



Livingston Parish Library Board of Control  
Regular Meeting November 19, 2024

## Minutes

The Livingston Parish Library Board of Control met in a regular session on November 19, 2024. The meeting took place at the Main Branch, located at 20390 Iowa Street, Livingston, LA 70754.

### 1. Call to Order

Board President, Ronnie Bencaz called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

### 2. Roll Call

Present: Ronnie Bencaz, Shalisha Labat, Kathy deGeneres, Larry Davis, Abby Crosby, Steve Bernard, DeWanna Christian, Summer Smith

Absent:

Also Present: Michelle Parrish (Director), Dustin Cotton (Assistant Director of Branch Services), Chris Moody (Parish Attorney), and David Gray (Public Information Officer)

### 3. Approval of Minutes

- a. August 13, 2024 – Special Meeting
- b. September 17, 2024 – Regular Meeting

MOTION to accept minutes from the last meetings made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Shalisha Labat

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

#### 4. Public Comments on Agenda Items

No public comments at this time.

#### 5. Director's Report

##### a. 2024 January – October Library Usage Statistics

Ms. Michelle Parrish, Director, informed the board of statistics across all branches as of October 2024. These statistics included branch visits, physical circulation, computer and wi-fi, meeting rooms, study rooms, discovery mobile, community events, and interlibrary loans.

##### b. Facility Maintenance Updates

Ms. Parrish discussed the erosion issue at the Albany-Springfield branch. She said a rendering will be available soon so the board can see what is anticipated before deciding to solicit bids on the project.

#### 6. Special Orders

##### a. Election of Livingston Parish Library Board of Control Officers for 2025

###### i. Elect Board President

Mr. Bencaz reads the agenda item for 6a.

Abby Crosby nominated Larry Davis as Chair, seconded by Dewanna Christian.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION made by Kathy DeGeneres, who nominated Shalisha Labat as President, seconded by Steve Bernard.

Vote on SUBSTITUTE MOTION

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Bernard

Nays: Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith

Absent:

Abstain:

A motion to elect Shalisha Labat as President failed on a vote of 4-4.

Vote on nomination made by Ms. Crosby

Yeas: Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith

Nays: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Bernard

Absent:

Abstain:

A motion to elect Larry Davis as Chair failed on a vote of 4-4.

Mr. Bencaz informs the board that a President must be chosen at this meeting, so he asks if they would like to move this agenda item to the end of the meeting.

MOTION to table election of President to the end of the meeting made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Summer Smith

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

ii. Elect Board Vice President

MOTION to table election of Vice-President to the end of the meeting made by Summer Smith, seconded by Shalisha Labat

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

b. Discussion & Approval: To approve the adjusted FY 2024 Operating and Capital Outlay/Projects Budgets

Ms. Parrish informs the board of the adjusted FY 2024 Operating and Capital Outlay budgets. She states which budgets were amended up or down based on need.

Ms. Crosby then asks a few questions regarding consulting fees and states she would like itemized receipts and a better explanation of what is coming out of which line item budget. She then states that it could be posted on the website, which the public could access. She states that cuts would need to be made to stretch the budget further.

MOTION to approve FY 2024 made by Shalisha Labat, seconded by Steve Bernard

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Bernard

Nays: Davis, Crosby,

Absent:

Abstain: Christian, Smith

The motion carried.

- c. Discussion & Approvals: To approve the adjusted FY 2025 Operating and Capital Outlay/Projects Budgets

Ms. Parrish states that this is almost the same budget as 2024 due to only increasing taxes by approximately \$200,000. She stated that there was a slight increase in the cost of living, but that is the only increase. There is discussion amongst the board of various budgets for FY 2025 and which would increase or decrease. ***More detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

Mr. Larry Davis moves that the question be called.

MOTION to approve 2025 adjusted budget made by Steve Bernard, seconded by Shalisha Labat

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Bernard

Nays: Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith

Absent:

Abstain:

A motion to approve the 2025 adjusted budget failed on a vote of 4-4.

