

# Ouachita Parish Public Library

## Board of Control

### Minutes April 11, 2024

The Ouachita Parish Public Library Board of Control Meeting was held on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at the Main Branch of the Ouachita Parish Public Library. In attendance were the following members: Ms. Betty Ward- Cooper, President; Mr. Darris Waren, Vice-President; Ms. Misti Cordell; Mr. Larry Bratton, ex-officio member; Ms. Alex Webre; and Mr. LaMario Looney. Absent were Ms. Kathy Craig and Mr. Wyman Mardis. Also attending were Mr. Brad Cammack, OPPJ Treasurer; Mr. Mark Johnson, OPPJ Parish Construction Superintendent; Ms. Nancy Green, OPPL Acting Director; Ms. LaKeisha Bosworth, OPPL Assistant Director; and Ms. Casie Castle, OPPL Business Manager. Mr. Looney arrived at 12:28pm.

President Betty Ward -Cooper called the meeting to order at 12:07pm. The invocation was given by Mr. Darris Waren.

There was one agenda change as Ms. Green asked to add an Acting Director's Update under "Other Business/Action" and the change was approved on a motion by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Mr. Bratton with all in favor.

President Cooper welcomed guest Mr. Mark Johnson who was introduced by Mr. Brad Cammack as the Parish Construction Superintendent.

No public was in attendance.

President Cooper then recognized Mr. Bill Land of Land 3 Architect for an update on the progress with the new Main Branch building.

Mr. Land stated that Mr. Johnson was asked to layout the electrical circuits at the new building to be able to provide the information to the engineers. Mr. Land noted that having Mr. Johnson help with these tasks saves him on costs that could come with change orders because Mr. Johnson will provide information for the engineers to know up front what they are dealing with for the plan design.

Mr. Johnson also checked the building's generator and the circuits. Mr. Land requested that Mr. Johnson check on the front canopy of the new building, stating a hole would need to be cut in the area behind the canopy to see how it is attached to the building to avoid any potential change order or added cost when the time comes to replace it.

Mr. Land then discussed his meeting with the library's IT department to get information on the locations of the data drops and he mentioned was that the eRate funding that was applied for would not come in this year, so it will not be available to pay for the data conduit wiring as hoped. Mr. Land stated that an estimate on having an outside vendor install the new IT system

in the new Main building would depend on how much of the new system would be wireless. If the desktop computers were included as Wi-Fi equipment the cost would be \$200,000; however, the library would need to also purchase new computer equipment for this scenario. With the desktop computers staying wired, the cost would be estimated at \$175,000. It was noted that the companies Mr. Land spoke to for the estimate recommended that the library not go 100% wireless due to the instability of the infrastructure. Instead having a mix of wired and wireless technology available was the recommendation such as the public having access to Wi-Fi for their personal devices and keeping the library computers available to the staff and public wired.

Mr. Bratton asked if the area where the cubicles had been completely opened. Mr. Land stated that the room in the center of the area for the IT servers that would remain since it was discovered by Mr. Johnson that the upstairs area where the IT offices will be located is not currently on the emergency generator. He stated that in meeting with Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth the number one priority for the emergency generator was IT services should a power outage occur.

The next priority was the lighting in the building. Mr. Land also noted that the elevator in the building was not on the emergency generator, but it will have a battery to operate it to go down should there be a power outage.

Mr. Land then discussed the furniture plan for the new branch and mentioned that Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth had sent a plan for furniture from the current Main Branch that can be reused in the new building. Mr. Land stated the remaining furniture options for mid-range furniture were being looked at, and he had a meeting with Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth to discuss those options after the board meeting. At present, Mr. Land stated the cost was \$250,000 over the planned budget for new furniture. He named a vendor called KI Brands as a possible place to acquire the remaining furniture noting a local company called Pettus Office Products provided furniture from this company. Mr. Land stated that the library staff needed to decide on the design end where the furniture needed to go and what needed to be purchased. President Cooper asked Mr. Land what led him to that furniture vendor. He stated that KI Brands was on state contract as well as it being suggested by other companies and his own personal experience working with them for the local University. The company has low, mid, and high-end furniture selections available, so the price can be adjusted if needed based on the level selected. Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth have requested the furniture be easy to clean and spill proof.

