

**JEFFERSON PARISH LIBRARY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING**

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

**August 18, 2026
MINUTES**

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Debra Cooper, Jackie Jones, and Gordon Wadge

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

OTHER PARISH STAFF: Assistant Parish Attorney Meredith Hearn

GUESTS: Community Engagement Librarian Erin Korosi; Retired WBR Reference Librarian Kshama Misra; Outreach Librarian Bridget Johnston; and Library Associates Isabella Bodin, Michael Scott, and Savannah Stephenson

Patricia called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM.

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- Community Engagement Librarian Erin Korosi gave a statistical overview on the Summer Reading Challenge event. She feels the SRC has reached a plateau in comparison to last's years registration and completion statistics. She and her team met with branch managers today to discuss the event and ideas on how to increase registration and completion numbers for next year. Outside of the regional locations, Belle Terre followed by Lakeshore and River Ridge had the highest number of registrations. The number of programs and attendance at the programs increased from last year. Erin displayed photos of the various programming events that took place in our branches noting that the Dino Experience and visits from Reptile Krewe and Nature on the Geaux were a success. About 100 people attended our first Adult After Hours event. The 90's themed event was a success and we plan to host another one. Jessica added someone from the State Library attended the event as JPL was the only library to host an event like this. Erin also reported we will celebrate National Good Neighbor Day on September 28, by coordinating with branch managers, Makerspace staff, and our outreach team to host community events at various branches that week. We will roll out our program to allow patrons to register for library cards online during National Library Week which is in September as well.
- Jessica introduced Kshama Misra who recently retired as one of WBR's Reference Librarians. She started with the library in 1992 at Live Oak and worked at Westwego, Wagner, and WBR libraries. Kshama commented she misses the library and has seen the library evolve so much adding that Jessica's leadership is awesome.
- Bridget Johnston is our July Employee of the Month. She started as an Associate in 2022 and was one of the MLIS graduates to be celebrated at the first Friends MLIS Graduate Reception. She is creative and has been learning to speak Spanish on her own. Bridget commented she

changed her career late in life and being a librarian is her dream career. She is glad she made the change.

- Floater Library Associate Savannah Stephenson was praised in a Patron Comment Letter for assistance she provided in helping a patron obtain a caseworker to find a home. Savannah said it was touching that the patron came back to the library to extend her gratitude for the assistance she provided. She added she used her knowledge as a former social worker to guide the patron in the right direction.
- Recent MLIS graduates Isabella Bodin and Michael Scott were honored and presented with a certificate from the Library, a certificate from the Parish President, and a goodie bag from the Friends to celebrate their graduation.
- Avondale library closed Monday due to an power outage. Baby Café (lactation coaching) started this week at Rosedale library. Jessica appeared on the news with American Heart Association's Executive Director Correta LaGarde where they spoke about the blood pressure cuffs available at JP libraries; Jessica will share the video with the board. Culture Collision is being held September 2, 7:30 PM, at LSU-UNO. This free event allows organizations to network with other culture organization; staff from JPL will be attending.
- Facilities Report: Terrytown's roof is in the process of being repaired; the A/C at Harahan will need to be replaced; and the Regional libraries were opened extended hours (9 AM to 8 PM) this past Saturday and Sunday to allow people to come in from the heat – bottled water was available at both libraries.
- The WBR design plans are being scaled down to fit our budget. We will be eliminating some of the additional study rooms. The library will likely close for one year when construction starts.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bob mentioned he saw in the minutes where a board member inquired about voter registration and asked if we have such material available in the library for patrons. Jessica informed him in addition to the printed materials he saw, information is available in our reference section and we can help patrons access this information online. Occasionally we have groups come to the library to conduct voter registration drives and that a representative from the Office of Registrar of Voters was recently here to distribute such information. Jessica added we can post verbiage in our newsletter reminding patrons when voter registration closes.

Bob said he read the Board's bylaws and have questions about the archives. He'd like to know the Board's position on the archives and asked Jessica if it can be discussed at a future meeting.

Bob asked where were we with our budget cycle and inquired about Board input as it relates to the budget. Jessica informed him our budget is being reviewed by Parish Administration and has not been finalized yet. Patricia added the Board reviews the budget after it's been approved. Bob countered he is talking about the Board being able to review the budget and make recommendations relative to the budget as the language states in the bylaws. He asked Jessica if she can address that statement at a future meeting by providing the board with highlights of what is included in our budget. Jessica stated she can do that.

Lisa mentioned she thought the archives was moved from under the library due to no climate controlled space for the archives' materials. Bob mentioned it is in the bylaws and asked Jessica if she can look into it. If it is the responsibility of the Board then the Board should be looking into it. If the verbiage in the ordinance and bylaws are obsolete, then it should be removed. Patricia suggested the Board form a committee to review the verbiage about the archives. Bob countered he thinks Jessica should check into it before the Board deems it obsolete.

Bob stated after reading the bylaws and having read the state statutes and the parish ordinances, he did a brief scan of the 10 largest library systems in the state looking at what their public facet for fundraising and suggests the Board revisit the language in the ordinance and bylaws as it relates to fundraising. Bob suggested the Board form a committee to review the parish ordinances and state laws and suggest changes if necessary, look into what opportunities we have and constraints we have as it relates to fundraising, and scan other library systems in the state to see what they are doing with regards to fundraising. Bob volunteered to serve on the committee and stated someone from our legal team, Friends members, and the library director should also be on the committee. Becky stated she does not think the Board's purpose is to do fundraising, Bob said it is. Meredith mentioned our Friends organization is setup to do fundraising and accept gifts and donations. She also read the section about solicitation of unconditional gifts from the ordinance and informed Bob the distinction of the Boards matters as our Board is an Advisory Board and other library systems in the state have Boards of Control. How we do things is not how other library systems does things.

Bob made to motion to form a committee to review the authorizing language and responsibilities of the Board relative to the bylaws; to review practices across the state of the 10 largest cities and to review and evaluate the findings with the board and make recommendations. Motion failed.

1 Yay

3 No

Bob stated this would be his last meeting. Lisa recommended we wait to get a report from Meredith on what the Board is allowed to do. Bob countered he will be contacting his councilperson that appointed him to the Library Board of his resignation.

Meredith informed the Board that Library Board meetings are public meetings. An agenda is prepared and posted for the public to view and attend the meeting to give comment if they'd like. She asked members to inform Irene or Jessica of topics they would like to be discussed at least a week prior to the meeting to allow staff the opportunity to prepare for the meeting.

Patricia stated discussing the bylaws, the ordinance creating the Library Board, and the archives will be put on the agenda for next month's meeting.

The next Library Board meeting is September 15, 2026.

Patricia stated the Board has been happy with Jessica's directorship and the direction of the Library.

The meeting adjourned at 5:32 PM.