

# **JEFFERSON PARISH LIBRARY BOARD REGULAR MEETING**

East Bank Regional Library – Administrative Conference Room  
4747 W. Napoleon Ave., Metairie, LA 70001

**November 18, 2025**

## **MINUTES**

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

**BOARD MEMBERS PERSENT VIRTUAL:** none

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Debra Cooper and James Simmons

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

**OTHER PARISH STAFF:** Assistant Parish Attorney Meredith Hearn

**GUESTS:** Reference Librarian Deena Bedigian, Associate Leo Castell, Webmaster Trey Green, Administrative Assistant Jeannie Hobbie, Marketing Manager David Johnson, Community Engagement Librarian Erin Korosi and EBR Manager Daniel Perez,

Patricia called the meeting to order at 4:01PM.

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

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- Jessica announced Sam Hankins from our maintenance staff is our October Employee of the Month. He is unable to attend this meeting, but was grateful for the acknowledgement. Most of his working time is spent on the west bank and he is our “boots on the ground” person for WBR. Trey Green was in attendance at this meeting to do a presentation, so he thought, but was surprised when Jessica introduced him and presented him with a certificate as our November Employee of the Month. Trey handles our website and our publications. Jessica mentioned he is “Johnny on the spot” and very responsive. A few of our staff members that nominated him were present to shed light on their choice for nominating him: Deena mentioned he was a pleasure to work with on finding information for our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and print jobs – they will also work together on an archives of our library system; Erin shared he is helpful in creating and printing brochures for SRP and other programs and events; and Daniel mentioned he was the obvious choice as he is one of the most utilized employees in the Library, he works really hard. Daniel also shared a story from his days as the North Kenner Library Manager and how Trey came through to make their Children’s DIY Comic Book program a success. Patricia added he is very helpful to the Friends. Trey thanked everyone for their kind words. He figured since he prepared for a presentation, he’ll give the presentation.
- Trey reported he is working with the Parish Public Information Office on a project make our website compliant under the ADA Website Requirements. The previous requirements were intended for Federal government websites, now all state and local government agencies must comply by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA requirements by April

2026. Our website currently has some accessibility, but it does not meet the requirements of the WCAG Version 2.1 Level AA requirements.

- Jessica introduced Jeannie Hobbie from our business office who will be retiring with a little over 35 years at the end of this month. Handling our bids, resolutions and contracts are just a few duties Jeannie does. She will be missed. Jeannie mentioned she started as the maintenance clerical person with an office at WBR and then moved to the business office at EBR. She mentioned she has saw firsthand how the Parish's contract and resolution routing system changed from a mail and delivery process to using software systems. She also mentioned she is willing to come back to help out if needed. Meredith added she works with Jeannie often on Library legal matters.
- Jessica reported a few of our peer library systems' millages were up for renewals. While West Baton Rouge and St. John the Baptist Parish libraries millage passed, East Baton Rouge's did not. They will be able to have their community vote for their millage again in the spring; if it fails again, they will have one year with no funds. This is an example of why millage elections are done early.
- Jessica attended ALA's CORE Conference in Denver, CO last week. She reported it was interesting and there was a lot of talk around AI.
- JPL has been in the media a lot lately. Last month David and Brigid were on FOX 8 to talk about the Quilting Expo; David and Friends President Marie were on WGNO to promote the Friends Big Book Sale; and Jessica and the JPAWS Director were on FOX 8 to discuss Next-Level partnerships and innovations. News articles about JPL includes a story about ongoing ukulele lessons at EBR and an article on our upcoming National Cat Day program co-hosted with JPAWS.
- Board members were invited to attend the Friend's Coffee event to thank volunteers of the Friends tomorrow at 10:00 AM. The Friends will present the Library with a check at the event.
- Facilities Report: Lakeshore roof project will commence after the contract is signed; the library will have to close for part of the installation. We coordinated with JPSO to house drone platforms on the roof tops of Avondale, Harahan, and Wagner libraries and support their efforts in reducing crime. Makerspace construction is coming along. A ribbon cutting date has not been set for the Gretna Library sculpture garden and refresh project; members are encouraged to visit.
- Last month library staff and staff from the parish president's office met with architects to present ideas for the design plans for the WBR renovation/addition project. Its possible staff may go to Dallas mid-December to tour a library designed by the architect to visualize ideas for the WBR project. We want to be sure to focus on being patron centered, have space to bring the community together and space for programs, have more study rooms, and have an overall space that is ADA accessible.
- Jessica introduced Leo Castell, EBR Associate and coordinator of the Cars & Coffee event, which was supported by councilpersons. The Parish PIO was there with their drone and produced a video of the event; Jessica will send a link to the video after the meeting. Leo reported he was pleased with the turnout and he received positive feedback. About 130 people attended and 70 American Vintage cars participated in the event. He said he ran out of the Library's special

coffee blend but is ready to start planning next year's event. Jessica added Leo worked with a local coffee brewery to create the *75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Library Blend* coffee. Patricia reported the Friends just ordered more of the blend to sell in the store.

- Community Engagement Librarian Erin Korosi announced upcoming events that included next week's *Grinchmas Gala* at Lafitte Library; and in December a *Best Bank Holiday Party* at WBR and *Yule Fest* at EBR. Also in December, Adult Programming Manager Chris Smith scheduled a lot of musical events from various groups. The programming team will take a break near the end of December and resume programming in January starting with a *Jane Austen Birthday Celebration* at the branches. The staff are excited about the event.
- Marketing Manager David Johnson reported he recently returned from the Library Marketing and Communications Conference where he connected with library marketing peers, even a few from the New Orleans area. He mentioned there was a lot of talk about AI and how small libraries can make videos using AI. He also mentioned he attended a great seminar about library card sign up. Attendees from across the country were in attendance. Jessica added AI results are not always accurate as they are ideas generated from information and resources on the internet.

In the event there is no quorum for the December meeting, members discussed the scheduled date for the January meeting.

Conescu/Knight made a motion to approve January 20, 2026 as the first Board meeting for 2026. Motion carried; all in favor.

Patricia asked members to email her if they are interested in serving on the Nominating Committee to nominate members for 2026 officers.

The next Library Board meeting is December 16, 2025.

**PUBLIC REMARKS:**

None

The meeting adjourned at 5:04 PM.