

Ouachita Parish Public Library

Board of Control

Minutes

March 7, 2024

The Ouachita Parish Public Library Board of Control Meeting was held on Thursday, March 7, 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; and Ms. Kathy Craig. Mr. LaMario Looney; Mr. Wyman Mardis; and Ms. Alex Webre were 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 Ward- Cooper called the meeting to order at 12:02pm, and Ms. Kathy Craig gave the invocation.

There was one agenda change as Mr. Lance Hilton of Land 3 Architect was in attendance for Mr. Bill Land to provide updates on the new Main Branch building. The agenda with changes was approved on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Ms. Cordell with all in favor.

There were no members of the public in attendance.

President Cooper then called on Mr. Lance Hilton of Land 3 Architect for an update on the new Main Branch building. Mr. Hilton introduced himself as the Production Manager for the new Main Branch Building. He began by saying that Mr. Mark Johnson, Ouachita Parish Police Jury Building Maintenance Supervisor, has been working on the electrical mapping at the new building, and Mr. Johnson had asked that the asbestos abatement be delayed until March 18, 2024, to fix issues with the building's generator. Mr. Hilton also stated that the design phase of the plans is about 85% complete. Once Land 3 receives information from the library concerning the library staff's assessment of furniture needs, the IT department's data plan for the new building, and the number and location for staff parking, Land 3 will be able to move forward with the plans. Mr. Hilton noted he had spoken with OPPL's IT department concerning eRate funding that would pay for the data conduit wiring at the building. Mr. Bratton stated he thought the board had voted for the new Main Branch to go wireless during the last meeting. However, Mr. Cammack referred to the minutes from the previous meeting and stated that Wi-Fi had not been voted for. Mr. Many shared at the February meeting Mr. Land's desire for the library to go wireless but noted that the library staff would need to make that decision.

Mr. Cammack also pointed out from the February minutes that Ms. Webre had asked Mr. Many if he knew the cost difference between remaining wired and going wireless which Mr. Many did not know. Ms. Green noted that all the patron and staff computers and equipment at the current Main Branch are not wireless. So, new technology would have to be purchased to go wireless, which the library is not prepared to do at this time due to cost. She and Ms. Bosworth both stated that the library will work towards going wireless in the future; however, presently, the library wishes to remain wired and apply for eRate funding to assist in wiring the new Main building for the current equipment. Mr. Hilton then noted that a time clock room had been added to the plans and that Mr. Land met with Agnew Sign to see about replacing the front awning on the building. Mr. Hilton then concluded his report.

The minutes from the previous meeting held on February 8, 2024, were then approved on a motion by Ms. Craig, seconded by Ms. Cordell with all present voting in favor of approval.

The Financial report and the Personnel reports for February 2024 were then presented. Mr. Cammack noted that the last of the property tax had not been received for the library at this time. The Financial Report was approved on a motion by Ms. Cordell and seconded by Mr. Waren.

The Personnel Report was approved on a motion by Mr. Waren with a second by Ms. Cordell.

Ms. Green then pointed out highlights of several programs planned by Branches throughout the library system and directed them to their copy of this month's newsletter to see listings of the other programs. Ms. Bosworth spoke about the Mardi Gras Ball that was held for young adults for the second year and was very well attended. The King and Queen of Janus attended this year and crowned the King and Queen of the Mardi Gras Ball which was a real treat for all of the attendees. Ms. Bosworth also noted the new Community Service Program for young adults where students ages 13-18yrs can earn volunteer community service hours by participating in Library programs that educate, enrich and empower them to make a difference in their communities. Ms. Green made mention of several other unique programs that were taking place all around the parish for all ages in an attempt to reach all citizens with Library service.

Mr. Bratton shared that he had seen a national news story discussing libraries across the country having a "Library of Things" for patrons to check out items as Ms. Green had discussed at the last meeting. Ms. Green stated that the library had already begun collecting items and would soon have them available for patron checkout and use.

Ms. Green also mentioned other partnerships the library has within the community such as the Food Bank, Autism Society, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities Kiwanis Club, Animal Shelter, and Children's Museum. Ms. Green stated it was the library's hope to continue these partnerships as well as create more within the community it serves. Ms. Cordell stated the library was a true community center that was bringing people together.

There was no other business on the agenda.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at the Main Branch Library.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:47pm on a motion by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Ms. Craig, with all voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted.

Nancy Green, Secretary

Betty Ward-Cooper, President