

May 19, 2008
Lockport, Louisiana

State of Louisiana
Parish of Lafourche

The Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Control was called to order at 5:00 p.m. with the following

PRESENT: Judy Babin
John Brandon
Mary Gayle Bryant
James Cantrelle
Nicholas Cheramie
Lynette Fossum
Sharleen Hotard

ABSENT: Rodney Doucet

Also present was Ms. Susanna LeBouef, Director, and Ms. Stacey Guidry, Finance Manager.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. Bryant.

Upon the question of approving the meeting's agenda, in response to a request from Ms. LeBouef, a motion to amend said agenda was made by Ms. Hotard, seconded by Ms. Babin and unanimously passed. That motion requested that a letter Ms. LeBouef had received from Mayor Charles Caillouet this date be read and discussed by the Board membership this evening for the purpose of directing Ms. LeBouef in her response.

A motion to adopt the amended agenda was made by Mr. Cantrelle, seconded by Ms. Babin and passed unanimously.

Ms. Fossum then moved that the minutes of the April 28, 2008 meeting be approved. That motion was seconded by Ms. Babin and passed unanimously.

Ms. LeBouef then gave the Director's Report. She had included in the Board packets the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 28, 2008 and ad valorem, investments and balance/budget reports. Ms. LeBouef then introduced the subject of the Board's individual ALA and LLA memberships, which renewals are currently due. In an effort to cut costs, it was decided that the memberships held by Ms. LeBouef would be sufficient for the Board. Information of interest she receives from either organization can be copied and disseminated to the Board in their meeting packets. A motion stating that Board memberships in these organizations be cut out was offered by Ms. Fossum, seconded by Ms. Babin and passed unanimously.

Ms. LeBouef attended the Lafourche Parish Council meeting on May 13, 2008 at which two resolutions were introduced pertaining to the Library -- one concerning the Thibodaux Branch and the other concerning the bid for the Lockport Branch.

Regarding Headquarters, Ms. LeBouef stated that the Thibodaux Forum of April 29, 2008 had a turnout of approximately 75 people. She, Ms. Regina Lauland, Mr. Cantrelle and Ms. Hotard attended the Trustees Workshop on May 2, 2008. Included in the Board packets were three policy recommendations regarding funeral leave, DVD checkout limits and DVD checkout privileges. She also announced that the Board's annual leave policy is not in alignment with the law, and, therefore, she will make a presentation to the Board on that after work has been done to make whatever adjustments are necessary.

Continuing with the Director's Report, she has submitted a grant request to the Lorio Foundation, and there remains a staff opening for Book Buyer. Press releases were included in the Board packets. Ms. LeBouef announced that the Lafourche Parish Public Library system now has an official column in the *Daily Comet* titled "SHELFSPACE," which will appear every other Monday.

The Director also mentioned some of the Programs/Displays at various branches and then provided an update on Building Progress. Beginning with Larose, Ms. LeBouef stated that the Library is almost ready to receive the keys to it. The final walk-through has not yet been done; however, a punch list is in preparation and should be ready in approximately two weeks. The Lockport building is out to bid, with the site preparation bid having been awarded to Betco by the Parish Council. Regarding Thibodaux, Mr. Fertitta had recommended a 23,000 s.f. library at the Forum, but did not state how it would be financed. This resolution was placed on the May 13, 2008 Lafourche Parish Council meeting agenda and was approved. The next step will be discussion by the Council on this resolution at its next meeting.

A difficulty foreseen by Ms. LeBouef is in the plan that has been drawn by Mr. Caillouet for the Thibodaux Branch: a one and one-half story building with open balconies. He had presented this to her with the justification that it was respecting "green space ordinances"; as a result, Ms. LeBouef sought out information on said ordinances. The ordinance he was referring to, Ordinance Number 1888, does not refer to lawn area, but actually refers to parking lots and the necessity for placement of some flora and fauna (trees in cement pots, for example) in a parking lot to soften its appearance. Ms. LeBouef does believe that there is enough acreage to construct a one-story building. Going forward with a one and one-half story building will result in increased expenditures in its construction and in utilities and will require additional staffing. Ms. LeBouef has prepared information to present to the Parish Council at its next meeting when the subject of the resolution is declared open for discussion. She will work with the Parish Council on any size library that it recommends; however, the difficulty lies in an inability to make Mr. Jay Caillouet understand that there is only so much money to work with.

Ms. LeBouef then brought up the letter she had received this date from the Mayor, Mr. Charles Caillouet, requesting the Board's input as to a reply. With a request by Mr. Cantrelle for the opinions of the Board members, Ms. Hotard began the discussion questioning by whose authority Mr. Caillouet had drawn plans for a one and one-half story building. He had been told by the Board members present at the Forum that it would be a one-story building, because of additional construction costs and the additional staff necessitated by a one and one-half or two-story building – expenses the Library cannot afford. It was also brought out that the Board had already voted against such an option on more than one occasion. Ms. LeBouef stated that in a short meeting with Mr. Caillouet, precipitated by her need for the bid specs for Lockport, Mr. Caillouet brought out the drawings for the story and one-half Thibodaux Branch and asked her opinion. Ms. LeBouef made no comment on them.

