

St. Tammany Parish Library  
Board of Control Meeting  
December 9, 2024  
St. Tammany Parish Council Chambers  
21490 Koop Dr.,  
Mandeville, LA 70471  
6:30 P.M.

Public Comment: A three (3) minute time limit is established for each member of the public wishing to speak (for or against) an item on the agenda. In the case of a Statement of Concern decision, the person who filed the Statement of Concern is given 5 minutes to speak. Please note, all comments must pertain to the agenda item announced. There is no general public comment at the end of the meeting. Any person wishing to comment on a topic not listed on the agenda may do so by e-mailing lboc@stpl.us by 4:00 PM on Monday, December 9, 2024.

AGENDA

Call to order by President and Roll Call by Director

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Library Board of Control that was held on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
  - Public Comment
  - Discussion
  - Vote
2. NEW BUSINESS
  - A. Financial Report – October 2024
    - Public Comment
    - Discussion
    - Vote
  - B. Director’s Report
  - C. Resolution to Amend Statements of Concern about Library Resources Policy to Shorten Public Speaking Time
    - Discussion
    - Public Comment
    - Vote
  - D. Statement of Concern Decision – *The Hate U Give*
    - Discussion
    - Public Comment
    - Vote
  - E. Statement of Concern Decision – *Triangles*
    - Discussion
    - Public Comment
    - Vote
3. Adjournment

**St. Tammany Parish Library  
Board of Control Meeting  
October 30, 2024  
St. Tammany Parish Council Chambers  
21490 Koop Dr.,  
Mandeville, LA 70471  
6:30 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by Ann Shaw, President. Kelly LaRocca, Director, called the roll and declared that a quorum was present.

**Present:** Rev. Robert Belknap, Pam Georges, Carole Gillio, Jill Kesler, Tamarah Myers, Ann Shaw, Parish President Mike Cooper

**Absent:** None

Emily Couvillon with the Civil Division of the District Attorney’s Office was also present as legal counsel for the library.

A. Shaw explained the meeting rules and the rules for public comment. A three-minute time limit is established for each member of the public wishing to speak (for or against) an item on the Agenda. In order to streamline the meeting, all resolutions will no longer be read aloud since they are posted online in the board packet. All votes by the Board will be conducted via roll call.

R. Belknap led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Library Board of Control (LBOC) that was held on October 2, 2024.**

**Discussion:** There were no suggested corrections to the minutes.

**Public Comment:**

Cynthia Weatherly – Abita Springs, LA. She stated that she appreciates the time and effort that the board members are dedicating to serving on the LBOC. She stated that it seems as though some members did not have a chance to review the salary study material prior to the previous board meeting. She stated that preparing properly for meetings would help streamline important discussions and decision making. She stated that the Board should know basic information, such as employee’s salaries, and suggested that they do their homework prior to the meetings.

James Prentice – Covington, LA. He stated that he appreciates the opportunity to speak. He stated that he currently works as CIC (Commissioner in Charge) for the St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court. He congratulated all of the sitting board members and stated that they are legitimate per a federal judge in Orleans Parish. He stated that any voice that wishes to delegitimize the Board’s certification has a jezebel spirit and is speaking untruths. He stated that he prays that God’s divine guidance helps the Board see through the details of the data to make informed decisions with integrity, as expected by the Parish Council who elected them and the citizens of St. Tammany Parish. He spoke about the salary

study and stated that the consultant suggested a 6% increase for 93 of the top 150 employees, which is only two-thirds of the staff. He stated that the budget spreadsheet shows a 6.75% increase for Library Salaries and noted an increase of 5.82% for Employee Benefits.

Donna Bonnoitt – Covington, LA. She questioned why the Parish needs 12 libraries and 150 employees in this age of information. She asked why spend this money when the Parish is drowning in debt. She stated that the library is bloated and overstaffed. She stated that the Parish only needs one library in Mandeville, one in Slidell, one in Madisonville, one in Covington, and maybe one rural library. She stated that Fire District 6 has enough funds to put only one person on a fire truck. She stated that spending \$40,000 on a salary evaluation is absurd. She stated that there are lawsuits paid for by the library and she would like a forensic account of library spending.

