

St. Charles Parish Library

Board of Control Meeting

July 15, 2025 at 6:00pm

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the St. Charles Parish Library Board of Control was held at 6:00pm, Tuesday, July 15, 2025 in Council Chambers at the Courthouse in Hahnville.

Members Present: Beverly DeLaune, Randy Matherne, Stephanie Mire, Robin Robicheaux, and Sarah Sacra

Members Absent: Charlene Alexander-Armstrong, Annie Harmon, and Holly Fonseca

Staff Present: Leann Benedict, Lauren Pitz, and Amy Duke

Others: Christine Alexander

Mrs. DeLaune called the meeting to order and asked all to stand for a moment of silent prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. DeLaune asked for approval of the minutes of the May 6, 2025 meeting. Mr. Matherne moved that the minutes be approved as e-mailed. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Mire and passed unanimously.

The attendance report for board members was completed.

The next agenda item was Scheduled Public Comment. There were no requests for public comment.

The next agenda item was the Librarian's Report. Mrs. Benedict gave the following report:

This year's summer reading program, with the theme Color Our World, started strong in June with over 600 people visiting our six branches during summer reading kick-off events that took place the first week of June.

In addition to the many activities and crafts hosted by our library staff, we welcomed special guests Drum Life, the TMM Project, the Yuck Show, Bright Star Theatre, and Johnette Downing to the library to perform. Other notable events were a Seed and Plant Swap in partnership with the LSU AgCenter and River Region Master Gardeners, visits from the St. Charles Parish Public Schools Learn With Us Bus at some of our weekly storytimes, and our annual Teen Lock-In. In total, we held 169 programs and outreach events in June, reaching a little over 4,000 people.

Special events coming up in July include visits from the River Region Ballet, Crescent Circus, and Louisiana Snake ID. We will also host our 4th Annual Murder Mystery for adults. Information about all our upcoming events can be found in our summer reading event guide, on our website, or at any library location.

As of yesterday, 2,299 people signed up for the summer reading challenge, and 1,258 of them have already completed it. Collectively, participants have logged 1,555,827 minutes read. We are more than halfway to our community reading goal of 2,750,000 minutes so we encourage our patrons to keep reading and logging their minutes.

Everyone has until July 31 to sign up for the summer reading program and to log the number of minutes that they read, so there is still plenty of time to sign up and start reading.

Our Makerspace made its debut with an open house on June 21st where 31 patrons stopped by to learn more about this exciting new creative space. The Makerspace is currently open on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 5:30pm – 7:30pm, Thursdays from 10am – 2pm (with the exception of this Thursday, July 17th when it will be open from 1pm – 5pm), and the first and third Saturday of the month from 10am – 2pm. During these times, patrons can pop in to learn more about the makerspace and learn how to use some of the resources. The Makerspace is designed for patrons aged 15 and older. Children and teens under the age of 15 are welcome to use the Makerspace but must be accompanied by an adult. Anyone with questions about the Makerspace can contact our new Makerspace Coordinator, Gina Kisse. Gina joined our team on May 8th and has jumped right in and is doing a fantastic job! We are also in the process of hiring for the part-time Makerspace Assistant position and anticipate having that position filled very soon.

In additional staffing news, Vickie Hinrichs joined our team in April as a part-time Bookmobile Assistant. We are also in the process of interviewing for a part-time custodian for the Norco and Hahnville branches. Jason Talley, our Planetarium Supervisor, attended the Southeastern Planetarium Association Conference in Washington D.C. last month. At the conference he began researching options to replace our aging star projector.

The last item in my report is regarding the library's millage. Last week, the Parish President reached out to me as this is the time of year when the parish sets the millage rates. The parish is continuing their work towards providing tax relief to the residents and businesses in St. Charles Parish. The library's current millage rate is set at 3.8 and they are proposing a rollback to 3.65. This will give us anticipated revenue in 2026 of approximately 9.3 million. While this is a decrease of almost \$305,000 compared to current 2025 revenue, it is still higher than the revenue we were receiving when the voters approved of the millage in 2020. Even with the construction project, I believe we will have adequate funds available while keeping an appropriate amount in our fund balance at this millage rate.

The next agenda item was Communications. There were no communications.

The first item of unfinished business was the Hahnville Branch Library Project Update. Mrs. Benedict informed the board that on June 2, 2025, the parish council approved the CMAR contract. Once the contract was signed, a kick-off meeting was held on June 26 with the architect, CMAR, and library team. The CMAR is currently working on compiling the 30% pricing estimate. The library team will meet with them at the beginning of August to review the price estimate. From there, the team will use that information to move forward with the design process and the CMAR will give an updated price estimate when the plans reach the 60% mark and then again at the 90% mark. Mrs. Benedict told the board she anticipates having more updates and visuals of the design for the library board to review at the September board meeting.

The next item of unfinished business was the Hurricane Ida Recovery Update. Mrs. Benedict informed the board that the final invoice for the West Regional Library repairs has been paid to the contractor. The library is still waiting for insurance reimbursements.

The first item of new business was the proposed Makerspace Policy. Mrs. Benedict gave a summary of the policy. Mrs. Robicheaux made a motion to approve the proposed policy. Mrs. Sacra seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

The next item of new business was the proposed revision of the Fines and Fees Policy. Mrs. Benedict explained that there had been a typo on the Fines and Fees Policy that the board approved at the May meeting. Mrs. Mire made a motion to adopt the revisions to the policy. Mr. Matherne seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was Public Comment. Mrs. Christine Alexander addressed the board asking the board to continue considering building a library in Killona in the future.

There being no further business, Mrs. DeLaune called for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Mire moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Matherne seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:

Beverly DeLaune, President
St. Charles Parish Library Board

Leann Benedict, Secretary
St. Charles Parish Library Board