



**New Orleans Public Library**  
Regular Board Meeting  
Main Library Board Room  
Tuesday, November 9, 2021  
4:30 p.m.

**NOTE REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENT:**

The legal purpose of open meetings is to allow individuals to observe and participate in the deliberations of public bodies. Meetings of public bodies must be open to the public unless closed pursuant to a statutory exception, such as set forth in R.S. 42:16 – 42:18, which authorizes closed executive sessions. Public bodies must provide an opportunity for public comment prior to action on the agenda item upon which a vote is to be taken. The governing body may adopt reasonable rules and restrictions regarding the comment period. R.S. 42:14, requires each public body, except school boards, conducting a meeting that is subject to the notice requirement of R.S. 42:19(A), to allow a public comment period prior to action on an agenda item upon which a vote is to be taken.

**NOTICE OF TELECONFERENCE MEETING:**

This meeting is being conducted via teleconference per Executive Order 59-JBE-2020 Section 2.C, which states: “All state agencies, boards and commissions, and local political subdivisions of the state shall continue to provide for attendance at essential governmental meetings via teleconference or video conference and such attendance shall be allowed during the pendency of this emergency. All efforts shall be made to provide for observation and input by members of the public. Before any meeting conducted pursuant to this section, the state agency, boards and commission, or local political subdivision of the state shall first provide a written certification that it will otherwise be unable to operate due to quorum requirements. Such certification shall be posted at the same time and in the same manner as the agenda for the meeting. Nothing in this order shall be interpreted to waive any notice requirements.”

**MINUTES**

- I. **Call to Order**
  - A. Board Chair, Vonda Flentroy-Rice called the November 9, 2021 Regular Board Meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.
  
- II. **Roll Call — (4:36 p.m.)**

Board Members Present: Bill Setoon, Vonda Flentroy-Rice, Dana Henry, Kathleen Coverick, Justin Ross-Hillard

Staff Present: Dr. Gabriel Morley, Michel Thompson, Tammy Hanson, Jane LeGros, Emily Painton
  
- III. **Public Comments — (4:36 p.m.)**
  - A. There were no public comments
  
- IV. **Action Item: Approval of Consent Agenda — (4:37 p.m.)**

- A. Review of September 7<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee minutes
- B. Review of draft September 14<sup>th</sup> Regular Board Meeting minutes
- C. Review of September 28<sup>th</sup> Special Board Meeting minutes
  - 1. Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Kathleen Coverick and seconded by Justin Ross-Hillard. Motion was approved unanimously.

V. **Information Items -- (4:38 p.m.)**

- A. Friends of NOPL Update (Dixon Stetler)
  - 1. A ribbon cutting ceremony for the opening of the Algiers bookstore is on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The Algiers staff has planned a Fall Festival that includes kids crafts, a gourde scavenger hunt, and raffles and prizes. The Foundation Board, Friends of NOPL, City Council, The Algiers Economic Development Foundation, and the NOPL Board of Directors are all invited. The New Aurora Saxophone Ensemble will play. VIP members are welcome from 10 to 11 a.m. and the general public are welcome from 11 am. To 2 p.m. Fact sheets on the millage will be provided.
- B. NOPL Foundation Update – (Demetric Mercadel)
  - 1. The courts have concluded the Mayfield/Markham case and it is not behind us. The Foundation is now ready to begin fundraising for the NOPL.
  - 2. The funding that the Foundation will give the millage PAC is delayed due to tax questions.
- C. Executive Director Update – (Dr. Gabriel Morley)
  - 1. FEMA is still taking relief applications at the NOPL until Thanksgiving.
  - 2. The finance committee requested that a decision on the new MLK location be postponed until after the millage election.
  - 3. The Corpus Christie archdiocese agree to the lease terms for the new REACH center so that endeavor is moving forward.
  - 4. NIX ADA construction continues and when it is complete, we will work on the heating system. We anticipate opening before Christmas.
  - 5. If board members have suggestions for the new NOPL website, contact Dr. Morley or Jane LeGros.
  - 6. NOPL was awarded \$220,000 from the Emergency Connectivity Fund to purchase 500 tablets with keyboards. They are Wi-Fi capable and available for patrons to check out after Thanksgiving. Individuals will need to sign an affidavit that the tablet will be used for educational purposes. Check out periods are anywhere from 11 to 17 months.
- D. 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Performance Report – (Jane LeGros)
  - 1. We have a 40% increase in physical circulations and digital circulations are up 18%.
  - 2. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2020 we began 45-minute in-person computer usage so in comparison to this year, there is a vast increase this year (354%). This is the same with in-person visits.
  - 3. Number of programs and attendance is up from last year (55%).
  - 4. We have 4,000 new library accounts (up 24% from 2020)
  - 5. Mr. Settoon noticed that digital circulation is much greater than print circulation. Ms. LeGros responded that this is due to the limited in-person allowance due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020.