C. Gillio addressed C. Weatherly's comment regarding the need for the Board to be more prepared for the meetings. C. Gillio stated that she agrees with C. Weatherly and that it would have been nice to have been given the information that was initially requested from the consultant who prepared the plan. She confirmed that the Board has since been given some of the information, such as how many employees are in a particular position and their salaries. C. Gillio explained that she is an attorney and agrees that preparedness is important.

**Vote:**

R. Belknap moved to approve the minutes of the LBOC meeting held on October 2, 2024. It was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Belknap: Yes Cooper: Yes Georges: Yes Gillio: Yes Kesler: Yes Myers: Yes Shaw: Yes  
Motion carried.

## **2. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Financial Report – September 2024**

**Discussion:**

K. LaRocca reported that the library has not received additional Ad Valorem funds since the last board meeting, leaving the total received as \$12,474,891.98. All State Revenue Sharing funds have been received for the year, bringing the total to \$264,301.40.

The budget percentage for this point in the year should be 75%. Revenues are at 76.44% and expenditures are at 70.29%. K. LaRocca reminded the Board that the Ad Valorem and State Revenue Sharing is credited to us in twelfths on the financial report. K. LaRocca gave explanations for any lines that were over or under budget. Most of the variances are due to when the expenses are due and paid throughout the year. Other notable line explanations are as follows: The Publication of Legal Notices line is under budget due to fewer board meetings this year. The library is required to publish the LBOC meeting minutes in the St. Tammany Farmer. The Signage line will be expended towards the end of the year. The Book Binding line is at zero because book binding is done at the end of the year. The Voice Line and Data Lines (Internet) are below budget due to receiving better pricing mid-year. K. LaRocca noted that this can be adjusted if there is another budget amendment before the end of the year. The Hurricane Disaster Costs line will be in balance before the end of the year as expenses are paid. The Pest

Control line is over budget due to adding the new Outreach Facility to our account. The Consultants line is at 89.39% due to completing the salary study.

J. Kesler asked who are the other consultants. K. LaRocca listed the following consultants who have been paid from the Consultants line this year: Denelle Wrightson, who helped with the Covington, Causeway, and Outreach Facility furniture projects. D. Wrightson helped with selecting furniture, fabric, and managed the bid process. Specialty Vehicle Service put together the specifications for the book hauler vehicle and helped manage the bid process. Transformyx migrated some of our servers, as this was specialty I.T. work that was beyond the capacity of our I.T. department. Installation of the new phone system was also paid out of the Consultants line. The new system saves a significant amount of money on Voice Line costs. As previously mentioned, Gallagher Benefit Consultants conducted the salary study.

The Web Design Consultant line is mostly expended, as payment for our apps are due towards the end of the year. J. Kesler asked if the Web Design Consultant is put out to bid. K. LaRocca clarified that it is not actually a consulting firm. It is the company and software that runs our website. It was put out to bid approximately 7 years ago. K. LaRocca explained that we are currently not in a position to migrate our website, as contracts for these services typically run for numerous years. Since our millage expires at the end of this year, we are unable to enter into a contract that extends over multiple years. K. LaRocca expressed interest in utilizing a new company and redesigning the website, but we will have to wait until after the millage renewal election in March 2025.

K. LaRocca stated that the Landscape Additions line will be expended as Covington's landscaping project begins later this year. J. Kesler asked if that project has gone out for bid yet. K. LaRocca explained that the project is below the threshold for bids, but will require three quotes. K. LaRocca explained that the Telephones & Telephone System line is at zero because the charge was coded to a different line and will be moved to correct the error.

J. Kesler asked what is Integrated Library Automation System. K. LaRocca explained that it is the server for the circulation system.

K. LaRocca stated that the lines under Capital Outlay-Library Resource Acquisitions are expended throughout the year. These are library materials such as books and DVDs. The librarians involved in collection development confirm that these lines will be on target for the year. K. LaRocca noted that we can transfer money between lines if there is a budget amendment before the end of the year.

