

Ouachita Parish Public Library

Board of Control

MINUTES

June 9, 2022

Ouachita Parish Public Library Board of Control Meeting was held on Thursday, June 9, 2022, 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; Mr. Wyman Mardis; Ms. Misti Cordell; Ms. Kathy Craig; Mr. Robert Wright, Jr.; and Mr. Larry Bratton ex-officio member. Ms. Alex Webre; 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.

President Betty Cooper called the meeting to order at 12:00pm and called on Mr. Wright to give the invocation.

President Cooper called for any agenda changes. There were no changes, and the agenda was approved as presented.

President Cooper welcomed guest speakers Mr. Friday Ellis, Mayor of Monroe; Ms. Kimberly Essex, Executive Administrative Assistant to Mayor Ellis; Mr. Bill Land, Architect of Land 3 Architect, Inc.; and Mr. Robert Manning, Architect of Land 3 Architect, Inc.

The President called for any public comments. Mayor Ellis spoke to the board about a 25-block downtown riverfront development plan of the City of Monroe. The city has purchased buildings for development where the old Ouachita Candy Co. Warehouse is located and surrounding buildings. Mayor Ellis said that the development was looking to turn the area into a space incorporating retail stores on the bottom floors and housing space above. The plan is to protect public access to the riverfront by offering features such as eating, banking, and retail services as well as a splashpad for children. Mayor Ellis said the plan also details creating a marina and expressed his hopes that the marina could one day have a branch of the Ouachita Parish Public Library in it. Mr. Land expressed a concern for available parking in the area. Mayor Ellis voiced that there was not a parking problem in Monroe, with 40% of the area being available parking, but that there was a walking problem. He shared the website www.monroe.city where board members could access Phase 1 of the project and view parking availability in the area. Mayor Ellis also discussed wanting to improve the pedestrian experience by hiring a landscaping company to install landscaping to do so. Mr. Land asked if the City of Monroe would be

maintaining the landscaping to which Mayor Ellis replied that the landscaping would be maintained by the city. Mayor Ellis expressed his appreciation for being allowed to speak at the Library Board of Control Meeting, ending his presentation.

The minutes from the previous meeting held on April 14, 2022, were then approved on a motion by Mr. Mardis, seconded by Ms. Cordell with all present voting in favor of approval except for Mr. Bratton who excused himself from voting as he had not attended the last board meeting.

The President then called for Mr. Manning of Land 3 Architect, Inc. to discuss the plans to renovate the Main Branch of the Ouachita Parish Public Library. Mr. Manning reviewed a previous presentation of renovations to the Main Branch that Land 3 Architect had presented. Mr. Bratton expressed, with agreement from Ms. Cordell and Mr. Waren, the need to make enhancements to the building that would be visible to the public when they enter the building. Ms. Craig then commented on the Pine Bluff, Arkansas library branch she visited and how the renovations done there were like the ones being presented by Land 3 Architect, Inc. Mr. Wright asked if there was a possibility that the library board could go on a trip to a library in another Parish such as the East Baton Rouge Library to which Mr. Mitchell said he would need to check. Mr. Bratton then announced that he would discuss with the Police Jury the costs of renovating Main Branch as well as doing a property search. Mr. Mitchell was asked about the possibility of a tax increase to help fund the Main Branch renovations or relocation to which he suggested the best route would be to present the renewal of the millage tax when it comes up for public vote and add a separate construction tax to be voted on that would not affect the millage tax should the construction tax be voted down.

The President called for Ms. Green to review OPPL's monthly reports from April and May of 2022.

The monthly statistical reports for April and May 2022 were approved on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Ms. Cordell.

The April and May 2022 financial reports were approved as presented on a motion made by Mr. Mardis, seconded by Ms. Craig.

The personnel reports for April and May 2022 were approved on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Mr. Wright.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:37pm on a motion by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Ms. Craig, with all voting in favor.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 14, 2022, at the Main Branch Library.

Respectfully,

Nancy Green, Secretary

Betty Ward Cooper, President