Ms. Labat then asks if this needs to be moved to the end of the meeting to discuss and vote on again. Ms. Parrish states that the library has to have an operating

budget for next year. Ms. Crosby then asked if we operate under a 50% budget until it gets passed, to which Ms. Parrish stated that no, and the library's policy stated that a budget must be agreed upon. Ms. Crosby asks if we are all under the same charter as deemed for the Parish Council. Mr. Moody, Parish Attorney, states that the library is a separate political entity from the Parish Council and follows the state law, which requires the library to adopt a budget. He states that if a budget is not adopted, the library will probably obtain a finding from the auditor when it is audited.

There is discussion amongst the board about moving this adoption to a December meeting if the board approves. Ms. Labat states that per policy, this should be voted upon at the November meeting. Mr. Moody states that if some board members want it moved to a December meeting, then the policy should be changed to reflect this. ***More detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

MOTION made by Abby Crosby to table another vote until the end of the meeting, seconded by Kathy deGeneres

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

d. Discussion & Approval: Dedicate funds to Capital Outlay

MOTION made by Abby Crosby to table the vote until the end of the meeting, seconded by Shalisha Labat

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

## 7. Unfinished Business

- a. Discussion & Adoption: Livingston Parish Library Strategic Plan for 2025-2029
  - i. Presented by David Gray, Public Information Officer

Ms. Crosby states that she wants to see goals and guesstimates of costs. She goes on to state that there were no designs or layouts and that it was nothing but talking points. She states that concrete evidence of what is needed according to the budget needs to be provided. She states that she is not for the strategic plan because figures and diagrams weren't available.

Mr. David Gray, the Public Information Officer, states that the plan isn't binding; it's just giving direction on what the library would like to accomplish based on the parish's economic growth.

6 comment cards were submitted in favor of this agenda item.

1 present and would like to speak, Jordan Gonzalez  
6 present and would not like to speak, Mandy Jo Pickering, Marla Elsea, Tim Elsea, Cathleen Hyde, and Vicki Turner

MOTION to adopt the Strategic Plan made by Shalisha Labat, seconded by Kathy deGeneres

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Bernard

Nays: Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith,

Absent:

Abstain:

A motion to approve the Strategic Plan for 2025-2029 failed on a vote of 4-4.

## **8. New Business**

- a. Discussion & Approval: Audit engagement and contract renewal with Baxley and Associates, LLC
  - i. Presented by Michelle Parrish, Director

\*\*At this time the board began discussing ADDENDUM A-2. Please see agenda item j for more information.

Ms. Parrish informs the board that the cost of the contract renewal with Baxley & Associates, LLC would be lower than the previous year

due to the fact that the legislative auditor now does alternating years when they look at the agreed upon audits and the alternate year we do not look at all 14, only those that need adjustments on.

MOTION to accept made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Dewanna Christian

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

- b. Discussion & Resolution: To investigate the creation of a “New Adult” collection.
  - i. Presented by Shalisha Labat, Board Member

Ms. Shalisha Labat proposes to the board the creation of a “New Adult” collection based on a systematic review of all of the Young Adult books. Any book with sexual content or extremely mature themes would be moved to this section and start at the age of majority until around age 25. Items not meeting these criteria will be kept where they are currently in the juvenile and young adult sections. She states that she researched other library systems that have implemented this, and it would give our patrons another tier to the card systems for parents to decide whether or not to let their children access the materials in this section.

Ms. Summer Smith asked how much this would cost. Ms. Parrish stated that the librarians would do this on the clock, but the most significant expense would be creating a new section. She noted that each location must be evaluated to see where and how these sections would be installed.

Ms. Dewanna Christian states that if the materials are sexually explicit, they should not be available to anyone under the age of 18. She said that we already have an Adult section, so why create a new section within a section?