J. Kesler asked who completes the acquisitions. K. LaRocca explained that each collection is assigned a librarian who is responsible for acquisitions related to that collection. The collections are as follows: Adult, Teen, Children, Reference, Genealogy, Periodicals, and downloadable materials. J. Kesler asked what is the process that they use to acquire materials. K. LaRocca stated that 36% of library materials are patron requests. The staff determines whether or not the item is available to purchase. If it is out of print, staff will check to see if the item is available through ILL (Interlibrary Loan). The staff looks at how many books the library already has on a topic and determines whether or not the item fits with the collection. Staff considers best sellers, circulation statistics, and they follow the Collection Development Policy that is set by the LBOC. The policy includes the criteria for selection, which states that staff cannot purchase items containing sexual conduct for the Children's and Teen collections. The Children's and Teen librarians review the materials to ensure they meet the criteria for selection.

J. Kesler asked if materials pass across K. LaRocca's desk for final approval. K. LaRocca answered no and clarified that if that were the case, approximately 250 items per week would cross her desk for approval. K. LaRocca stated that she relies on the staff to perform those duties. T. Myers asked if the criteria for selection regarding sexual content is a new policy. K. LaRocca stated that the LBOC passed the policy in 2023 to comply with state law.

K. LaRocca reviewed the Capital Expenditures and noted that the Outreach Facility refers to the new Mobile Library Branch. The Outreach FF & E (Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment) line will be in balance as the invoices for the furniture are paid. The Outreach Vehicle line will be in balance as payments are made. Staff are currently working on the Outreach Opening Day Collection and are purchasing more large print materials. Most of the Causeway FF & E has been received and that line will be in balance as payments are made. The Covington FF & E and Acoustic Work line will be in balance as that work is completed and paid for through the end of the year.

K. LaRocca explained that the Board usually has the opportunity to amend the budget three or four times per year. She stated that she hopes to have a budget amendment in December to adjust some of the budget lines.

**Public Comment:**

Cynthia Weatherly – Abita Springs, LA. She highlighted the substantial strain that book challenges have placed on library resources. She estimated that \$72,000 was allocated to handling book challenges. She stated that the library faced 212 challenges this year compared to 1,269 challenges nationwide. She stated that it is inappropriate for staff to volunteer to read the books and that they should be paid for their time. She stated that the staff has done an exceptional job of managing the challenges while staying within budget. She noted that one of the book challengers withdrew 150 challenges after hundreds of hours were already spent addressing those concerns. She stated that she would like to know the actual cost of the book challenges for 2024.

Ruth Terry-Sipos – Abita Springs, LA. She thanked K. LaRocca for the thoroughness of the financial reports. She recalled when Jake Airey, past LBOC member and past Parish Councilman, was complimentary to K. LaRocca and stated that he wished all departments in Parish Government were as thorough as the library has been. She stated that she commends K. LaRocca and appreciates her efforts. She stated that it would be a grievous loss if there was a closure to the Abita Springs Branch.

James Prentice – He stated there was a \$2,200,000 budget increase from 2022 to 2025 for the library to enact its will upon whatever they want to accomplish. He noted a 9% increase in the Public Relations Programming lines, which include Summer Reading Program and t-shirts, Adult Programming, Young Adult Programming, and Juvenile Programming. He noted Professional Services increased by 74.45%. He stated that he wants to shed light on where the money is going and its direction, listing Payroll Services, Financial Consultants, Gallagher Consulting, and Web Design Consultant. He noted the cost of being placed on the election ballot is \$250,000 and added that he must show up for that election because he is a Commissioner in Charge of a precinct. He stated that spending \$250,000 of the public's money on a special election to "put one past the public" is an unwise and inappropriate use of funds when it could be placed on another ballot with other elections taking place. He asked if \$700,000 for furniture at Slidell sounds like a good use of public money. He stated that there are no furniture projects for the Folsom or Abita Springs Branches and the Folsom Branch needs a wobbly table replaced.

E. Couvillon addressed the comments made by J. Prentice regarding the \$250,000 election cost. She clarified that the Parish Council determines what election items are placed on the ballot. The previous LBOC did request for the Parish Council to place the library's millage renewal on the November 2024 ballot with the presidential election, which would have been substantially less expensive. She explained that the Parish Council opted not to do so, and that is why the millage renewal has been placed on the March 2025 ballot. E. Couvillon noted that there will be other election items on that ballot and the cost to the library should be less than \$250,000.

