

**JEFFERSON PARISH LIBRARY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING**

Charles A. Wagner Library – Meeting Room  
6646 Riverside Dr., Metairie, LA 70003

**March 18, 2025  
MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bob Bales, Lisa Conescu, Patricia Cox, Becky Knight and Gordon Wadge

**BOARD MEMBERS PERSENT VIRTUAL:**

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** James Simmons

**LIBRARY STAFF PRESENT:** Irene Lunkin, Melissa Muhoberac, Antoinette Scott and Jessica Styons

**OTHER PARISH STAFF:** Deputy COO Cherreen Gegenheimer and Assistant Parish Attorney Meredith Hearn

**GUEST:** Community Engagement Librarian Erin Korosi, Marketing Manager David Johnson; Network Administrator Ricardo Mesa, EBR Reference Librarian and Chairperson of CAAC Tara Taylor, and Field Supervisor Shane Cardinelle.

Patricia called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m.

Knight/Conescu made a motion to dispense with the reading of the February minutes and accept them as written. Motion carried.

Bob requested the minutes to reflect that Jessica will report on the Library's strategic plan at a future board meeting.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- Jessica introduced Tara Taylor, Chairperson of the Library's Celebrations, Appreciations, and Awards Committee (CAAC). The committee is composed of staff from various departments within the library. This month the CAAC nominated Maintenance Field Supervisor Shane Cardinelle as Library Employee of the Month. Jessica commented that Shane is approachable and always tuned in to the Library's needs. Shane mentioned he was honored to be selected as the March Employee of the Month. Tara mentioned she and CAAC will bring a lot of great things and a positive atmosphere to the Library.
- No formal announcement regarding the Library's millage renewal will be made until after 3/31. Jessica just finished a sound bite video on how the Library serves the community. The millage election is 5/3; early voting for that election will take place at EBR and WBR libraries 4/19 – 4/26. The ballot will include the following renewals: Library's 6.5 mills, Recreation's 10 mills and Drainage's 6 mills.
- EBR Library is now an official early voting site.

- JPAWS recently hosted an event at EBR Library to showcase their Microchip Scanning Station. Over 60 pets were chipped. A Microchip Scanning Station and event will be held at WBR Library soon.
- Tulane University is hosting the New Orleans Book Festival 3/27-3/29. We are allowing them to use EBR and Terrytown library parking lots as pick-up and drop-off sites for the Family Day at the Fest event which is that Saturday, 3/29. JPL staff will be participating in the Book Festival promoting JPL.
- Kanopy, one of our digital content vendors, is temporarily unavailable and patrons are expressing their concerns. We are working to get the contract with Kanopy renewed and have prepared a statement for our marketing team to include in their next email blast. We are referring our patrons to use Hoopla as an alternative until we get Kanopy back.
- We have hired a manager for the Avondale Library. It's likely we will be able to open by the end of April and if the board agrees, we can have the May meeting at Avondale Library.
- Facilities updates include: the chiller replacement project at WBR have been completed; plans and specifications for the Lakeshore roof replacement project have been completed and will go before GAB for approval; and the contractor for the Sculpture Garden at Gretna Library has started the project. During this project, Gretna Library will receive interior and exterior renovations, including new furniture.
- Designs for the new Jefferson Hwy. eResource Library are complete and will go before GAB for approval. The new 4,500 sq. ft. library is designed to have technology and study rooms in lieu of having a full book collection. There are two other JP libraries in close proximity that are full service libraries. Cherreen added the Administration met with the District 3 Councilman and he is on board with these plans.
- The Thomas Jefferson busts have been created and will be unveiled during National Library Week in April. Busts will be sold in the Friends store. Also during National Library Week, we will unveil the new vintage library cards that we planned to make available during the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event.
- Members of the board are invited to join us for our *Cars and Coffee* event on 4/5, from 9:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. Patrons' fancy cars will be on display and the Library's special blend coffee will be available for tasting. Some staff will have their cars on display at the event.
- Community Engagement Librarian Erin Korosi reported the Bluey Bash event at WBR was a success with 350 people in attendance. We received a "cease and desist" letter today from BBC Studios for unauthorized use of the Bluey character on our social media page. Erin reported upcoming children's events include Reading to Rabbits, the rabbits will be brought in by JPAS; events on 4/5 at EBR and WBR during National Autism Week; an Elephant and Piggy party at EBR on 4/6; and a viewing of "Free for All", a documentary about the value of public libraries. The documentary will be streamed by PBS 3/20, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM at EBR.
- Marketing Manager David Johnson announced upcoming adult events such as Android classes for senior citizens and Community Garden Hour at Terrytown where the community come out to work in the garden. David distributed a handout with upcoming events to share.

- Jessica mentioned some our staff will be presenting at the Louisiana Library Association conference in Baton Rouge on Friday, 3/21 at 7:00 PM and invited members to attend. Most of the conference's Friday events will be held at the Hilton Capitol Center. The conference is 3/20-3/22. Jessica also mentioned she is being honored by LLA with the Meritorious Service Award.
- Library Network Administrator Ricardo Mesa gave a presentation on the technology equipment in the new meeting room at Wagner library. Highlights include four 55" monitors synced together; ceiling mounted speakers and microphones; a DVD player; and video conference that allows screen sharing and integrates with Microsoft TEAMS and WebEx. A benefit of having this technology is that it eliminates staff having to travel to meetings. This same type of technology will be installed at the Avondale and Jefferson Hwy. eResource libraries. Cherreen added the library has a very nice color pallet, especially in the new restrooms. Jessica encouraged members to tour the library after the meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Gordon announced he, Lisa and Cherreen were at the Elmwood Business Association Luncheon today, and he heard a lot of positive compliments about how great the Jefferson Parish Library was. He wished Library staff would have been present to hear the compliments, but Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng was the guest speaker and she was very complimentary. He invited the board and inquired if the Library will be participating in the Senior Expo at the Pontchartrain Center on Thursday; 8:30 – 1:00. Gordon gave a shot out to Jessica for being cheerleader for the Krewe of Dolly; the krewe is a ladies groups that promotes literacy. Councilwoman Bohannon's key staff person, John Tolbert, spoke about how the JP Public Schools, YMCA, the Library, and other area businesses can work better together.

The principal of Bissonet Plaza elementary school informed Gordon that the school has a population of about 80% of students with parents who do not speak English. He inquired about the Library offering ESL classes. Erin informed him we offer ESL classes at EBR, Gretna, North Kenner, Terrytown and Wagner libraries. Gordon also inquired if the Library offers Spanish as a second language class. Jessica reported we don't offer SSL classes at this time, but we have a Spanish conversation session that is presented by one of our Outreach staff persons. We also have databases such as Mango that teach Spanish. We also partner with Que Pasa and we promote the library in the Spanish speaking communities.

Bob commented on the positive comment letters about the Murder Mystery program at Grand Isle Library and inquired about the demographics of the participants. Erin informed him people of all ages participate. She added that the game kits are available for loan in our LoT Collection.

The next Library Board meeting is April 15, 2025

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 PM.