

JEFFERSON PARISH LIBRARY BOARD REGULAR MEETING

Dr. Joseph & Constance Carroll Avondale Library – Meeting Room
558 Avondale Garden Road, Avondale, LA 70094

September 16, 2025

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa Conescu, Patricia Cox, Becky Knight, James Simmons, and Gordon Wadge

BOARD MEMBERS PERSENT VIRTUAL: none

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Bob Bales

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

OTHER PARISH STAFF: Assistant Parish Attorney Megan Grantham

GUESTS: Marketing Manager David Johnson and Belle Terre Branch Manager Nicholas Caluda

Patricia called the meeting to order at 4:09 PM.

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- Jessica introduced Belle Terre Library Branch Manager Nicholas Caluda; who also leads JPL's 75th Anniversary Committee with a team of JPL staff. Together, the committee organizes events commemorating the 75th anniversary as well as Library events around the Parish's Bicentennial Anniversary. Nicholas stated he started with JPL as a Library Floater in 2017 and was promoted to Branch Manager last month. He mentioned Belle Terre staff have great ideas and are ready to present new things to the community. Nicholas talked about recent events and upcoming events at Belle Terre that include a registration drive for teen volunteers, Halloween Bingo, and crocheting events. October 18 is Home Movie Day, which is an international annual event. He plans to commemorate the day with an event for people to project and get resources about digitization for film and taped media that they may have at home; we will test our makerspace equipment during this event. Prior to this meeting, he was involved in taking photographs that depict *I learned to use a phone at the library* to make an advertising poster. Other photos will be taken to illustrate the various things you can do at the library. These posters will replace the posters of staff we have posted in the libraries. Patricia commented Nicholas has done an outstanding job in presenting events for the 75th Anniversary. Nicholas thanked her and added he and his team do their best.
- Jessica thanked members for meeting today at the Dr. Joseph & Constance Carroll Avondale Library. Hundreds of people attended the ribbon cutting for the opening of the library. This opening celebration was the most attended one in comparison to other library openings. It was wonderful; James was one of the speakers, Marie and Barbara were there to promote the Friends and did a drawing; and Patricia helped serve refreshments. David mentioned Branch

Manager Evelyn Brown, Jessica, and himself will be interviewed by Bill Wood of WGNO early this Thursday morning at Avondale library. The live cast of the interview will be aired on the news between 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM. He added YMCA will be presenting classes at Avondale library and on October 4, there will be a community open house where NOLA Games on Wheels truck will be on site for the kids to play video games. Storytime and crafts will be done inside the library.

- Councilman Kerner plans to appoint Debra Cooper, a retired Principal, to the Library Board at tomorrow's council meeting. Jessica mentioned she spoke with her prior to the meeting and she seems nice. Debra informed Jessica that she will be able to attend the October meeting, but not the November and December meetings. A resolution to accept the low bidder for the Lakeshore roof project will go before the council as well as other library items.
- Facilities Report: It's likely there will be a ribbon cutting in October for completion of the Gretna Garden/Library Refresh project. The refresh project includes new furniture, mobile shelving units, two new study rooms, new lighting, and freshly painted walls inside the library. The carpet recently arrived; we will schedule a date to close the library for about two weeks for its installation. Construction of the Makerspace at EBR has started. The children's playhouse at Old Metairie Library has been redesigned with a fisheye glass in place of the door and it looks good. We are in transition for using the State Library's Experience Pass platform, their platform has passes to State museums that are not on our platform.
- The Library's budget hearing with the Parish President is this Friday.

Gordon announced he is glad the library embraced YMCA's free Adult Literacy classes and other classes at various libraries and complimented Councilman Lee and his staff for helping advance the programs.

Jessica presented members with millage election voting results for their district and asked them to provide insight on how we can reach the people in the areas where the voting numbers were low. Our goal is do better in reaching everyone to tell them about library services. Both Gordon and James informed Jessica of groups and organizations, particularly on the west bank, that she can make contact with to promote the library. James mentioned he has a contact at the Delgado River City campus where we can place brochures about library services and inform them of the new Avondale library.

PUBLIC REMARKS:

Jacqueline Carroll Jones mentioned we did an excellent job with the ribbon cutting event and presented the Board with a copy of Dr. Joseph & Constance Carroll's biography. She mentioned she is a community organizer for the past 25 years and that Dr. Joseph & Constance Carroll are her parents. She would like to make herself available to help out where needed. David and Jessica invited her to join them in Thursday's interview with Bill Wood of WGNO to speak of her parents. She also mentioned a plaque is being made to hang in the library as requested by her mother, Constance Carroll. The plaque is dedicated to Bernice Allen, age 101, who worked with her family for a long time.

The Board discussed changing the date for completing the Eliminating Sexual Harassment Training and Debra Cooper, the new Board member's participation in the training. Members of the Board voted to move the training to the November meeting if Debra Cooper has completed Eliminating Sexual Harassment Training with another agency this year.

The next Library Board meeting is October 21, 2025

The meeting adjourned at 5:02 PM.