**Vote:**

P. Georges moved to approve the September 2024 Financial Report. It was seconded by President Cooper.

Roll call vote: Belknap: Yes Cooper: Yes Georges: Yes Gillio: Yes Kesler: Yes Myers: Yes Shaw: Yes  
Motion carried.

**B. Director's Report**

K. LaRocca reported on Facilities updates. Covington Branch updates include the completion of sidewalk and drainage work and study carrel "pods" were delivered. A desk, a conference table, and chairs were delivered to the Outreach Facility. Causeway Branch updates include new carpet, rearrangement of adult shelving, new circulation desk, new furniture, a new I.T. network closet, and a short wall was built to separate the children's area from the adult stacks. The Parish Procurement office placed the order for the elevator for the Technical Services building. Administration and Maintenance met with Parish Engineering staff and architect Vaughn Sollberger to go over final plans for the Mandeville renovation and the Technical Services elevator shaft. These projects should go out to bid soon. A brick wall was built surrounding the A/C chillers at Slidell Branch.

J. Kesler asked if the building that is getting an elevator is leased or owned. K. LaRocca answered that it is owned.

K. LaRocca reported on Marketing, Outreach, and Professional Development updates. Staff promoted the library on The Lake and The Highway radio stations. Staff provided outreach services to the following events and groups: Olde Towne Pumpkin Festival, COAST Resource Festival, Folsom Fall Garden Festival, Kiwanis of Folsom, Chamber of Commerce Northshore Expo, Pearl River COAST Center, Bush COAST Center, Slidell COAST Center, Bluesberry Festival, Wildlife and Fisheries: Wild Things event, Monster Mash, and the Wooden Boat Festival.

Staff attended the following meetings, conferences, and workshops: Louisiana Children and Youth Prevention Coalition, Friends of the Slidell Library's Slidell Branch parking lot landscaping project meeting, State Library of Louisiana Administrator's Conference, Leadership Northshore Social Services Day, BiblioCon Virtual conference (website vendor), American Bookmobile and Outreach Services conference, "Doing Delegation Better" webinar, DNA workshop session for the Illinois State Genealogical Society conference, Louisiana Legislative Auditor's Center for Local Government Excellence Fall workshop, and FamilySearch.org database training. All staff members attended the Annual All Staff Training Day.

K. LaRocca noted that the St. Tammany Parish Library has been chosen as an approved research facility by FamilySearch.org. This allows patrons access to more genealogical records that are usually not viewable at locations other than the FamilySearch Library in Utah.

K. LaRocca reported that the 2025 Budget public hearing was advertised for October 30, 2024, and a draft of the budget has been available for inspection on our website and at every library location since August 2024. Two public records request results have been turned over to the District Attorney's Office for review. There are no other open public records requests in the library's possession. There are 115 statements of concern on 112 titles. Library staff continue to read titles, hold meetings, and make recommendations. The remaining statements of concern are still pending review.

K. LaRocca reviewed the latest transition of materials. Since the last board meeting, two graphic novels were moved to the restricted graphic novels collection behind the desk, and 14 Young Adult fiction items were moved to the Adult collection.

K. LaRocca reviewed the September 2024 and year-to-date service statistics. The September statistics showed that total circulation was 76,182, computer usage was 6,124, door count was 40,822, wireless internet inside was 7,118, and wireless internet outside was 6,563. The year-to-date total circulation was 750,786, computer usage was 63,286, door count was 453,044, wireless internet inside was 63,616, and wireless internet outside was 58,452. There were 6,964 new patrons registered for library cards so far this year.

There was disruption from the audience. Johanna Miner asked to give public comment. E. Couvillon explained that there is no public comment on the Director's Report because there is no vote to be taken by the Board. J. Miner called out from the audience and accused K. LaRocca of lying. J. Miner stated that she has an open public records request that she submitted nine months ago in February. E. Couvillon clarified that K. LaRocca is referring to public records requests that were submitted to the library, not J. Miner's public records request to the Parish.