Ms. Fossum noted that at the Forum a member of the audience referred to a set of plans in circulation; however, Mr. Caillouet has not yet given the Board official plans for the Lockport and Thibodaux buildings. The roof on the Lockport building has been changed by Mr. Caillouet; but, the Board still has not seen those plans. The Larose building is under construction; however, the Board does not know with any certainty if changes that had been requested of Mr. Caillouet will be or have been implemented.

Ms. Hotard stated that she feels that the Board needs to write the Parish Council advising them that it does not agree with what is going on and that the Board does not want to pay for drawings it did not request. Mr. Cantrelle felt that that section of the 2007 audit cautioning the Board against constructing buildings larger than should be built, because of their greater operational and maintenance costs, should also be included in that communication.

Ms. Fossum stated that at no point did the Board agree to a one and one-half story or two-story building. Their discussions have focused on finances, maintenance and staffing. Mr. Cantrelle said that the Board has no objection to what the Council might want to do in Thibodaux, as long as it is within the budget. There are no extra monies.

Ms. Babin stated that since the Board did not direct Mr. Caillouet to draw those plans, it will not pay him for them.

Ms. Fossum moved that a letter be written by Ms. LeBouef on behalf of the Board stating the Board's concern with what is being done without its authority or recommendation, as discussed in the meeting this evening, and stating that, once again, Mr. Caillouet is acting against the wishes of the Board and without its permission. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hotard and passed unanimously.

Ms. LeBouef then received input from the Board regarding the letter she had received from Mayor Caillouet and its response. That response will be a part of next month's agenda.

A motion to accept the Director's Report was made by Ms. Hotard, seconded by Ms. Fossum and passed unanimously.

Ms. Guidry then gave the Finance Report. Included in the Board's packets were the balance sheet, budgets and financial statements. As directed by the Board at its last meeting, she has moved those monies discussed to LAMP. As of this date, ninety percent of the Library's operating funds and budget money is in LAMP.

In response to Ms. Guidry's request for any questions the Board might have, Mr. Cantrelle referred to the recently-held Forum and received clarification from Ms. Guidry and Ms. LeBouef on a liquidity figure mentioned at that time by Mr. Jerry Jones, a member of the Lafourche Parish Council, as being from the 2007 audit. Also referring to the Forum, Ms. Fossum stated that there are people who seem to believe that the Library is making huge amounts of money from funds placed in LAMP and in investments and also seem to believe that there will be excesses in the millions of dollars by the time the libraries are built. Ms. Guidry corrected that perception by saying that the Library, as a public entity, is mandated by the State, probably federally-mandated as well, to invest in very limited, very secure investments. Very little risk can be taken, so the payoff is minimal as well. There are interest earnings, but not to the degree it would help in any building project. Any interest earned in the individual building project accounts stays in those accounts and can be easily tracked in the statements, as well as other account activity. Ms. Guidry gave an example using the current Thibodaux project account information provided in the Board packets. Interest earned was approximately \$6,000 for that month; however, a bill was paid from that account that same month for approximately \$12,000. A withdrawal to cover a billing from Mr. Jay Caillouet outstripped the interest earnings. The withdrawals made necessary by Mr. Caillouet's billings, and billings from contractors if the project is in the building stage, combined with the low interest rates, do not result in a great amount of interest income. Ms. LeBouef stated that in the last four years all four projects have averaged 35 percent over budget; so the interest earned in those accounts paid that overage. Ms. Guidry stated emphatically that the Library is not earning enough money to pay for a building project or to even contribute to one.

Ms. Hotard voiced her objection to a billing from Mr. Caillouet which included his expense for Copy Connection, feeling that that should not be the Board's expense. Discussion began regarding the balance left on his contract. Mr. Cantrelle then voiced his objection to the Copy Connection billing, and discussion was reopened. Ms. Guidry was able to state that the same question had been raised by a former Library administration with Mr. Caillouet, but to no avail. Also, in response to Ms. Babin's question on whether the Board can refuse to pay such a billing, Ms. Guidry said no, because the Parish approves the billing first.

A motion to approve the Finance Report as presented was made by Ms. Fossum, seconded by Ms. Hotard and passed unanimously.

Ms. Hotard introduced the subject of Board committees and the necessity of convening before those meetings when such topics would make it advantageous to do so. After a short discussion, Ms. Hotard moved that the Building Committee, By-laws Committee, Executive Committee and/or Finance Committee plan to meet when appropriate to a meeting's agenda for a period of time prior to that meeting to be decided upon by the particular chairman. The motion was seconded by Ms. Babin and passed unanimously.

Ms. LeBouef then asked the Board to address the matter of policy revisions, specifically funeral leave that seeks to include the mother-in-law and father-in-law as part of the immediate family. Mr. Brandon suggested that discussion and approval take place at next month's meeting. He also stated that it is his opinion that the death of a son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or brother/sister-in-law should also be included as part of the immediate family.

The topic of the Library's annual leave policy was briefly revisited and will be re-introduced at next month's meeting for discussion and approval.

Regarding the Lockport project, it was brought out that Betco's bid had been accepted for construction by the Parish Council, but the Board had not been given the opportunity to approve it at this evening's meeting. In response to Ms. Hotard's question about the dirt that had been donated, Mr. Cantrelle explained that it would be used outside and for landscaping.

A short discussion begun by Ms. Babin regarding the sites for both the Lockport and Thibodaux projects took place and was followed by a motion to adjourn from Ms. Fossum. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hotard and passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.