Ms. Labat stated that she was trying to develop a more long-term solution. Ms. Christian said she thinks this new section has no purpose. There is a more lengthy discussion amongst board members, and ***more detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

Mr. Larry Davis asks Mr. Bencaz to ask the audience for questions.

10 comment cards were submitted on this agenda item.

2 in support and would like to speak Rebecca Farms and Ricky Goff

8 in opposition and would like to speak Marla Elsea, Ed Braithwaite, Jordan Gonzalez, Bridgette Rushing Gilbert, Trey Cowell, Kirstie Holden, Vicki Turner, and DeAnna Charett

**Public comments may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.**

Ms. Dewanna Christian asked about the ordering process for materials. Ms. Parrish explains the method to the board. Ms. Christian stated that if they were allowed to have the Executive Session, they wanted to discuss who ordered the books for the library.

At this time, Brian Gunter, who filled out a comment card in favor of agenda items 8c & 8d but opposed to 8b, spoke on how the library should represent the parish and its values; ***more detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

Vicki Turner and DeAnna Charett then made public comments.

Councilman Ricky Goff supports 8b and states that the ultimate goal is to prevent the books from entering the wrong hands. He commends Ms. Labat for her effort in trying to resolve the issue by creating a “New Adult” section.

Discussion among the board and Ms. Parrish regarding the location and cost of implementing this section.

MOTION to approve the investigation of the creation made by Shalisha Labat, seconded by Steve Bernard

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Bernard

Nays: Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith,

Absent:

Abstain:

A motion to approve the investigation of the creation failed on a vote of 4-4.



- c. Discussion & Resolution: Whether “Me and Earl and the Dying Girl” by Jesse Andrews meets the criteria outlined in LA RS 25:225C(2)(d)(ii) and the definition provided in LA RS 25:225B(4) as claimed by a complainant who submitted a Citizen’s Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Form (3-309a), and whether to move this material to another collection based on this challenge.
  - i. Presented by Abby Crosby, Board Member

Ms. Crosby stated that this book is not one that she wouldn’t want a young adult to read. She also stated that it meets the criteria for the Heath Cloud law and goes into detail regarding explicitness.

19 comment cards were submitted on this agenda item.

5 in favor and would like to speak: Brian Gunter, Jackie Crosby, Trey Cowell, Ricky Goff, Edward Braithwaite, and Amanda Robert

5 in favor and do not wish to speak: Jennifer Holden, Gus Holden, Kirstie Holden, Bridgett Rushing Gilbert, and Mary Susie Labry

3 in opposition and would like to speak: Marla Elsea, Rivule Sykes, and Jordan Gonzalez

5 in opposition and do not wish to speak: Tim Elsea, Vicki Turner, Mandy Jo Pickering, Cathleen Hyde, and Loxley Doolittle

**Public comments may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.**

Ms. Christian asks Ms. Parrish a question regarding the library’s tier card system: *“Are those restrictions automatically on the card, and then the parent has to remove them?”* Ms. Parrish replies no and then goes on to explain how the parent has to physically come in and sign paperwork stating which tier they would like their child to have access to before the account is even created or updated in the system; ***more detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

MOTION to move items to the Adult side made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Summer Smith

Yeas: Bencaz, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain: Labat

The motion carried.

d. Discussion & Resolution: Whether “The Perks of Being a Wallflower” by Stephen Chbosky meets the criteria outlined in LA RS 25:225C(2)(d)(ii) and the definition provided in LA RS 25:225B(4) as claimed by a complainant who submitted a Citizen’s Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Form (3-309a), and whether to move this material to another collection based on this challenge.

i. Presented by Abby Crosby, Board Member

Ms. Crosby found the book disturbing because its themes met the law's criteria. She stated that these books affect not only the children who read them but also the grownups who read them.

MOTION to move this book to the Adult section made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Dewanna Christian

17 comment cards were submitted on this agenda item.

