

Washington Parish Library
Library Board of Control
Bogalusa Branch
Thursday, February 20, 2025, 5pm
Meeting Minutes

- I. Call to order by President Suzie Betts at 5:02pm
- II. Roll Call by the Director, Mrs. Sonnet Ireland
Board Members Present: Ms. Kewanda August, Mrs. Suzie Betts, Mr. Derek Dantin, Ms. Penny Moses, Ms. Emma Ross, and Mr. Perry Talley.
Guest: Mr. Michael Golrick, Assistant State Librarian
Special note: Ms. Kewanda August arrived at the start of training around 5:06pm.
Mr. Derek Dantin left the meeting at 5:57pm. At all times a quorum was maintained.
- III. Invocation by Mr. Derek Dantin.
- IV. Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Perry Talley
- V. State Training for Library Board members with Mr. Michael Golrick, Assistant State Librarian
Mr. Golrick reviewed the purposes and functions of a Library Board. He clarified the duties and responsibilities of the Director versus those of the Board and its members. He reviewed various laws that apply to Libraries and their Boards, and he answered many questions from Board members, staff, and the public.

*Mr. Dantin left the meeting at this point for a prior engagement.
Training ended around 6:15pm. A short 15 minute break was taken between the end of the training session and the continuation of the meeting. Meeting resumes at 6:34pm*

- VI. Approval of Agenda
 - A. A motion was made by Mr. Talley to amend the agenda by adding item F to New Business: a resolution requesting that the Council authorize the inclusion of the library millage in the fall election; seconded by Ms. Moses.
Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes
Ms. Kewanda August: Yes
Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent
Ms. Penny Moses: Yes
Ms. Emma Ross: Yes
Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Motion passed.

- B. A motion was made by Ms. Moses to approve the amended agenda; seconded by Ms. August.
Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes
Ms. Kewanda August: Yes
Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent
Ms. Penny Moses: Yes
Ms. Emma Ross: Yes
Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Motion passed.

VII. Approval of Minutes from January 16, 2025 meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Talley to approve the minutes from the previous meeting on January 16, 2025 at the Franklinton Branch; seconded by Ms. August.

Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes

Ms. Kewanda August: Yes

Ms. Emma Ross: Yes

Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent

Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Ms. Penny Moses: Yes

Motion passed.

VIII. New Business

A. Resolution to Replace Technology

Because all of the computers were purchased at one time in 2019, the Library needs to replace all of the machines at one time. Mrs. Ireland explained that she is working on finding a way to stagger them going forward; however, with the end of support for Windows 10, the Library has no choice but to purchase computers that can operate on Windows 11. Mrs. Ireland explained that a resolution is not really needed for this, but she wanted to ensure that she would have no problems making this purchase when it is time.

A motion was made by Mr. Talley to adopt the resolution; seconded by Ms. Ross.

Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes

Ms. Kewanda August: Yes

Ms. Emma Ross: Yes

Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent

Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Ms. Penny Moses: Yes

Motion passed.

B. New Part Time Position at Franklinton

Mrs. Ireland is requesting the Board approve an additional part-time position at the Franklinton Branch. The Bogalusa Branch has three part-time staff positions, while the Franklinton Branch has two part-time staff positions. In the last few years, the usage at the Franklinton Branch has increased enough to warrant adding a third part-time position. This would also alleviate the extra pressure on Headquarters staff who often fill in unexpectedly when there is a shortage at the Franklinton Branch. Mrs. Ireland believes that this is a necessity until the Library can afford more full-time positions.

A motion was made by Mr. Talley to add this position; seconded by Ms. Moses.

Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes

Ms. Kewanda August: Yes

Ms. Emma Ross: Yes

Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent

Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Ms. Penny Moses: Yes

Motion passed.

C. New Part Time Position at Headquarters

Mrs. Ireland is requesting the Board approve an additional part-time position in Headquarters. She has been working to readjust job duties throughout the system in an effort to update positions and make them more efficient and effective. While Mrs. Ireland believes that there is a need for a full-time position in Headquarters, she would rather focus on having an additional full-time person at each of the large branches first. In the meantime, it is more cost-effective to have an additional part-timer at Headquarters.

A motion was made by Ms. Moses to add this position; seconded by Ms. Ross.

Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes

Ms. Kewanda August: Yes

Ms. Emma Ross: Yes

Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent

Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Ms. Penny Moses: Yes

Motion passed.