R. Belknap asked to confirm that the wall built around the A/C chillers at Slidell was due to an accident. K. LaRocca confirmed that someone lost control of their vehicle and hit the wall. She stated that the person's insurance covered the repairs.

### **C. 2025 Budget**

#### **Discussion:**

K. LaRocca noted that the 2025 budget covers the library's 75<sup>th</sup> year in service. K. LaRocca explained that the expected revenue numbers for 2025 were provided to the library by the Assessor's Office and the St. Tammany Parish Department of Finance. Since the figures are estimates, the revenue is budgeted conservatively. Expected expenditures are based on the three previous years, and budget discussions about the upcoming year were held with each library department.

K. LaRocca explained that the library will operate on a revenue of \$13,074,922 in 2025. The primary source (97%) of the library's 2025 income will be a 5.35 mil property tax millage – 4.54 mils for operations and .81 mils for capital improvements to library buildings. This millage rate is reduced from the 5.78 we received previously so that we do not unduly benefit from the rise in assessments. The remaining three percent of the library's income comes from state revenue sharing, fines, fees,



interest, and donations.

K. LaRocca reviewed the expenditure lines and explained that the increases and decreases are due to several factors, such as the economy affecting the cost of supplies, the strategic plan being in the implementation phase, the upcoming Mandeville Branch renovation, and the March 2025 millage election. K. LaRocca highlighted some of the notable changes in budget lines and gave explanations for each adjustment.

J. Kesler asked if a Human Resources (HR) person has been hired. K. LaRocca stated that she has not yet hired an HR person, as that position's salary is budgeted for 2025. She explained that hiring someone before the millage election would be challenging, as it would be tough to find a highly qualified candidate willing to stay long-term without the assurance of guaranteed funding. J. Kesler asked how HR is handled in the meantime. K. LaRocca stated that those duties are split between herself and the two Assistant Directors. If a serious issue arises, they confer with an HR consultant or legal counsel for Parish Government. Interviewing for open positions, hiring, and onboarding is done by Library Administration and training is done at the branches.

J. Kesler asked if K. LaRocca has anticipated how much the Books By Mail service will cost. K. LaRocca confirmed that the estimated costs for the service was calculated based on discussions with other libraries that have that service. T. Myers asked who are those who will be best served by this service. K. LaRocca explained that it will be piloted with COAST's Meals on Wheels program for people who cannot leave their house. She added that this service is a result of input from focus groups during the strategic planning process. J. Kesler asked if the library will be proactive and have the Mobile Library vehicle visit nursing homes and other locations. K. LaRocca confirmed that the Mobile Library will provide Lobby Stop service to nursing homes, and this is the primary purpose of the Mobile Library vehicle. She explained that we are piloting the program with COAST, then we will pick a nursing facility on each side of the Parish for further piloting.

In response to the increased building lease expense for the Causeway Branch, J. Kesler asked how much is the lease agreement. K. LaRocca answered that it is \$15,625 per month.

K. LaRocca explained that any unused money at the end of the year becomes Prior Years' Operating Revenue. After all bills were paid for December 2023 and after the auditors made their adjustments in March 2024, the cash on hand was \$5,881,020. Based on the projected year end of 2024, where we have a planned usage of savings, we will have \$5,764,390 on December 31, 2024. This figure is less than half of one year's operating revenue. These savings are dedicated to the following specific purposes: Operational reserves needed to run the library until the first significant portion of our millage is received from the Parish, disaster and emergency funds, and a proposed dedication of savings in the amount of \$250,000 for the millage election. K. LaRocca noted that if the library is not on the ballot alone, the number can be reduced accordingly. Funds for the furniture projects for the Mandeville, Slidell, and Lacombe branches are designated, but not budgeted. The furniture purchases will be coordinated with the start of those projects.

This leaves a current Unassigned Savings of \$254,390, which puts the library in good stead to fund any projects identified as we continue to implement the strategic plan. K. LaRocca is forecasting an increase in revenue of \$239,970 due to an increase in Ad Valorem taxes as part of average growth. She anticipates an increase in expenditures of \$102,587 due to the increased costs for employee salaries and



the cost of the millage election. Other than the planned usage of savings for the millage election, the operational budget for 2025 is balanced.

