



Livingston Parish Library Board of Control
Regular Meeting, March 21, 2023

Minutes

The Livingston Parish Board of Control met in a regular session on March 21, 2023. 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 5:06 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Ronnie Bencaz, Kathy DeGeneres, Ivy Graham (arrived at 5:10), Melissa Anderson, Larry Davis, Wendi Neal

Absent: Layton Ricks, Giovanni Tairov, Jennifer Seneca

Also Present: Holli Portier

3. Approve Minutes of January 17, 2023 meeting

Motion to approve minutes as written made by Kathy deGeneres, seconded by Melissa Anderson

Yeas: Bencaz, deGeneres, Anderson, Davis, Neal

Nays:

Absent: Graham (arrived at 5:10)

Abstain:

The motion carried.

4. Public Comments

Marla Elsea, Livingston Parish resident, stated that there are already policies in place to protect children, all books are categorized in appropriate categories, and there is already a tiered system in place giving parental controls of what children check out. She also stated that *"I urge you to not treat us parents like children in the process."*

Amanda Jones, resident of Livingston Parish, took the opportunity to “*thank Giovanni Tairov, for years of excellence and dedication to our library system.*” She stated that Livingston Parish Resolution 23-061 is ridiculous and not needed as it’s asking you to endorse bills that haven’t passed legislature. Jones also thanked former library board member Debbie Henson for her decades of service.

Vickie Turner, retired librarian in Livingston Parish, she stated that she was in charge of selecting materials for a K-5 school and she thinks that everyone should be aware of the policy of challenging books. She stated that the policy has always been there and anyone has a right to fill out a form for a challenged book.

Garry Talbert, Livingston Parish Councilman for District 2, spoke on two items. The first item was in reference to the Council’s passed resolution 23-101 and for the discussion of this resolution by the Library Board of Control. He also mentioned Louisiana Statue 42-16 and 42-17 regarding reasons to go into Executive Session. He stated that none of the terms listed on the agenda qualify for going into Executive Session and should be held in public.

Elise LeBlanc, Livingston Parish resident, stated that she would like to apologize to the board for the ill treatment they’ve endured for nearly a year. She also stated that she thinks that it would be premature and ill responsible to endorse a bill that’s not officially on the table yet.

Alec Degraw, Teen Advisory Board member, spoke on how reading was an escape through hard times and how everyone has different viewpoints and opinions.

End of public comments at 5:21

5. New Business

a. Discussion of Livingston Parish Council Resolution 23-101

Ivy Graham reads the Livingston Parish Council Resolution 23-101 aloud.

Ms. deGeneres stated that she is reluctant to approve anything that is like a fill-in-the-blank test where things can be filled in later and yet has already been approved.

Mr. Davis commented that the library and school system within Livingston Parish are the greatest in the state due to parental involvement. He related statistics regarding Livingston Parish and states that the government was set up to represent the voices of the people.

Melissa Anderson makes a comment regarding a school option that she is familiar with where a parent is able to “opt out” of something by signing a form.

Ivy Graham states that there is already something like this in place that parents can fill out in regards to their child’s account.

Wendi Neal makes a comment in regards to the digital drivers license. She states that with the availability of just putting in an age, it might eliminate accessing information by children under 18.

Ms. Graham then states that in regards to the restricting of applications such as Kanopy that something is already in place and refers to the tiered card system and the restriction of what your children can and cannot through the library.

Ms. Anderson makes a comment that the public schools have multiple lessons on unrestricted use of a device, that the children should have appropriate supervision of devices.

Larry Davis makes a motion adopt LPR 23-101 in full. The motion is not seconded. The motion dies.

b. Executive Session – Personnel Matters

- i. Interim Director
- ii. Director Search

At 5:35 a motion to move into executive session was made by Ivy Graham and seconded by Melissa Anderson.

Yeas: Bencaz, Graham, deGeneres, Anderson, Davis, Neal

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

The motion carried.

Ronnie Bencaz called the meeting to order after executive session at 6:31.

Motions After Executive Session

Ivy Graham states that the policy in place would place the Assistant Director in the interim basis upon the departure of Director. However, due to the resignation of the Assistant Director as well, another person would then need to be placed in the Interim Director position.

- a. Ms. Graham makes a motion that in lieu of board policy, as Interim Director of the library system, Ms. Michelle Parish be appointed as the Interim Director. Seconded by Larry Davis.

Yeas: Bencaz, Graham, deGeneres, Anderson, Davis, Neal
Nays: _____
Absent: _____
Abstain: _____

The motion carried.

- b. Ms. Graham makes a motion that we appoint a committee to search for a new Library Director. Seconded by Melissa Anderson.

Yeas: Bencaz, Graham, deGeneres, Anderson, Davis, Neal
Nays: _____
Absent: _____
Abstain: _____

The motion carried.

- c. Ms. Graham makes a motion that the committee be appointed by the board president and to consist of no more than three board members and one library staff member. Seconded by Larry Davis.

Yeas: Bencaz, Graham, deGeneres, Anderson, Davis, Neal
Nays: _____
Absent: _____
Abstain: _____

- d. Ronnie Bencaz appoints the committee members that will be comprised of board members Larry Davis, Ivy Graham, and Mr. Bencaz along with the assistance of Human Resource Manager Shelley Taylor.

c. Bank Designees – Removals and Additions

Ivy Graham makes a motion to remove Giovanni Tairov as an authorized signer effective immediately as a bank designee, to add Michelle Parrish as a bank designee authorized signer, and to request April 14, 2023 Jennifer Seneca be removed as a bank signer designee. Seconded by Larry Davis.

Yeas: Bencaz, Graham, deGeneres, Anderson, Davis, Neal _____

Nays: _____

Absent: _____

Abstain: _____

The motion carried.

Ronnie Bencaz adjourned the meeting at 6:37.