Mr. Land presented the board with a plan for the digital sign in front of the new building. It is currently on a separate electrical meter different from the main building. He stated that this could be kept, or it could be connected to the main building meter. However, to connect the sign to the main building would include an extra cost that would involve removing concrete in

the parking lot as well as running a line. The board expressed that it would be best to just leave the sign on the current meter and save on cost. Mr. Land stated that his team was close to finishing the drawings for the building and can finish once the furniture plan, electrical, and IT needs are worked out.

Mr. Land also discussed with the board that several additional costs had arisen since the board and Police Jury approved the cost to acquire and remodel the new building. Since the eRate funding would not be available this year, the cost to outsource the IT system needed in the building would be around \$200,000. Mr. Johnson was asked to remove the walls around the elevator to inspect it, and it was discovered there was no elevator pit which is required. The cost of installing an elevator pit is estimated at \$50,000. Once the Asbestos abatement was completed, it was discovered that the floor was unlevel. Leveling the floor to ensure proper installation of the new flooring is estimated to cost \$50,000.

Mr. Land noted that it was mentioned that the current sprinkler system in the new building was not aesthetically pleasing due to the sprinkler heads sticking out about six inches. The cost to replace them was estimated at \$50,000. In total, Mr. Land estimated the cost increase to be around \$700,000 over the originally presented cost estimate. Ms. Green stated the current sprinkler system could be left as is, and a new one was not necessary provided the current sprinkler system worked and if the request for a new one was just aesthetics.

Mr. Land discussed his pending meeting with Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth noting their plan to go over the desired logo for the library to have on the branch as well as the door access control locations. He questioned if the library's logo had changed in the past two years, to which Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth answered it had not. Mr. Land mentioned a call he received from Monroe Office Equipment about any needed audiovisual equipment such a projector, screens, and a sound system for the new building. He also questioned Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth as to whether there was a need for RFID towers at the doors of the new building. Ms. Green said there was no need as the library was no longer using RFID tags in items.

Mr. Warren then asked Mr. Land what sort of timeline the board could tell people they were looking at before moving into the new building. Mr. Land stated it would be an estimated 90-120 days before breaking ground on the remodeling of the building. This would be followed by an estimated 16-month project to remodel. Mr. Land's estimate was around the first quarter of 2026. Mr. Land also asked Mr. Johnson if the new building's exterior lights particularly the parking lot lights near the building could be put on the emergency generator to provide light should a power outage occur at night and staff and patrons needed to exit to their cars.

Mr. Land stated in closing that the additional costs for the new building would increase the originally approved estimation of \$7.8 million to around \$8.5 million.

The minutes from the previous meeting held on March 7, 2024, were approved on a motion by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Mr. Looney with all present voting in favor of approval.

The Statistical Reports for February and March 2024 were presented, and both were approved on a motion by Ms. Webre, seconded by Mr. Warren with all present voting in favor of approval. The Financial Report for March 2024 was then presented and was approved on a motion by Mr. Warren, seconded by Mr. Looney with all present voting in favor of approval and the Personnel Report for March 2024 was presented and approved on a motion by Ms. Webre, seconded by Ms. Cordell with all present voting in favor of approval.

Ms. Green then presented to the board House Bill 640 that has been recently proposed to the Louisiana Legislature. Ms. Green noted that the library cannot advocate at all either for anything for or against the bill however, she just wanted to make the Board members were aware of this possible Legislation. Ms. Green also noted that The State Library of Louisiana had provided a template in response to this bill, and she provided a copy of this template to all Board members for informational purposes.

There was no other business on the agenda.

Mr. Looney then questioned if a resolution had been made for Ms. Bosworth to get her certification to which Ms. Bosworth stated that the certification committee is again in place to continue with this testing. Mr. Looney also asked where the Board was on future planning for Carver-McDonald Branch. Ms. Webre stated the community wants any new branch to remain as close to the current branch as possible which has been the problem in finding such a location. She expressed that she had been in contact with Monroe City concerning the current Carver-McDonald Branch building which Monroe City Schools owns. There is the possibility of some land behind the Carroll School that the city owns that may be available.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:03pm on a motion by Mr. Warren, seconded by Ms. Webre, with all voting in favor.

Respectfully,

Betty Ward- Cooper, President

Nancy Green, Acting Director