C. Gillio followed up on J. Prentice's earlier comments about the \$700,000 cost of furniture for Slidell. She stated that she was also perplexed at the amount upon her initial review. C. Gillio clarified that she now understands that the \$700,000 is not budgeted to be spent on Slidell furnishings in 2025. Regarding the millage election, she mentioned that we are asking the public—who are already unhappy with high insurance costs and new assessments—to vote for an additional tax in March. She stated that it would be helpful to have more detailed explanations regarding certain costs and asked K. LaRocca to briefly explain how procurement for furniture takes place.

K. LaRocca explained that the Capital Projects spreadsheet shows the funds that are earmarked for remaining projects. Over the last 10 years, furniture at each branch has been replaced, except for Mandeville and Slidell. Any furniture projects over \$30,000 has to go out to bid, which is why the library uses consultants to help with the bid process. K. LaRocca noted that the Covington Branch furniture replacement project cost was \$550,000 about five years ago. Furniture throughout the branches is systematically replaced over time due to aging and the furniture at the Slidell Branch is now 35 years old. All of the small branches have gotten a refresh of new furniture, including new circulation desks, new tables and chairs, shelving, and rearrangement of the spaces. K. LaRocca reiterated that the money is estimated and earmarked, but is not budgeted. She clarified that the Board would have to vote for the funds to be part of the budget for those funds to be spent. She stated that the funds will stay earmarked unless the Board wishes to use it for another purpose.

M. Cooper asked if the cost of the furniture is higher due to being institutional furniture. K. LaRocca confirmed that institutional furniture is more expensive because it has to last a significant amount of time and it endures heavy duty use by the public. Institutional furniture used in schools and libraries is designed to a higher construction standard, making it a worthwhile investment as it is built to last for over 30 years. M. Cooper asked if this furniture cost is for the addition to Slidell or the existing space. K. LaRocca stated that it is for both the replacement of existing furniture and new furniture for the addition.

R. Belknap addressed an earlier comment about salaries. He stated that he wants to make sure that people understand that K. LaRocca, as well as the two Assistant Directors, opted out of receiving a raise in order to ensure that employees on the lower end of the scale will get a raise. K. LaRocca confirmed that is correct.

**Public Hearing:**

A. Shaw called for a motion to open the public hearing for the 2025 budget. M. Cooper moved to open the public hearing. It was seconded by R. Belknap.

Roll call vote: Belknap: Yes Cooper: Yes Georges: Yes Gillio: Yes Kesler: Yes Myers: Yes Shaw: Yes  
Motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

Cynthia Weatherly – Abita Springs, LA. She commended the program being piloted with COAST. She stated that she is happy to pay \$35 per year for libraries across the Parish. She spoke highly about library

services. She spoke about the strain placed on the library's resources and stated that it is crucial to consider strategies for future budgeting, handling book challenges, and potential lawsuits. She stated that budgeting for robust intellectual freedom policies and transparent challenge processes can help minimize the operational strain and financial impact of book challenges. She stated that it is important to balance the needs of the entire community. She asked for the Board to include additional budgetary funds for current and additional staff to handle book challenges.

Joan Simon – Covington, LA. She stated that she would like to correct some statements made earlier by other members of the public. She stated that she casts no aspersions to anyone on the Board and appreciates their work, but the legal challenge has not been exhausted yet. She stated that there was a preliminary injunction that was denied and there is still a pending court case. She asked for the public to stop spreading misinformation. She stated that all of the reports show how well that K. LaRocca manages the library's money and is an excellent steward of the library. She stated that St. Tammany Parish has a diversity of citizens and the library has a diversity of services. She thanked the staff and the Board for their work. She asked the Board to approve the budget.