- E. Budget Department Update – (Michel Thompson)
1. We received \$18.9 million at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter which is slightly over 100% of what was budgeted.
  2. Personnel costs are \$8.4 million (64% of our budgeted). Still low because hiring freeze was in place.
  3. Our operating budget is \$3.7 million (48% of our budgeted).
  4. We have encumbered approximately 85% or \$6.5 million but have only paid out roughly 53%.
  5. \$630,000 remain in the trust fund balance. Ms. Thompson is working with the facilities director to procure building equipment and with the I/T Director to purchase updated computers.
  6. Mr. Settoon inquired whether the NOPL has filled most position since the hiring freeze was lifted this past summer. Ms. Thompson responded that we are currently filling many position and continue to do so.

VI. **Vote to Approve 2022 Holiday Closures- (4:55 p.m.)**

- ◆ New Year's Day – Saturday, January 1
  - ◆ New Year's Day (*observed*) – Monday, January 3
  - ◆ Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Monday, January 17
  - ◆ Mardi Gras Day – Tuesday, March 1
  - ◆ Additional Mardi Gras closings, TBA
  - ◆ Good Friday – Friday, April 15
  - ◆ Memorial Day – Monday, May 30
  - ◆ Juneteenth (*observed*) – Monday, June 20
  - ◆ Independence Day – Monday, July 4
  - ◆ Labor Day – Monday, September 5
  - ◆ Election Day -- Tuesday, November 8
  - ◆ Thanksgiving Eve – All locations close at 5 p.m. – Wednesday, November 23
  - ◆ Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 24
  - ◆ Veterans Day (*observed*) – Friday, November 25
  - ◆ Christmas Eve (*observed*) – Friday, November 23
  - ◆ Christmas Eve – Saturday, December 24
  - ◆ Christmas Day – Sunday, December 25
  - ◆ Christmas Day (*observed*) – Monday, December 26
  - ◆ New Year's Eve (*observed*) – Friday, December 23
  - ◆ New Year's Eve – Saturday, December 31
- A. Ms. Flentroy-Rice made a motion to approve the proposed 2022 holiday closure schedule and Mr. Ross-Hillard seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

VII. **Discussion Items (4:57 p.m.)**

- A. Millage Update (Dana Henry)
1. The Yes! PAC has been fully staffed with Ron Nabonne as chair. Emails and phone calls seeking donation requests will begin on November 15. Questions on

what the millage supports should be directed to Dr. Morley. Mr. Henry will continue to work as a liaison between the NOPL Board and the Yes! PAC.

B. Strategic Plan Update (Dr. Gabriel Morley)

1. We want to ensure that the public knows the millage is a renewal that will not only continue to fund basic operations, but also our strategic planning objectives. We continue to hire the people needed to continue those objectives. Meeting will take place in the coming week to finalize their strategies for completing those goals.
2. Mr. Settoon asked Mr. Henry if the December election will have anything else on the ballot. Mr. Henry responded that a housing measure is also on the ballot.

C. Filming Production Policy (Jane LeGros)

1. The Latter branch was recently closed for four days for filming enabling us to procure \$28,000 for building updates. Additionally, there were also some permanent updates done such as new lighting and window blinds. Realizing that Latter is being suggested as a filming location, we need to adopt a standard policy that dictates what can and cannot be changed/updated, how often and when the library can remain closed and what monetary compensation is appropriate. Thus, an attached draft policy is proposed.
2. A photography policy has been added as well.
3. Mr. Settoon commented that Irvin Mayfield threw himself a 30<sup>th</sup> birthday party at Latter.
4. Ms. Coverick asked if short notices would be allowed if compelled by monetary compensation. Ms. LeGros responded that each project would be assessed as a case-by-case basis.
5. Ms. Flentroy-Rice inquired if there may be other libraries with similar policies that serve as a template for ours. Ms. LeGros responded that we did look at policies from Fulton County and others that are comparable to ours.

VIII. **Adjournment**

- A. Ms. Flentroy-Rice made a motion to adjourn the November 9, 2021 regular board meeting. Motion was seconded by Mr. Henry. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.