4 in support and would like to speak: Amanda Robert, Ricky Goff, Jennifer Holden, and Trey Cowell

5 in support and do not wish to speak: Bridgett Rushing Gilbert, Kirstie Holden, Rebecca Farm, Mary S. “Susie” Labry, and Gus Holden

3 in opposition and would like to speak: Marla Elsea, Jordan, Gonzalez, and Mandy Jo Pickering

4 in opposition and do not wish to speak: Loxley Doolittle, Tim Elsea, Vicki Turner, and Cathleen Hyde

1 in opposition and will provide information if requested: Elise LeBlanc

**Public comments may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.**

The vote is taken on MOTION that this book be moved to the Adult section made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Dewanna Christian

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

- e. Discussion & Resolution: Policy: To investigate the potential of entering into an intergovernmental agreement between the Livingston Parish Library and the Livingston Parish Sheriff's Office for security for the library.
  - i. Presented by Abby Crosby, Board Member

Ms. Crosby spoke on the safety of employees at various branches and how she would like to create a three-person group to discuss what is needed as far as security and have a meeting with Sheriff Ard about hiring a person for the branches, especially the Denham Springs-Walker Branch, so those who patron the branch and are employed there can feel safe.

Ms. Crosby stated she would like to volunteer on this committee and asked the board for additional volunteers. Steve Bernard and Summer Smith volunteered.

MOTION to create a three-person group to discuss security needs made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Dewanna Christian

4 comment cards were submitted on this agenda item.

2 in opposition and do not wish to speak: Tim Elsea and Marla Elsea

2 neutral and would like to speak to provide unbiased information: Cathleen Hyde and Jordan Gonzalez

**Public comments may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.**

The vote is taken on the MOTION to create a three-person group to discuss security needs made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Dewanna Christian

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davism Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

- f. Discussion & Approval: Policy Change – to amend Code: 2-202a, Public Speaking Policy, Board Meetings, to include verbiage from the Livingston Parish Council LPR No. 24-387: “to require anyone wishing to speak under public input and for public speaking to submit in writing their name and address and upon addressing the board before giving their public input, state their name and what area they are from (i.e., the Parish, Council District, city.)”
  - i. Presented by Dustin Cotton, Assistant Director of Branch Services

Mr. Cotton spoke to the board regarding the Livingston Parish Council’s LPR No. 24-387. To adapt to this, the library would need to change line four of 2-202a, the Public Speaking Policy and Board Meetings. This would also change the verbiage on the colored-card system policy to include the area they are from.

MOTION to accept this change made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Shalisha Labat

4 comment cards were submitted on this agenda item.

2 in opposition and do not wish to speak: Tim Elsea and Vicki Turner

2 in opposition and would like to speak: Marla Elsea and Rebecca Roberts

**Public comments may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.**

The vote is taken on the MOTION to accept this change made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Shalisha Labat

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

- g. Discussion & Adoption: Livingston Parish Library 2025 Closure Schedule including Holidays, Events, and Training: including discussion on moving the Juneteenth closure from June 19 to the third Saturday in June per LA RS 1:58 2B
  - i. Presented by Dustin Cotton, Assistant Director of Branch Services

Mr. Cotton speaks to the board regarding LA RS 1:58 2B, which recognizes Juneteenth Day throughout Louisiana in honor of the day African Americans celebrate as Emancipation Day. He states that instead of celebrating it on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, we could celebrate the holiday with a closure to the third Saturday in June, as indicated in State Law.

MOTION to accept made by Dewanna Christian, seconded by Larry Davis

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

- h. Discussion & Approval: Surplus Items for Disposal
  - i. Presented by Dustin Cotton, Assistant Director of Branch Services

Mr. Cotton brings a list of items for disposal and auction to the board.

