



New Orleans Public Library
Regular Board Meeting
ZOOM Teleconference
Tuesday, March 8, 2022
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.

PUBLIC COMMENT IS LIMITED TO TWO MINUTES PER INDIVIDUAL

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 March 8, 2022 regular board meeting to order at 4:40 p.m.
Board Member Present: Vonda Flentroy-Rice, Andrea Neighbours, Kathleen Coverick, Raquel Dufauchard, Phala Kimbrough-Mire, Justin Ross-Hilliard, Alexis Parent-Ferrouillet, Daniel Tapia
NOPL Staff Present: Emily Painton, Michel Thompson, Tammy Hanson
Foundation Staff Present: Demetric Mercadel
- II. **Roll Call (4:40 p.m.)**
- III. **Public Comments (4:42 p.m.)**
 - A. There were no public comments

IV. **Action Item: Approval of Consent Agendas (4:42 p.m.)**

- A. Approve January 18th Regular Board Meeting minutes
- B. Approve February 12th Special Board Meeting minutes
- C. Review Executive Committee February 22, 2022 meeting minutes
 - 1. Ms. Flentroy-Rice moved to approve all consent agendas and Ms. Coverick seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

V. **Information Items (4:43 p.m.)**

- A. NOPL Foundation Report
 - 1. The Foundation board's next meeting is on March 10th. Ms. Mercadel congratulated the board and staff for the millage passing. She looks forward to working together this year.
- B. Executive Director Update
 - 1. Dixon Stetler has resigned her position at the Friends of NOPL. Louise Saenz taking place as interim executive director.
 - 2. Many of our librarians are attending the PLA conference in Portland March 21-25 in person and virtually. Ms. Painton is attending the pre-conference and will meet with the directors of the Urban Library Council.
 - 3. The digital literacy librarian and workforce development positions have been filled. A new Youth Services librarian is starting at ENO at end of March. This position oversees children's programming, collection development, early literacy, and story time.
 - 4. Staff surveys are being developed in order to improve our organizational culture. This feedback will direct the following surveys. The initial surveys will lead to interest surveys to gauge where staff can be placed from within. It will also give us an idea of the goals and interests staff have and if they plan on seeking promotion.
 - 5. Marketing has added a comment box to the intranet for staff suggestions, compliments, criticism, etc. The answers will be kept confidential.
 - 6. Nix is almost complete. The ADA accessible lift is done, but there is a leaking roof. Not sure how long it was like this. Found out through email. Working with Capitol Projects. However, at this point we need to do an emergency bid process because as we get more rain, we risk more damage to library property. Thus, the reopening of Nix will be delayed until the roof is fixed. Alvar is still doing curbside. We are still looking for a contractor to fix the termite damage to the bathroom.
 - 7. A staff member expressed concern about materials possibly containing asbestos at the Mid-City Library. We reached out to the building owner and he assured us that there an asbestos abatement was completed in 1994. We requested the owner do an air and material test to be safe. Once we have those results, we may be able to reopen. We are still waiting for the building owner to respond about the testing.
 - 8. All library locations are closing for a major upgrade to our cataloging system, Polaris. Because this upgrade effects all library services, use of computers will not be possible. If the upgrade is complete by Friday, we are planning staff teambuilding/training/meetings, etc.

9. Ms. Flentroy-Rice asked what the next step is after the bid process for the Nix roof repairs. Ms. Painton responded that we had to produce an emergency purchase memo, then request a pre-approval to proceed from the Chief Procurement Officer. Once the building manager meets with the three contractors and they submit bids, we state what bid won and why and attach the emergency purchase memo to it. Once that is complete, Ms. Thompson will enter it into the system and notify the chief procurement officer who will then sign it. We hope to combine other damages from the leaking roof to the PO.

C. Financial Report

1. For the month of January, there are no posted income because property taxes are not due until January 31st. Mid to late March is when we will see posted income.
2. Salaries are \$1.1 million which is normal. Other operating expenses are at \$182,000. Total expenses for January is \$1.2 million. Purchase orders are slowly coming in. Our acquisitions manager, Mat Bowers, keeps our subscription services up to date.
3. Trust money has increased slightly from the end of 2021. Ms. Thompson is looking into how we can roll over interest monies into the millage account to zero those dollars out.
4. Ms. Thompson added a slide to show the projected budget per strategic pillar that will also demonstrate spending. A major expense is personnel costs.
5. The 'Personnel' category on the pie chart has changed to 'Customer Service' to reflect the work staff does.
6. The vacant CVS is the preferred site for the new MLK Jr. branch. Our realtor suggested we get an appraisal of the building. The owners are asking for \$4 million to purchase or \$16 per square foot for a 10-year lease. Purchasing the site would mean we could manage the building better because our hours and repairs would not be dictated by a building owner. The first step is soliciting bids from appraisers. Once this is complete, we can decide if purchasing or renting is most lucrative. At the next meeting, we can have a discussion on how to do the allocation of the fund balance. With approximately \$14 million in the fund balance, 50% would be for savings, 25% for technology, and 25% for one-time building purchases. An ordinance will need to be written giving the board the authority to change these percentages as the need arises such as if the funds are not all needed in a category.
7. Ms. Neighbours asked if one-time building expenses are for repairs or building purchases. Ms. Thompson responded that it could be a number of things such as equipment, but the board needs to approve anything over \$150,000.
8. Ms. Neighbours asked if building expenses would include doing an archive location study. Ms. Thompson replied that it would not at this time.

VI. Discussion Items (4:48 p.m.)

A. Hiring Rate for Librarians Update

1. The board approved the rate increase at the January board meeting and Ms. Flentroy-Rice submitted it to Civil Service who has approved it. It is now at City Council for approval.

B. Executive Director Search

1. Ms. Flentroy-Rice and Mr. Henry met with Mayor Cantrell and Emily Wolf about the process of finding a new Executive Director. Ms. Kimbrough-Mire agreed to chair the search committee. More volunteers are needed to fill the search committee. Ms. Neighbours asked what serving on the committee would entail. Ms. Flentroy-Rice responded that the committee would decide on the search process and to give the rest of the board updates. Ms. Dufauchard, Ms. Neighbours, and Ms. Coverick volunteered for the search committee. Ms. Coverick asked if there is an established timeline. Ms. Flentroy-Rice replied that there is not. Ms. Kimbrough-Mire added that since an interim Director is in place, there is no urgency. The committee will meet to establish a reasonable timeline. Ms. Kimbrough-Mire will contact the rest of the committee to set a date for the first meeting.

C. Committee Assignments

1. Ms. Flentroy-Rice asked members their committee assignment preferences. Responses to volunteer are as follows:
 - Search Committee: Chair, Phala Kimbrough-Mire, Raquel Dufauchard, Andrea Neighbours, Kathleen Coverick
 - Strategic Planning: Andrea Neighbours
 - Justin Ross-Hilliard and Alexis Parent-Ferrouillet volunteered to fill in any gaps.

VII. **Attachments**

- A. Board Packet

VIII. **Adjournment**

- A. Ms. Flentroy-Rice moved to adjourn. Mr. Ross-Hilliard seconded the motion. The May 8, 2022 regular board meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.