

**STATE LIBRARY OF LOUISIANA
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
March 25, 2021
Baton Rouge, La
10:00 am**

CALL TO ORDER

Due to COVID-19 restrictions in place regarding social distancing, the quarterly meeting of the State Library Board of Commissioners was held virtually.

The State Library Board of Commissioners meeting was called to order by Chair Georgia Brown. Additional members in attendance included Louis Covington, David Johnson, James Lee, Evelyn Valore, and Gail Waters. Rebecca Hamilton was present as Executive Secretary. Also present was Associate State Librarian, John Lovelace, facilitating the meeting. Absent from the meeting was Dr. Argiro Morgan.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Brown called for a motion to approve and adopt the agenda as presented. Motion was offered by Brown, seconded by Louis, and unanimously carried.

MINUTES

On a motion offered by Brown and seconded by Covington, the minutes were approved.

QUARTERLY REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Hamilton presented the Departmental Quarterly Report and brought the board's attention to the hundreds of questions that the State Library receives and provides answers for from the general public, public libraries, etc. on a daily basis. She stated how the State Library staff, even during a pandemic and working from home with an increased workload and reduced staff, has continued to excel in duties.

Hamilton shared the Director's Survey with the board, in regards to positive feedback for the State Library that despite being short-staffed and having a shortage of funding, the State Library continues to provide guidance, prompt response, etc., especially during a pandemic. Hamilton stated that there are some State Library staff who are eligible for retirement, but refuse to leave the State Library during these uncertain times, exemplifying true servants' hearts.

Lee interjected that he has observed State Library staff always moving fast, no frowning faces and hard at work. Hamilton told the board that the staff has a safe and healthy place to work where they know that their voices will be heard. She stated that despite personal challenges, they continue to thrive. As a way of encouraging them on a job well done, Hamilton broached the idea of having the board create video clips which can be used to give

the staff verbal acknowledgement during a pandemic that can be uploaded on a social media forum as a way to show appreciation.

Brown noted the State Library staff has not shirked responsibilities, but rather, embraced them. She told the board that the staff follows the good leadership.

Hamilton informed the board of the intention to hold the Louisiana Book Festival on October 30, 2021.

Discussion was held on State Library usage and how numbers were higher than usual on social media. Lovelace discussed how the State Library map has been incredibly helpful with over 97,000 views. Hamilton stated that the map that has been consistently updated showing all the LA libraries and Wi-Fi capability and whether they were opened or closed during Covid-19 and how it has also helped reporters.

Hamilton also discussed the upcoming National Geographic documentary for which the producers will need access to the State Library Digital Library. This will create good publicity and required a usage fee, helping the library.

Also discussed were the CARES stimulus checks and how federal funds meant for libraries are sent to the public libraries and that the State Library would not take any administrative costs.

Hamilton discussed the role the libraries played in the way they bridged the gap during the pandemic with many teachers not having home internet service. Hamilton also informed the Board how the State Library Talking Books and Braille Department, with some of its most vulnerable staff, still came in to work daily to ensure blind patrons were not deprived of the services normally provided while they were in lock down.

Brown inquired on status of budget and Hamilton stated that fiscally the State Library is in a better place than last year with some cuts and still partially funded by tourism money. She stated that the State Library is not below the Maintenance of Effort this time.

Reiterating concern regarding attempts made to redirect millage money and parishes running out of funds, Hamilton discussed the importance of libraries earmarking funds, having them encumbered and tracked. If not earmarked, parishes will want to use that money for other needs and libraries could lose it.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to discuss and Brown made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Johnson Brown declared the meeting adjourned at 10:53 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Hamilton, Secretary
State Library Board of Commissioners

Georgia Brown, Chair
State Library Board of Commissioners