MOTION to accept made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Shalisha Labat

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

- i. **ADDENDUM A-1:** Discussion & Resolution: To have monthly Livingston Parish Library Board of Control open meetings in December until all books in the queue for review for explicitness are reviewed and voted on.

i. Presented by Dewanna Christian, Board Member

Ms. Christian addressed the board regarding the number of books that need to be reviewed and the need for additional meetings to review these challenge requests. She stated, *"At the rate we're going, we're not going to get anything [a whole lot] done. And from what I understand, there's a lot of books out there that need to be reviewed."* She also stated that if an emergency would arise, it could be added to the meeting since they would be meeting monthly anyway. She said, for example, *"Just have a few little questions about the budget; we can put it on the December also."*

Ms. Crosby also stated that the agenda would have included seven books for review, but it was agreed to add three for now. She noted that with work and families and whatnot, it was challenging for some members to find the time to read all items before a meeting for a proper review and discussion.

Mr. Bernard asked why the number of books couldn't be increased for each meeting instead of every month. Ms. Labat interjected that it is difficult for her to find the time to meet every single month because she works and homeschools her children. She stated that this position is voluntary, and when she was appointed, the meetings were once every other month; to do it every single month would not be beneficial to her and would cause hardship for her family.

MOTION to call a Special Meeting in December to review five books made by Dewanna Christian, seconded by Abby Crosby

8 comment cards were submitted on this agenda item.

3 in support and would like to speak: Ricky Goff, Kirstie Holden, and Bridgette Gilbert

1 in opposition and would like to speak: Jordan Gonzalez

4 in opposition and do not wish to speak: Cathleen Hyde, Loxley Doolittle, Vicki Turner, and Mandy Jo Pickering

**Public comments may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.**

The vote is taken on the MOTION to have a December meeting to review five books made by Dewanna Christian, seconded by Abby Crosby

Yeas: Bencaz, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays: Labat

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

- j. **ADDENDUM A-2:** Executive Session: To discuss the process of reviewing books, rules for ordering books, and who is in charge of that task.
  - i. Presented by Summer Smith, Board Member

Mr. Ronnie Bencaz informs the board that ADDENDUM A-2 from the agenda has been pulled. Ms. Crosby asks why it has been pulled. Ms. Summer Smith, who put the item on the agenda, stated that she was going to pull it, but she did not receive an email that everyone else on the board supposedly received. ***More detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

The board then discusses who sits on the review committee. Ms. Parrish states that it is whoever is available at the time. The committee comprises degreed librarians who review the items, but there is no set committee; it changes occasionally.

Ms. Parrish then states that once a Citizen's Request for Reconsideration form has been submitted and reviewed by the committee, then she can email a list of who has reviewed that book to the board, but that no one has ever asked for this in the past.

Ms. Parrish then discusses the criteria the committee uses to review books versus how the board does. She discusses the peer review criteria and how books are judged based on these criteria.

Mr. Moody, Parish Attorney, suggests that both sides must compromise on the election of Board Officers. He suggests options to the board regarding how they could select and elect the officers; ***more detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

Ms. Christian asked Mr. Bencaz if he could continue to serve, and he responded, "Until January." Mr. Bencaz stated that it would only be the month of December, as a vote would be taken in January for the new officers.

MOTION to keep Mr. Ronnie Bencaz in his current position until January was made by Dewanna Christian, seconded by Abby Crosby

20 comment cards were submitted on this ADDENDUM item

2 in support and would like to speak: Amanda Robert and Trey Cowell

17 in support and do not wish to speak: Nicole Kelley, Jennifer Holden, Jennifer Rowell, Mary S. "Susie" Labry, Bridgett Gilbert, Jim Gilbert, Ed Braithwaite, Tori Hymel, Jimmy Morris, Rebecca Roberts, Kirstie Holden, Gus Holden, Brad Crosby, Jackie Crosby, Ryan Thames, Marsha Easley, and Linda Glascock

1 in opposition and would like to speak: Jordan Gonzalez

**Public comments may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.**

The vote is taken on the MOTION to keep Mr. Ronnie Bencaz in his current position until January made by Dewanna Christian, seconded by Abby Crosby

Yeas: Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain: Bencaz

The motion carried.

