

# Ouachita Parish Public Library

## Board of Control

### Minutes

December 9, 2021

The Ouachita Parish Public Library Board of Control met on Thursday, December 9, 2021, 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; Mr. Wyman Mardis, Ms. Alex Webre, Ms. Misti Cordell, Ms. Kathy Craig, and Mr. Larry Bratton, ex-officio member. Mr. Robert Wright, Jr. was absent. Also attending were Mr. Jay Mitchell, OPPJ Assistant District Attorney; Dr. Robert Gaines, OPPJ Head of IT; Mr. Curtis Boyette, OPPJ IT Engineer; Ms. Nancy Green, OPPL Interim Director; and Ms. Casie Castle, OPPL Business Manager.

President Betty Cooper called the meeting to order at 12:04pm and called on Ms. Green to give the invocation.

President Cooper called for any agenda changes. There were none with a motion to approve the agenda as presented by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Ms. Craig

The President called for any public comments. There were none.

President Cooper welcomed guests Dr. Robert Gaines, OPPJ Head of IT, Mr. Curtis Boyette, OPPJ IT Engineer, and Mr. Jay Mitchell, OPPJ Assistant District Attorney. Mr. Mitchell further introduced Dr. Gaines and Mr. Boyette as being present to offer and discuss help needed in OPPL's IT department at the suggestion of the Police Jury during the Police Jury Financial Meeting on Monday, December 6, 2021. Dr. Gaines asked questions about the OPPL IT department to clarify what kind of assistance is needed. Ms. Green answered his questions concerning how many staff members were currently in OPPL IT and also how many locations they serviced. Mr. Bratton reiterated the concern the Police Jury had with the branch patron computers being down since the Malware attack OPPL suffered in April 2021.

The minutes from the previous meeting held on November 18, 2021, were approved on a motion by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Ms. Webre with all present voting in favor of approval.

The President called for Ms. Green to review OPPL's monthly reports. Ms. Green noted various aspects of the November 2021 statistical report compared to the previous year's report. She discussed items such as Physical Circulation statistics being down, eService statistics holding and some gaining, in-house computer use data not being available any other way than asking

the branches about the usage, which was determined to be up, program participation has increased, and visits to the library were also up. She also mentioned that fine reports were still unavailable due to the fact that the Business Office is still catching up posting deposits to its accounting software from when the OPPL system went down in April. Ms. Green explained that patrons who do not have library cards can still access computers through guest passes, so no one is denied use of the library computer services due to lack of a library card. Ms. Cooper discussed the fact that the inclusion of everyone and allowing free access to the internet for everyone makes the library a great asset to the community. Ms. Cooper asked Ms. Green about the promotion of the Homework Help eService to which both Ms. Green and Ms. Craig explained how library staff contact schools both in-person and through social media and promote this eService. Ms. Green then discussed two eServices offered by OPPL: Hoopla and Cloud Library, and how both eServices have seen an increase in usage and new patrons during the month of November. The monthly statistical report for November 2021 was approved on a motion by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Ms. Craig.

The November 2021 financial report was reviewed by Ms. Green. She made note that Tuition and Fees for the month of November were a negative because an employee left prior to the two-year time frame required for employment after receiving reimbursement of funds for course completion. This employee refunded the amount of the reimbursement. Ms. Green also noted that the use of funds from the Purchase of Office Furnishings account was due to two branches having sofas ordered for their staff lounge and YA areas. The financial reports were approved as presented on a motion made by Ms. Webre, seconded by Mr. Warren.

The personnel report for November 2021 was reviewed by Ms. Green, noting that several staff members had been hired during the month. The OPPL personnel report was approved on a motion by Mr. Warren, seconded by Ms. Webre.

Under Discussion/Action Item #1, President Cooper again recognized and welcomed Dr. Robert Gaines, OPPJ head of IT. Dr. Gaines expressed how OPPJ IT wanted to assist OPPL anyway they can. Mrs. Green assured him that any help he and OPPJ IT could provide was greatly appreciated. She told him she was planning on having a meeting with him and Mr. Curtis Boyette, OPPJ IT Engineer, with the OPPL IT staff following the Board Meeting in order to provide assistance through information as well as assess the needs and timeline for getting all OPPL patron computers back online.

Under Discussion/Action Item #2, President Cooper addressed Ms. Webre as the chair of the Selection Team to find a new Director for OPPL. Ms. Webre discussed that 4 applications had been submitted so far since the job opening had been posted. Mr. Warren questioned if the team should go ahead and review and select 3 applications to be interviewed by the Selection Team now. Also, discussed was letting the applicants know their applications had been received. The Board decided that the interview process should begin in January due to the upcoming holidays.

Mr. Bratton asked to address comments made at the Police Jury Financial meeting that had been held Monday, December 6, 2021, concerning renovations being done to Main Branch. He asked if new sites could possibly be looked at as an alternative to renovating the Main Branch. Mr. Waren discussed that new sites had been looked at previously but none of them had been right or were unavailable at the time they could have been purchased. The Board discussed maybe going to Mr. Bill Land, OPPJ Architect, with the amount the library can afford to spend on renovations and let him come back with what he can do. The Board decided to try and meet with Mr. Land after the first of the year.

Then once renovations have begun, the Board suggested publicizing the information for voters prior to the tax renewal happening in Spring of 2025.

It was also discussed whether to go ahead and post the position for Communications Coordinator that the Ouachita Parish Library has open. The position was noted as being vital to spreading public awareness to library happenings such as beginning renovations on library branches. It was decided that the position should be posted after a new Director has been found in order to include the new Director in the search for Communications Coordinator, a position that will work closely with the Director.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Mardis, seconded by Ms. Cordell, with all voting in favor.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 13, 2022, at the Main Branch Library.

Respectfully,

Betty Ward Cooper, President

Nancy Green, Secretary