

LINCOLN PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

Minutes of Meeting

May 27, 2021

The Lincoln Parish Library Board of Control Special Called Meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Dr. Clark, Library Board President. Board members present included Dr. Augusta Clark, Mary Jo Cooper, Sandra Dupree, Richard Durrett, Diana Humphries, Amy Miller, and Charles Penuell.

The agenda was approved with a motion from Mrs. Dupree and a second from Mrs. Humphries. All yes. Motion carried.

There were no public comments.

Dr. Clark welcomed the applicants and invited Mr. Edward Richmond to approach the Board for formal interview. Mr. Richmond briefed the Board on his extensive English background and experience as an avid life-long library user. Mr. Richmond stated that libraries are important resources especially in rural areas. He expressed to the members of the Board that he felt his professional background in policies and procedures as well as marketing from a small business standpoint could be an asset to the Board and the Library alike. Mr. Richmond stated that his main concern for the future of the Library was the upcoming election in October. He strongly recommended that the Library pursue outreach across all available pathways and implement modern day marketing ploys to reach a wider range of voters within the community. Mr. Richmond stated that, while he has no personal experience in campaigning, he believes in being very vocal about the Library and its assets for the community at large. He stated that he had reviewed the revised budget and, while there are areas he wished the Library could have maintained some expenses, particularly staffing, he understood that in a time of hard decisions, the Library had to make the cuts in order to survive. Mr. Richmond stated that Libraries are among the last public spaces where people can come to just be without being pressured to purchase a product or shown the door. Mr. Richmond expressed sincere desire to work with the Board and the Library in the near future.

Dr. Clark invited Mr. William Jones, Jr. to approach the board for formal interview. Mr. Jones stated that he had also reviewed the budget personally and he felt the Library needed to be very vocal about their efforts to cut the budget and reach a tax millage proposal that was not only lower but had the community in mind. He stated that, as a former Senator, he had much experience with campaigns and he wished to help the Library with their upcoming election by utilizing his experience. He stated that the Library has to make sure the people know what exactly they offer and do and how things are run. He mentioned reaching out to the local businesses was a vital step. Mr. Jones stated that his biggest concerns are the current public misconceptions of the library surrounding the budget, staffing and various other financially specific topics. He briefed the Board on his Law background as well as his professional business and policy experience. Both of which, he felt, could be important to his role if he were placed on the Board.

Upon the conclusion of the interviews, Dr. Clark invited several attendees to address the Board and applicants. Former Board member Debbie Holliman spoke, followed by Theresa Wyatt, Jury Member, and Milton Melton, Jury Member.

Mrs. Miller made the motion to add making a formal recommendation to the Jury to fill the current Board vacancy to the agenda. Penuell, yes. Miller, yes. Durrett, yes. Dupree, yes. Clark, yes. Cooper, yes. Humphries, yes. With a unanimous vote, it was approved to amend the agenda to include this item.

Mrs. Miller made the motion to recommend Mr. William A. Jones, Jr. to the Police Jury as the Board's choice to fill the vacancy. Mrs. Cooper seconded the motion. Mr. Penuell stated that while he knows and respects Mr. Jones and believed he could be an asset to the Board as the Library moves toward the upcoming election, he felt Mr. Richmond could serve the Board admirably beyond that point. Penuell, voted no. Miller, yes. Durrett, yes. Dupree, yes. Cooper, yes. Humphries, yes. Clark, yes. With a six to one vote, the recommendation to the Police Jury by the Library Board will be William A. Jones, Jr.

Mrs. Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Dupree seconded the motion. All yes. Motion carried.