No action was taken on the election of Vice-President. Mr. Steve Bernard will keep his position until January.

The board discusses the budget and its ability to be amended. Ms. Smith then asked if the budget could be voted on at the newly approved December meeting, if it would be before the new year, and if it would give members time to meet with Ms. Parrish to discuss any discrepancies. Mr. Moody says that going by state law would be fine. However, the library's policy states that a budget must be approved in November. Ms. Crosby stated, "*We can always amend whatever we need to amend and go out.*" Mr. Moody stated, "*Even if you adopt the present one, you could amend it all in January.*" Ms. Parrish states that when the budget was submitted to the board over two weeks prior, she asked members to meet with her to review any issues, but there were no meetings. She then stated that if this is approved to be moved to December, she would



ask that the board meet with her to discuss it in full. Mr. Davis and Ms. Crosby stated that they would like to see an itemized budget.

Mr. Davis suggested that the board have two meetings with Ms. Michelle to discuss the budget so that a quorum is not met. Mr. Moody asked if decisions would be made at these meetings. Mr. Davis stated that it was just a discussion; ***more detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

Mr. Moody suggests that as long as no decisions are being made at the meeting, the board might do better to adopt when they are more informed. He states that the meeting should recess and reconvene in December.

MOTION to recess the meeting and reconvene to finish the budget process in December made by Abby Crosby

The board discusses reconvening on December 17<sup>th</sup> to address book challenges and the budget. Ms. Labat, Ms. deGeneres, and Mr. Davis stated they could not attend on that date. A quorum is discussed, as five members agree to continue the meeting at 6 pm on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

It was then reiterated that this meeting would discuss and adopt the budget only and that the election of officers would happen in January.

The vote is taken on the MOTION to recess the meeting and reconvene to finish the budget process in December made by Abby Crosby, seconded by Summer Smith

Yeas: Bencaz, Labat, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Bernard, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

The meeting was recessed.



Livingston Parish Library Board of Control

**CONTINUATION OF RECESSED REGULAR BOARD MEETING FROM 11/19/24**

December 4, 2024

## Minutes

The Livingston Parish Board of Control continued the recessed regular board meeting from 11/19/24 on December 4, 2024. The meeting took place at the Denham Springs-Walker Branch located at 8101 US Hwy 190, Denham Springs, LA 70754.

### REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA

#### 1. Call to Order

Board of Control member Larry Davis calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. He states the public hearing is closed as the meeting is being resumed from the previous meeting on November 19, 2024.

Mr. Davis asks if the board has any objections and if there have been any revisits of old agenda items.

MOTION before the budget is discussed to revisit agenda item 6a made by Summer Smith, seconded by Dewanna Christian

Mr. Davis asks for any objections, which Ms. Kathy deGeneres opposes, indicating that elections were put off until January. Ms. Christian responds, *"Well, I think we're going to revisit it."* Ms. DeGeneres stated, *"This was taken to retain the current officers until January 2025. What's the matter with doing that?"* Mr. Davis states that Ms. Smith is rescinding that motion, to which Ms. Christian interjects that she is revisiting it. According to Ms. Christian, there has been a change in the status as one of the previous nominations has resigned from the Board of Control. Ms. DeGeneres stated, *"So the status is that there is presumed no other, that there is nobody else that is going to be nominated to run against Larry who was previously nominated?"*

### MEETING START TIME

#### 2. Roll Call

Present: Kathy deGeneres, Larry Davis, Abby Crosby, Dewanna Christian, Summer Smith

Absent: Ronnie Bencaz, Steve Bernard

Also Present: Michelle Parrish (Director), Dustin Cotton (Assistant Director of Branch Services, Brad Cascio (Parish Attorney), and David Gray (Public Information Officer)

The vote is taken on MOTION to revisit agenda item 6a made by Summer Smith, seconded by Dewanna Christian

Yeas:, deGeneres, Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith

Nays:

Absent: Bencaz, Bernard

Abstain:

The motion carried.

