Ouachita Parish Public Library

Board of Control

Minutes

September 11, 2025

The Ouachita Parish Public Library Board of Control Meeting met Thursday, September 11, 2025, 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. Larry Bratton, ex officio member; Ms. Misti Cordell; and new board member Ms. Debbie Blue. Mr. Wyman Mardis; Ms. Alex Webre; and Ms. Kathy Craig were absent. Also attending were Mr. William Long, OPPJ Treasurer; Ms. Nancy Green, OPPL Acting Director; Ms. LaKeisha Bosworth, OPPL Assistant Director; and Ms. Casie Castle, OPPL Business Manager.

President Cooper called the meeting to order at 12:08 pm, and Mr. Bratton gave the invocation.

President Cooper called for any agenda changes and Ms. Green asked that the Bookmobile item under New Business/Action be removed from the agenda to be discussed at a future meeting.

The agenda was approved on a motion by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Ms. Blue, with all in favor.

President Cooper welcomed guests Ms. Delcie McDonald Green and Mr. Brad Cammack.

There were no public comments.

Mr. Bill Land of Land 3 Architect then presented his updates on the new Main Branch Library.

Mr. Land began by stating that the project was around 60% complete and that the flooring process should begin in the next couple of weeks. He noted that he had cautioned the contractor to protect the flooring before the building itself was finished, so as not to trap excess dirt in the floors, as had happened in a previous job he oversaw.

Mr. Land discussed the change order to install an interior wall on the north, south, and west of the building and to install insulation in those areas after it was discovered that the walls were cinderblock with no insulation. This change order will cost an estimated $35,000, however, Mr. Land stated that adding the insulation would allow a reduction in the electricity cost for the building.

The furnishings and electronics that will be in the new building were also discussed, and new circuits were added to accommodate furniture that will have power outlets for charging stations. The back meeting room was originally planned to have a projector screen, but this has been changed to a flat screen monitor, which required a power plug to be added to the wall in that area. Mr. Land also noted that the graphics in the Children's area have been changed, and a mural or paint will be used in that area.

Paving of the parking lot is expected to take place in October or November. Mr. Land mentioned that there were a few bad spots in the lot, but the plan is to patch the bad areas and mill and overlay the whole lot. He estimated the cost to be around $30,000. Mark Johnson, Parish Construction Superintendent, inspected an area of the parking lot for drainage issues and a culvert was found to be cracked in places and will be replaced. Mr. Land is also checking the small lawn area of the parking lot for lawn irrigation.

Audio Visual equipment for the new Main Branch building was next discussed. Mr. Land mentioned a walkthrough of the new building that he had done with Ms. Green and Ms. Bosworth to assess the technology needed throughout the building. Currently, the vendor American AVL of Ruston is preparing a quote for the technology that will be put out for bid for the building. Mr. Land mentioned that he had spoken with Ms. Lushonnoh Matthews, Purchasing Manager for the Ouachita Parish Police Jury, who suggested he ask the Police Jury Head of IT, Mr. Robert Gaines, for input in technology needs for the new Main Branch. Mr. Bratton inquired about moving the telephone service from the current Main Branch to the new building and suggested contacting the provider to avoid any delays.

Mr. Land then presented the Board with two options for the new Main Branch building site sign. The second option was chosen.

Mr. Land next spoke about the murals that had been selected by the Board, Ms. Green, and Ms. Bosworth, to be placed on various walls throughout the building and the process necessary to complete this project.

Mr. Land ended his discussion by noting so far in the project there has been an estimated $200,000 in change orders, and the project is $1 million under budget at this time. This concluded Mr. Land's updates.

The minutes from the previous meeting held on August 14, 2025, were approved on a motion by Ms. Cordell, seconded by Mr. Waren, with all present voting in favor of approval.

The monthly reports for August 2025 were then presented.

The Statistical Report for August 2025 was approved on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Ms. Cordell, with all present voting in favor of approval.

The Financial Report for August 2025 was presented and approved on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Mr. Bratton, with all present voting in favor of approval.

The Personnel Report for August 2025 was presented next and was approved on a motion by Mr. Bratton, seconded by Ms. Cordell, with all present voting in favor of approval.

President Cooper then discussed the property location of the Carver-McDonald Branch. President Cooper stated that there was not sufficient parking or suitable land surrounding the current building that would allow for expansion. The Board then asked Ms. Green to contact Ms. Gladys Smith, a realtor specializing in the area located close to the current Carver-McDonald Branch location, to advise them on the possible property sites.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 9, 2025, at the Main Branch Library.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 pm on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Ms. Blue, with all present voting in favor.

Betty Ward-Cooper, President

Nancy Green, Secretary