James Prentice – He gave a cost analysis for an individual to visit the library. He stated it was \$22 per visit in 2022 and is now up to \$22.75 per visit in 2024. He stated that if you forget your library card or an overdue book in your vehicle, the cost goes up to \$45.44. He asked if the LBOC has met with the community advisory committee or library staff. He stated that those groups are responsible for the strategic plan. He stated that the strategic plan lists the names of all the people on the community advisory committee and names of people who gave personal interviews. He stated that Parish President Mike Cooper was involved in that process. He stated that the key themes are digital inequity, marketing and communications, customer service, technology, and RFID (Radio Frequency Identification). He asked what is RFID. He mentioned that the LBOC has been in place for five months and inquired whether they are meeting with all the right people to ensure that they can make intelligent and informed decisions. He stated that the board members were elected because of the integrity they showed in their interviews with the Council.

Lisa Rustemeyer – Mandeville, LA. She stated that she is always impressed and amazed at the presentations and K. LaRocca's ability to keep track of data and field questions. She stated that she trusts the librarians to know what the community needs and they are always working and adapting to changes. She read excerpts from LA R.S. 25:31 that refers to citizens' rights to convenient access to library resources. She stated that libraries are so much more than furniture. She spoke about the value the library provides to families and the training and education available to job seekers. She stated that she is in support of the budget.

Johanna Miner – She thanked everyone on the Board for offering their service. She stated that the Board does not get paid for their service, but the Director and Assistant Directors do get paid. She stated that she is praying and hoping that the Board will be helpful in stopping what is happening in St. Tammany Parish. She stated that she does not agree with the budget and feels that the library spends way too much money. J. Miner accused K. LaRocca of lying and stated that she sent a public records request to the library. A. Shaw informed J. Miner that her comments should stay on the topic of the proposed budget. J. Miner stated that she has the public records request and referred to paperwork that she had in her hands. She asked who is protecting Jeff Corbin, a Parish Councilmember.

Rebecca Taylor – Slidell, LA. She referenced the 2023 statistical report from the State Library of Louisiana (*Public Libraries in Louisiana: A Statistical Report*) which is available on the State Library of Louisiana’s website. She compared St. Tammany Parish Library’s local per capita revenue to four other parish library systems that are similar in population. Shreve Memorial Library - \$85.54, Calcasieu Parish Library - \$76.63, New Orleans Public Library - \$59.93, Lafayette Parish Library - \$46.84, and St. Tammany Parish Library - \$39.45. She urged the Board to view the report and stated that it is a very important publication produced by the State Library and contains innumerable statistics for libraries across the state. She stated that the budget should be approved for 2025. She thanked the Board for their time.

Donna Bonnoitt – She expressed her disapproval of the budget and called for a forensic audit of the 2025 budget. She stated that \$700,000 for furnishings is outrageous. She explained that she is a designer and places furniture in homes. She stated that a beautiful house can be built for \$700,000. She referenced the Books by Mail partnership with COAST. She stated that people have computers and that electronic passage of data is very affordable. She stated that she has placed commercial and industrial furniture in places and that \$700,000 is ridiculous. She referenced the lease at the Causeway Branch and stated that \$15,000 to rent a commercial location is ridiculous. She stated that the Causeway Branch is not in a good location, as it is hard to access and hard to park. She stated that there is something fishy going on and she does not approve of the budget.

Becky Bohm – She referenced the salary study and stated that she hopes it is implemented, but stated that it is still barely a living wage. She stated that the previous speaker’s store is not a good comparison, as the store was not as big as the library system. She stated that the partnership with COAST is beneficial to senior citizens who cannot access a computer. She stated that libraries are here to serve all of the community.

Jeff Corbin – Slidell, LA. He stated that he is speaking as a private citizen. He referenced the earlier question from J. Prentice regarding RFID. He explained that it is simplistic technology where an RFID tag is placed inside a book and helps with checking out items. He encouraged the Board and the audience to take a look at the presentation from the community meeting that was held in March 2024, as it answers a lot of questions. He also suggested reviewing a presentation that was given to the previous Parish Council located on the library’s website. He stated that he supports R. Taylor’s comments regarding the per capita revenue and noted that the median cost is relatively low compared to those around us. He stated that there were questions raised about the total value of the library budget and explained that the library is running 12 facilities. He noted that other entities, such as the District Attorney’s Office, operate in facilities that are provided to them and they do not own the buildings. He encouraged the public to look at the facts and information, as it is readily available on the library’s website. He stated that he supports the budget.