D. 2025 Holiday/Closure Schedule

Mrs. Ireland is requesting the authority to determine if any of the branches have enough staff to open on Friday, March 21st. The Board approved closing that day for all staff to be able to attend the Louisiana Library Association/Southeastern Library Association Conference in Baton Rouge as a second staff day this year. However, there are a few staff who did not wish to attend. Mrs. Ireland would like the Board's permission to use her judgment in this matter in early March.

A motion was made by Ms. Moses to grant Mrs. Ireland this authority; seconded by Ms. August.

Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes

Ms. Kewanda August: Yes

Ms. Emma Ross: Yes

Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent

Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Ms. Penny Moses: Yes

Motion passed.

E. Fines and Fees Policy

Mrs. Ireland is requesting the Board approve a policy that lists the prices of the fines and fees that the Washington Parish Library charges, such as those for printing, faxing, and overdue technology. The policy was not included in the packet, so the prices were repeated verbally and approved by the Board. The written policy will be brought to the next meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Talley to accept these prices in the policy; seconded by Ms. Moses.

Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes

Ms. Kewanda August: Yes

Ms. Emma Ross: Yes

Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent

Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Ms. Penny Moses: Yes

Motion passed.

F. Resolution Requesting the Council include the Millage on the Fall Ballot
During his training session with the Board, Mr. Golrick mentioned the process for putting a library millage renewal on the ballot. We learned that the Library Board is expected to pass a resolution requesting that the Council place the millage renewal on the ballot. It was discussed, and the Board learned that the Council was planning to discuss this in the meeting on Monday, March 10th. Since there would not be another Board meeting before then, Mrs. Ireland quickly drafted a resolution for the Board to consider. It requests that the Washington Parish Council include the Washington Parish Library millage on the ballot for the regular Fall election.

A motion was made by Ms. Ross to pass this resolution; seconded by Mr. Talley.

Mrs. Suzie Betts: Yes

Ms. Kewanda August: Yes

Ms. Emma Ross: Yes

Mr. Derek Dantin: Absent

Mr. Perry Talley: Yes

Ms. Penny Moses: Yes

Motion passed.

IX. Old Business

A. Director's Review

The Board opted to delay the review until the next meeting on Thursday, March 27th.

B. Branch Building Updates

Mrs. Ireland explained the current efforts to bring both large branches up to code for the fire alarm system. Washington Parish Government Maintenance has been kind enough to work on the quotes for this project and for replacing Enon's ramp. Thomas is almost completed, and Mrs. Ireland is excited to show the Board and the public the revamped branch—particularly how staff have rearranged the furniture to make the branch feel larger inside. Mrs. Ireland hopes to replace some of the furniture over the next few years. Once the Library is able to complete these projects, Mrs. Ireland will be able to focus more on the Angie branch. The Angie Branch is no longer infested with termites, but Mrs. Ireland recommended using an architect to create the scope of work. She is also hoping that the outside bookdrop at Bogalusa will be installed soon.

X. Director's Report

Mrs. Ireland gave a verbal report on the status of various grants and projects, such as the Library using a grant from Proliteracy to subscribe to We All Can Read, a program that helps adults learn to read. The Library has 20 seats that can be used by the public for free. It only requires an email address to sign up. Mrs. Ireland and Ms. Aerial Mathews also highlighted recent outreach efforts by the staff, including the Administration team.

XI. Announcements

- A. Once the Thomas Branch is ready to reopen, the Branch will host a grand reopening. This will be advertised ahead of time. A date cannot be set until we have finished returning the books to the shelves.
- B. The Library has received a Proliteracy grant for an adult literacy program. With it, the Library has subscribed to the We All Can Read program, which can be accessed from any computer, tablet, or smartphone once the Library registers that user's email address.
- C. The Library is planning open houses for all of the branches and encourages Board Members to attend.
- D. Ms. Moses thanked the Board candidates, Ms. Abby Kemp and Mr. Nathan Pierce, for attending the training and the meeting. She looks forward to either one of them joining the Board and making the Board even better.
- E. Mr. Talley invited both candidates to introduce themselves publicly.
- F. Mr. Talley would like representatives from the Board to request a meeting with the Washington Parish Council Infrastructure Committee with the goal of working out some of the issues the Library has faced with Parish Government.

XII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Moses to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Talley.

All present Board Members agreed. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.