Mr. Davis opens the floor for nominees for the election of Board Chair

Ms. Kathy deGeneres nominates Mr. Steve Bernard

Ms. Christian mentions that Mr. Davis is already been nominated

The vote is taken on the first nomination for Mr. Steve Bernard

Yeas:, deGeneres

Nays: Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith

Absent: Bencaz, Bernard

Abstain:

The vote is taken on the second nomination for Mr. Larry Davis

Yeas:, Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith

Nays: deGeneres

Absent: Bencaz, Bernard

Abstain:

With a vote of 4 to 1, Mr. Larry Davis was elected as the future Board Chair.

Mr. Davis stated that there were two previous nominations for Vice-Chair

Ms. deGeneres re-nominates Mr. Bernard as Vice-Chair  
The vote is taken on Mr. Bernard's nomination

Yeas: deGeneres

Nays: Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith

Absent: Bencaz, Bernard

Abstain:

The vote is taken on the previous nomination of Abby Crosby

Yeas: Davis, Crosby, Christian, Smith

Nays: deGeneres

Absent: Bencaz, Bernard

Abstain:

With a vote of 4 to 1, Ms. Abby Crosby was elected as the future Board Vice-Chair.

### **3. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

**\*\*see 6c. for further information**

### **6. Special Orders**

- c. Discussion & Approval: To approve the adjusted FY 2025 Operating and Capital Outlay/Projects Budgets

Mr. Davis stated that he would turn over this section to Ms. Crosby just in case there were any questions about the amended budget that was proposed.

Questions about lifting the agenda and the vote were asked of Brad Cascio from audience members. Mr. Brad Cascio, Parish Attorney, stated, *"If we revisited an item, it has to be reopened for public comment."* Mr. Davis then asks, *"If it's a recessed meeting and that person has already spoken, should we just read the card that was already presented at the last meeting?"* Mr. Davis states they've already spoken and had their three minutes. Mr. Cascio says no that there is new action being taken, which should have been taken before the vote, but he didn't see the commenter's hand up before the vote. The commenter is allowed three minutes.

Marla Elsea asks about the legality of bringing something back up that was not on the public agenda and then voting on it with zero public comment.

Mr. Cascio stated, "The public comment should have been had beforehand." He went on to state that it was recessed from the previous meeting, so the agenda is back, so to speak. Ms. Elsea states that it was agreed upon that it would be voted upon at the January meeting.

Mr. Davis stated that *"Robert's Rules gives the board appointment the opportunity to revisit an agenda item in a recessed meeting. We have that language from the State Parliamentarian, which we received training from."*

Ms. Elsea stated that they shouldn't have had his vote until they had an entire nine-person board. Mr. Davis responds, *"The policy states that a quorum is five."*

Ms. DeGeneres then asks if she leaves, would it constitute a quorum? Mr. Cascio states that if she left, it would leave four members, and thus, a quorum would not be met; ***more detailed information may be found by listening to the posted audio recording of the meeting or watching the posted video link to our YouTube channel.***

Ms. DeGeneres leaves the meeting, and Mr. Davis questions her upon departure, stating, *"Public comment was already spoken about me last meeting, not about Steve Bernard. So, if she wants to speak in support of Steve Bernard, she can speak in support of Steve Bernard. But as far as a public comment as me being Chair, that's already been asked and answered. That vote is valid from the State Parliamentarian, which we already researched today."*

#### d. Discussion & Approval: Dedicate funds to Capital Projects

No discussion occurred on 6C or 6D due to the lack of quorum.

## 9. Adjournment

Mr. Davis stated since there was no quorum, he made a MOTION to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Crosby

Mr. Cascio states that it is *de facto*; it just happens. It naturally occurs, and no MOTION is needed.

The quorum was lost due to *de facto*, and the recessed meeting ended at 6:14 pm.