

# Ouachita Parish Public Library

## Board of Control

### Minutes

December 12, 2025

The Library Board of Control Meeting was held on Thursday, December 12, 2025, at the Main Branch of the Ouachita Parish Public Library. In attendance were the following members: Mr. Darris Waren, Vice-President; Mr. Larry Bratton, ex-officio member; Ms. Alex Webre; Ms. Kathy Craig, and Ms. Debbie Blue. Ms. Betty Ward Cooper, President; Mr. Wyman Mardis; and Ms. Misti Cordell were absent. Also attending were Mr. William Long, OPPJ Treasurer; Ms. Jennifer Johnson, OPPJ Assistant District Attorney; Ms. Nancy Green, OPPL Director; Ms. LaKeisha Bosworth, OPPL Assistant Director; and Ms. Casie Castle, OPPL Business Manager.

Mr. Waren called the meeting to order at 12:07pm and gave the invocation.

There were no agenda changes, and the agenda was approved on a motion by Ms. Craig, seconded by Mr. Bratton, with all in favor.

Mr. Waren welcomed guests Mr. Bill Land of Land 3 Architect and Ms. Delcie McDonald Green.

There were no public comments.

Mr. Land then gave his update on the new Main Branch Library building. Mr. Land discussed the specialty furniture for the new branch that was not under state contract which was the Agati seating, Datum shelving in Special Collections, and special furniture for the Children's area. This furniture was put out for bid and Pettus Office Products had the lowest bid at \$179,000. Mr. Land stated that was around the original estimated price and that the Agati seating had gone up just a little in cost. He plans to take the winning bid to the Police Jury meeting on Monday night for the jury's approval. Mr. Land discussed how the Datum shelving is allowing for double storage capacity in the Genealogy Department area. He stated that the children's furniture could not have been gotten through KI with the rest of the furniture due to KI mostly specializing in Adult and Young Adult furniture.

Mr. Land discussed why the AV equipment bid had to be a separate cost not only because of obtaining the equipment but because of the installation that requires a specialist. He reminded the board that Bluum Technology won the bid to acquire and install the AV equipment for the new Main Branch with a bid of \$189,000 and that he will be taking this bid to the Police Jury meeting Monday for approval. He noted the bid from Bluum has an optional 6 hours training course for an additional \$3,000. Ms. Green asked if Mr. Land thought the Library's, IT staff

would need the training, and he stated he felt it would be a good idea. This would increase the cost of the AV installation to \$192,000. Mr. Land reminded the board that Bluum was on state contract and even though they are out of Baton Rouge they have a local installer who can assist with any issues. Mr. Land reminded the board that the whole project was still around \$1 million under cost. He stated the construction bid was \$5.3 million and with the current change orders the total cost is around \$5,654,000.

Mr. Land informed the board that the Police Jury has given approval to bid out the site sign. He also went over a few recent change orders such as access control doors being added to the Bookmobile office as well as the IT offices upstairs. A buzz in access control was also added to the back door of the building where Bookmobile will access the building. These change orders totaled \$29,508. Another change order he discussed was adding electrical access to furniture that will offer patrons the ability to charge their devices. The cost for this change order was \$22,981.

Mr. Waren and Mr. Bratton then asked for an estimated timeline to completion. Mr. Land stated the plan was to assemble furniture and asphalt the parking lot in January. He also stated the wall graphic murals were still being worked on. He reminded the board he had contacted local graphics company HD Graphics to provide a proposal for the murals which came in between \$12-14,000. He is asking the contracted painter, Guidry Painting, if they have someone who can install the murals, or if the money originally given to Guidry Painting for the job can be returned to the library to use for another graphic company to put in the murals.

Mr. Land also reiterated the board's discussion about irrigating the green area in the parking lot of the new building. Ms. Webre stated that the trees that are there now have been there for a while. If they die, they can be replaced with something else. Mr. Waren felt the need for irrigation is valid since they are tearing up the parking lot to repair and replace it. He said it would be the perfect time to install irrigation in that area for the current plants and any future ones.

Local realtor Ms. Gladys Smith was scheduled to be present to discuss with the board any information she found concerning a new location for the Carver-McDonald Branch but did not attend as she had not been able to get any information on the lease situation for the Carver-McDonald Branch from the City Attorney.

Parish Attorney Ms. Johnson also stated that the Police Jury was at a standstill with this lease situation because the lease was supposed to be between the Monroe City School Board and the Ouachita Parish Police Jury, as is written on the lease agreement. However, the property is listed as being owned by the City of Monroe and not the Monroe City School Board. Ms. Johnson indicated that more research is needed to discover which body is responsible for the land and building. The lease for the current branch was created around 1963 for a 50-year term. It has since been renewed with the Monroe City School Board. Ms. Johnson mentioned that she and an associate are researching to get more information.

Ms. Green then discussed a point that had been planned for the New Business/Action section of the meeting. Ms. Green asked about a buyer's agreement for Ms. Smith as had been used for Mr. Roark. Mr. Bratton said he felt the agreement should be first given to Ms. Johnson to look over and check on. Ms. Webre said the agreement was more for the benefit of the realtor than the board. The Board discussed if they felt having an agreement would limit their ability to find all available property to look into for a new Carver-McDonald Branch. Mr. Waren suggested a clause be added to the agreement that if another realtor came forward with an available property the board could use them.

The minutes from the previous meeting held on November 13, 2025, were approved on a motion by Ms. Webre, seconded by Ms. Blue, with all present voting in favor of approval except Mr. Bratton who asked that it be noted he abstained since he had been unable to attend the November meeting.

OPPL's monthly reports from the month November 2025 we presented.

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

The Financial Report for November 2025 was approved on a motion by Ms. Webre, seconded by Ms. Craig, with all present voting in favor of approval.

The Personnel Report for November 2025 was approved on a motion by Ms. Craig, seconded by Ms. Blue, with all present voting in favor of approval.

New Business/Action: The election of officers for the Board of Control.

Ms. Webre nominated Mr. Waren for President of the Board but Mr. Waren stated that since he had previously served in the position, he felt someone else should hold it. Mr. Waren and Mr. Bratton nominated Ms. Webre for President. Ms. Webre was elected President of the Library Board of Control on a motion by Mr. Bratton, seconded by Ms. Craig, with all present voting in favor of approval. Ms. Craig was nominated as the Vice President of the Library Board of Control on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Mr. Bratton, with all present voting in favor of approval.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:46pm on a motion by Mr. Waren, seconded by Ms. Webre, with all present voting in favor.

Mr. Darris Waren, Vice President

Nancy Green, Secretary