherry and I have prepared several cost share options to look over on the health plan. The parish has chosen BCBS as our health provider, and the premium cost increased by 18.02% so the 2021 insurance line item will not cover the cost of all the options without amendment. Dental premiums are a decrease from 2020. After some discussion, Mr. Chiasson suggested we chose any health cost share option for our employees and in January do an internal transfer within the personnel category to cover any overages. A motion was made by Ms. Bazare, seconded by Ms. Smith, to choose the same flat rate cost share as Parish Government for health insurance and continue to pay the low level individual rate on dental insurance. A roll call vote was taken; Mr. Rome yes, Mrs. Chiquet yes, Ms. Bazare yes, Mrs. Hubbell abstained due to a relative working at library, Mrs. Malcombe abstained due to a relative working at library, and Ms. Smith yes; Mrs. LeBlanc was absent. The motion carried 4-0-1-2.
2. Discussion and approval of LPPL longevity awards for employees: Mrs. Sanders explained this policy was implemented some 20 years ago by the Board. This was back when library salaries were below what other libraries paid, but the Board has worked very hard the last several years to make our pay rates comparable. At this time I think we need to do away with the longevity award and possibly look at it again at a later time or at a different percentage. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Ms. Bazare, to omit the language in the LPPL Human Resource Manual, Section: 2 Policy: 2.04, that pertains to longevity service awards. A roll call vote was taken; Mr. Rome yes, Mrs. Chiquet yes, Ms. Bazare yes, Mrs. Hubbell abstained due to a relative working at library, Mrs. Malcombe abstained due to a relative working at library, and Ms. Smith yes; Mrs. LeBlanc was absent. The motion carried 4-0-1-2.
3. Discussion and approval of participating in the Parish's Employee Assistance Program: Mrs. Sanders explained, EAP from Hidalgo Health Associates is a program that's offered to LPPL employees as a call-in counseling service at low cost to the library. We've participated in this program with the Parish so this is a renewal. A motion was made by Mrs. Chiquet, seconded by Ms. Smith, to continue participation in the Hidalgo Health Associates EAP if the Parish renews the plan. A roll call vote was taken;

Mr. Rome yes, Mrs. Chiquet yes, Ms. Bazare yes, Mrs. Hubbell abstained due to a relative working at library, Mrs. Malcombe abstained due to a relative working at library, and Ms. Smith yes; Mrs. LeBlanc was absent. The motion carried 4-0-1-2.

Unanimous agenda item:

1. Discussion and approval of making full time employees 35-40 hours and part-time employees 20-29 hours weekly as determined by the Director to reduce 2021 personnel expenses. As you know this Board agreed to voluntarily reduce our library millage -017 by 1.02 mills to help ease the tax burden of the citizens of Lafourche. Contrary to the will of the people who voted for us to have both millages, the Parish Council on 10/27 did not approve the ordinance to levy library millage 014 for tax base year 2020. The Library will now be short nearly \$2.5 million in funding to cover the 2021 budget. There was no advance notice to the public that this would occur. There was no public discussion at the Council meeting. The following Council members voted no to collecting library millage -014: Jerry Jones District 1, T-Boo Adams District 2, Jim Wendell District 5, D'Lynn Boudreaux District 8 and our Library Liaison Daniel Lorraine District 9. I need this Board's help to find ways for the Library to survive such drastic and unplanned cuts. It was agreed that it would be fiscal irresponsible not to decrease our budget with such a large decrease in our revenue collections, and with our not knowing whether the council plans to cut our funding again next year. Ms. Smith suggested Mrs. Sanders meet with the Finance Committee to come up with a strategic plan and present it to the Board for discussion, even though these matters fall within Mrs. Sander's purview as Director. Ms. Sanders explained I want to keep the Board in the loop and have your support on any cuts made. I have a meeting with other area directors coming up and that will be a good resource to get additional suggestions. Since the Board was in agreement that they did not need to approve personnel scheduling decisions by the Director, there was no motion necessary. The discussion ended.

With no further business to discuss, a motion for adjournment was made by Ms. Bazare, seconded by Ms. Smith, and carried unanimously. The Library Board of Control was adjourned at approximately 6:50pm