

# Ouachita Parish Public Library

## Board of Control

### Minutes

August 8, 2024

The Ouachita Parish Public Library Board of Control Meeting was held on Thursday, August 8, 2024, at the Main Branch of the Ouachita Parish Public Library. In attendance were the following members: Ms. Betty Ward Cooper, President; Mr. Darris Warren, Vice-President; Ms. Misti Cordell; Mr. Larry Bratton, ex-officio member; Ms. Alex Webre; Ms. Kathy Craig; and Mr. Wyman Mardis. Mr. LaMario Looney was absent. Also attending were Mr. Brad Cammack, OPPJ Treasurer; Mr. Jay Mitchell, OPPJ Assistant District Attorney; Ms. Nancy Green, OPPL Acting Director; Ms. LaKeisha Bosworth, OPPL Assistant Director; and Ms. Casie Castle, OPPL Business Manager.

Mr. Warren called the meeting to order at 12:04pm and gave the invocation. President Cooper arrived during the invocation, and Mr. Warren turned the meeting over to her.

Next, President Cooper called for any agenda changes. Ms. Green asked to table the New Business/Action discussion of the Ouachita Parish Public Library's Shared Sick Leave Policy 8.81 until next meeting due to time constraints because the Bikes for Books giveaway would be happening directly after the board meeting. Mr. Cammack also suggested the Business/Action discussion of the possible sale of the parking lot across from the library with frontage on N 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Stubbs Ave may require action instead of just a discussion for board members to be aware of the necessity to stay through that part of the meeting. The agenda was approved with changes on a motion by Mr. Mardis, seconded by Ms. Craig, with all in favor.

President Cooper welcomed guest, Ms. Dilcie McDonald Green. There was no public comment.

President Cooper then called for Mr. Bill Land of Land 3 Architect to give an update on the new Main Branch building. Mr. Land presented the board with a printout of the plans for the new Main Branch with more meeting rooms on the plan as had been requested at the June 13 board meeting. He also discussed needing to meet with Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth to discuss where carpeting in the new Main Branch was needed as well as the parking area for the new building. Mr. Warren suggested that hard surface flooring be used in high traffic areas and Mr. Land stated that was intended, but his concern was having only carpet in places like the Young Adult area. Ms. Cordell suggested leaving carpet in the meeting rooms for the acoustics.

Mr. Land next referred to the previous meeting the board had on June 13 where the board members were shown different display screens that could be available to choose from for the

meeting rooms. He also discussed that partial plans had been submitted to the Fire Marshal for approval. Mr. Land stated that there were some things in the plans he wanted to keep from the current structure of the building such as part of the current stairs leading to the second floor. He also stated that there had been some code updates made to the plans concerning the lighting control in the building. He spoke about the possibility of a choice between motion detection lights or dimmer lights throughout the building.

Next, Mr. Land referred to his estimate from the June 13 board meeting that the cost of the current plans will be between \$8.5 and 9 million. He noted that the Police Jury looks closely at the cost when determining how to move forward with things such as building renovations. Mr. Cammack stated that the library should consider keeping money in its fund, and that at present it has about \$9 million in the Capital Outlay fund to cover the new Main Branch as well as the future plans for the Carver-McDonald Branch.

Mr. Waren then asked Mr. Land when bids could be expected, and Mr. Land estimated the time frame to be the board meeting after next due to the hope that advertising for bids can take place within the next 30 days and the standard 25-day advertising period for bids. Mr. Bratton suggested the library use this time to get the information out to the public about the project moving forward. Ms. Cordell asked if a rendering of the new Main Branch could be put outside the new building as well as all the library branches in the parish. Mr. Mitchell emphasized that the board be sure to pay attention to the timing of the upcoming tax renewal and be aware that the board and library should not spend any public money to showcase the new Main Branch in a way that advocates for or against voting for the tax renewal.

Mr. Waren next asked Mr. Land about the timeframe for the beginning of the renovation after the bids were accepted and a contractor selected. Mr. Land estimated around a month after a contractor was awarded the bid before the renovations could begin. Mr. Waren felt that maybe the board and library should start promoting the new Main Branch once a groundbreaking has taken place. Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Land when he estimated the library would be out of the current Main Branch and ready to move into the new Main Branch. Mr. Land gave an estimate of the Summer of 2026 before the library can move provided everything goes smoothly. Mr. Land again noted the need to meet with Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth to discuss the flooring, stating he thought it best to leave concrete flooring in the Maker Room planned for the new building. Mr. Land then concluded his presentation and left the board meeting.

The minutes from the previous meeting held on June 13, 2024, were approved on a motion by Ms. Webre, seconded by Ms. Cordell, with all present voting in favor of approval.

The Statistical and Financial Reports for June and July 2024 were presented with the Statistical Reports approved on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Ms. Webre, with all present voting in favor of approval and the Financial Reports both approved on a motion by Misti Cordell and a second by Ms. Craig with all voting in favor of approval.

The Personnel Reports for June and July 2024 were then presented and approved on a motion by Mr. Warren with a second by Ms. Webre with all voting in favor.

Mr. Mitchell then discussed the upcoming 2025 tax renewal for the library. The library's current millage of 7.64 is authorized by the Police Jury to be levied through the year 2025. Mr. Mitchell advised the board that the tax renewal would need to be placed on the ballot in Spring 2025, Fall 2025, or Spring 2026 to have the time available in case the renewal does not pass. Mr. Mitchell stated if the board wanted the renewal to be on the ballot for the Spring 2025 primary which would take place March 29, they would need to start the process before October 2024, to allow the Police Jury to promote that they are putting it on the Spring 2025 ballot at their October 7 meeting. Mr. Cammack and Mr. Mitchell both stated in years past the library has been on the ballot with Green Oaks's millage renewal. Mr. Warren made a motion to move forward with putting the renewal on the March 29, 2024, ballot, seconded by Ms. Webre with all present voting in favor of approval.

Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Cammack then discussed the possible sale of Parcel C of the Ouachita Parish Public Library's parking lot which is located along N 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Stubbs Ave across the street from the current Main Branch building. Mr. Mitchell noted that the parcel of land was appraised last year for \$123,000, reminding the board that using that appraisal the land could not be sold for less than that amount. Mr. Cammack then inquired if the Board would want to sell that parcel now or wait and give the interested party first right of refusal when the time came to sell the rest of the current Main Branch. Ms. Webre and Mr. Warren both indicated that they felt it would be best to wait until closer to time for the Main Branch to actually be ready to move to its new location. Mr. Mitchell noted that a new appraisal could possibly be done at that time and possibly have a better value appraised on the land. A motion was made by Ms. Weber, seconded by Mr. Warren, that the Board would not move forward at this time with the sale of this lot separately. All present voted in favor of this.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, September 12, 2024, at the Main Branch Library. The meeting was adjourned at 1:05pm on a motion by Ms. Craig, seconded by Mr. Warren, with all present voting in favor.

Betty Ward-Cooper, President

Nancy Green, Secretary