

**STATE LIBRARY OF LOUISIANA
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
September 17, 2020
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 via Zoom. This is the second virtual board meeting since the Pandemic began.

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 John Lovelace facilitating the meeting. Absent from the meeting was 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 Johnson, and unanimously carried.

MINUTES

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

QUARTERLY REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Hamilton informed the board that in spite of the lock down due to Covid, the State Library shifted service models and continued to serve the public in alternate, but extremely effective ways; and service to constituents has been continual and on a 24/7 basis since March. Regardless of what Phase, key staff members continued to report to the State Library building to ensure State Library clients got what they needed.

She reported on the many different ways that State Library staff went above and beyond to reach their clients and reported at length on a few.

The staff of the Talking Books and Braille Library (TBBL) never stopped coming into the office daily. They serve our 7,000 blind citizens with reading materials. They are sending out about 1,000 items per day to these clients who are homebound and often alone.

The Library Development Division implemented weekly virtual meetings to host workshops and trainings for all public library directors. These meetings have an average attendance of 55 out of 67 directors with an all time high attendance of 78 which included all directors and some assistant directors. Each week the agenda includes timely topics related to COVID and local government operations as dictated by the requests of the public libraries.

Hamilton further reported that the reference department, in cooperation with the Library Development Division, have been continually updating the Louisiana Public Library Status blog and map on the State Library website, which shows Wi-Fi availability at all 350 public libraries across the state. The map is receiving on average, 100 hits per day. This shows that citizens are looking for their nearest public library to likely access the Internet and online training opportunities.

Hamilton also reported that in June, the State Library received \$420,000 in IMLS Cares Act Funds to support Louisiana's public libraries. Hamilton knew that these funds would be coming because of weekly conference calls with IMLS and the other state librarians across the nation. As a result, prior to receiving these funds, Hamilton had her staff created a very detailed needs survey and sent it out to all of the public libraries asking them to report on their greatest needs and challenges; and they all did so in a timely manner.

Hamilton also reached out to the Louisiana Department of Education to determine needs of students across the state including their educational resource needs and their broadband needs to determine areas of collaboration to stretch funds as much as possible. State library staff were then able to collate this data and draft a report on the overall needs of public libraries in Louisiana during the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic.

Hamilton also reported on the cancelation of Louisiana Book Festival due to Covid restrictions and the fact that authors were indicating they would not be able to attend. It was better to make this decision early the foundation would not lose any deposits on all of those things that it pays for only half of the state library. She further reported that the National Book Festival would also be held virtually this year with Johnette Downing representing Louisiana with her book *Bonfires on the Levee: A Louisiana Christmas Tradition*. Hamilton reported that the Louisiana Writer's Award is being planned to be held virtually November 5-10.

Board member David Johnson asked for the floor and said that he wanted to recognize the State Library staff for once again doing whatever it takes to meet the needs of our citizens in a disaster. He stated that even with the challenges with Covid, the State Library is making a tremendous impact that is seen and felt all across the state.

OLD BUSINESS

The 2020 Census was discussed and concern was shown about the turn out for the state with resources based on numbers that are not accurate; numbers are lower than in 2010 after Hurricane Katrina.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to discuss and Lee made a motion to adjourn and Brown declared the meeting adjourned at 11:00am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Hamilton, Secretary
State Library Board of Commissioners

Georgia Brown, Chair
State Library Board of Commissioners