

St. Charles Parish Library

Board of Control Meeting

November 18, 2025 at 6:00pm

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the St. Charles Parish Library Board of Control was held at 6:00pm on Tuesday, November 18, 2025 in Council Chambers at the Courthouse in Hahnville.

Members Present: Beverly DeLaune, Randy Matherne, Charlene Alexander-Armstrong, Sarah Sacra, Lindsey Tullier, and Holly Fonseca

Members Absent: Robin Robicheaux and Stephanie Mire

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

Others: None

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

Mrs. DeLaune first welcomed new board member Lindsey Tullier. She then asked for approval of the minutes of the September 29, 2025 special meeting. Mr. Matherne moved that the minutes be approved as e-mailed and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Armstrong. The motion passed unanimously.

The attendance report for board members was completed.

The next agenda item was Scheduled Public Comment. There was no scheduled public comment.

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

In staffing news, we had three new part-time staff join our team in October. At the West Regional Library, Leah Langan is a part-time circulation assistant, and Cheyenne Naquin is a new Page. Stephanie Hill joined the East Regional Library team as a Page.

As mentioned at our last meeting, September was Library Card Sign-up Month and we encouraged library cardholders to tell us what they love most about our Library for a chance to win a library prize pack. We issued 136 new library cards and had 40 entries in the love your library contest. Three patrons were randomly selected as winners of a library tote bag filled with books and a variety of library-branded prizes along with a library branded folding chair. Congratulations to April Ebeling, Charlee Fremen, and Audrey Trauth and thanks to everyone who participated!

We are excited to announce that we plan to kick off the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program in January. 1000 Books Before Kindergarten is a reading program that encourages parents and caregivers to read 1000 books with their children before they start kindergarten. The goal is to help children develop early literacy skills like speaking, listening, and communicating, and to build their confidence as readers. It can also help parents and children bond through reading. When signing up, parents or caregivers will receive a packet that includes a fun booklet that can be used to track the number of books read, and for every 100 books read, children can come to the library to receive a milestone sticker and prize. When they reach 1000 books, they will receive a completion prize. Information will be available on our website and social media as we get closer to the program being available.

October is always a busy month for programming and outreach. The library participated in numerous community events including the Norco Civic Association's 100-year Celebration, the Council on Aging's Senior TRIAD Day, The United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat, the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office Fall Festival, the ARC of St. Charles Trunk or Treat, and the Allemands Elementary Trunk or Treat. In-house programs included the annual Trunk or Treat at the East Regional Library held in partnership with the local Girl Scouts troops with 754 patrons attending. We also held an all-ages STEM fair at the West Regional Library in partnership with Entergy Waterford 3 with 139 patrons enjoying activities in the makerspace, star talks in the planetarium, virtual reality games, and several STEM activities led by Entergy staff throughout the library. Other in-house programs included bean bag baseball, movie and a craft programs, storytimes, cookbook club, lego free play, lawyers in library events, and two after-hours teen programs with one held at the West Regional Library and one at the Paradis Branch. The library was also honored to receive a donation of a bronze tactile braille American flag from the Louisiana/Mississippi Blinded Veterans Association Regional Group. This braille flag is hanging in the East Regional Library on the wall near the Good Hope Train Depot display. The BVA also donated an acrylic braille flag that has been hung in the children's room where our younger patrons can easily access it.

This month the library has been a collection point for the Matthew 25:35 Thanksgiving Food Drive and I was informed this afternoon that we delivered over 1200 items that were donated by library patrons to the food pantry.

The library has been very busy preparing for the upcoming Americans and the Holocaust exhibit that will be displayed at the East Regional Library. Assistant Director Lauren Pitz and Adult Programming and Outreach Librarian Maria Bilello have been working diligently for over a year to get everything ready for this.

Mrs. Pitz and Mrs. Bilello then gave a brief presentation about the exhibit and planned programs. The exhibit will be on display at the East Regional Library in Destrehan from December 5, 2025 to January 10, 2026. An opening reception will be held on Friday, December 5, 2025 at 5:30pm and all are welcome to attend. Additional information can be found at www.myscpl.org/aath.

Mrs. Benedict thanked Mrs. Pitz and Mrs. Bilello and acknowledged the hard work that has gone into planning for this exhibit.

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

The first item of unfinished business was the Hahnville Branch Library project. Mrs. Benedict gave an update on the project. The architect should receive the 60% estimate from the CMAR on Friday, November 21, 2025. Once the architect reviews it, the library administrative team will meet with them to review it. Mrs. Benedict will then reach out to the library board to schedule a special meeting to get board approval to move towards the 90% estimate.

The next item of unfinished business was the Hurricane Ida Recovery update. Mrs. Benedict reported that there were no new updates at the time as the matter is still under litigation.

The first item of new business was approval of the proposed 2026 Holiday Schedule. Mrs. Armstrong made a motion to approve the 2026 Holiday Schedule. Mr. Matherne seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

The next item of new business was the public hearing and adoption of the 2026 budget. The floor was opened for public hearing. There was no public comment. After some discussion, Mrs. Sacra moved that the library board approve the 2026 library budget as presented and Mrs. Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The final agenda item was Public Comment. There was no public comment.

There being no further business, Mr. Matherne moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Armstrong 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