A. Shaw called for a motion to close the public hearing for the 2025 budget. C. Gillio moved to close the public hearing. It was seconded by R. Belknap.

Roll call vote: Belknap: Yes Cooper: Yes Georges: Yes Gillio: Yes Kesler: Yes Myers: Yes Shaw: Yes  
Motion carried.

**Discussion:** There was no further discussion by the Board.

**Vote:**

P. Georges moved to adopt the 2025 Budget. It was seconded by R. Belknap.

Roll call vote: Belknap: Yes Cooper: Yes Georges: Yes Gillio: Yes Kesler: Yes Myers: Yes Shaw: Yes  
Motion carried.

**D. Designation of Capital Funds – Lacombe Branch**

**Discussion:**

K. LaRocca referenced the Capital Projects spreadsheet. She noted that the items highlighted in green are projects and funds that have been designated by the LBOC and budgeted by the Parish. The items in yellow are the projects being discussed at the board meeting. The items in blue are not yet designated by the LBOC or budgeted by the Parish. K. LaRocca explained why the RFID project is delayed and why she is not yet asking the Board to dedicate funds for the core costs of the Lacombe Branch replacement and the Slidell Branch expansion and renovation. The reason is that the funds will be needed to run the library if the millage renewal fails in March 2025.

K. LaRocca explained that she is asking for the Board to dedicate capital funds for the architectural and design services needed for the Lacombe Branch replacement. The land for the new library is a parcel of vacant land located on the south side of Highway 190. The back of the property lines up with the Tammany Trace. It is near Bayou Lacombe Middle School and is on the same side of the street as Chahta-Ima Elementary School, which is within walking distance. Those students would no longer need to cross the street to visit the library. The lot should be able to support a 6,000 - 7,000 square foot building, which is approximately the size of the South Slidell Branch. The new branch will include a meeting room and study spaces. K. LaRocca noted that the current Lacombe Branch was the most heavily visited small branch in 2023.

K LaRocca reported that after speaking with the Parish Engineering department, it was determined that \$300,000 should be more than enough for the architectural and design services. She explained that any leftover funding will go towards the construction of the new branch. She clarified that this resolution does not designate funds for the project itself, as we must wait until after the millage election before moving forward with designating funds for the construction. In the meantime, the architect can collect and record the input of the community, library staff, and the library board on what they would like to see in the new library. In order for the Parish to secure an architect, the LBOC will need to adopt a resolution to designate the funding.

J. Kesler asked if this will be put out to bid. K. LaRocca explained that the library does not oversee this task, as it is handled by the Parish. E. Couvillon clarified that architectural and design services cannot be put out to bid, per Louisiana's Public Bid Law. Instead, the Parish goes through an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) process and the applications are reviewed. The cost cannot be considered as a determining factor, as they must consider the best quality of services over the least expensive option.

C. Gillio asked if the \$300,000 is for architectural services only. K. LaRocca clarified that it is for architectural and design services from beginning to end, which includes drawing the plans and

overseeing the management of the project. She explained that the cost is typically calculated as a percentage of the cost of the building. K. LaRocca reiterated that the Board is only designating enough funds for the Parish to find an architect to do the work.

C. Gillio asked how long the entire project will take. K. LaRocca stated that it usually takes a couple of months to get an architect under contract and collecting input from the community will take another couple of months. K. LaRocca said she is hopeful that the plans will be drawn up by the end of 2025. She stated that a project like this takes a couple of years to complete from beginning to end. C. Gillio asked how many square feet is the building anticipated to be. K. LaRocca answered approximately 6,000 - 7,000 sq. ft.

A. Shaw asked K. LaRocca about her discussions with Parish Engineering. K. LaRocca stated that they anticipate the cost of the design services to be under \$300,000, but wanted to make sure enough funds are designated in order to avoid going back and forth to request and designate more money. She reiterated that any unused funds will roll over to construction costs.

C. Gillio asked if the Lacombe Branch will be going from 1,500 sq. ft. to 7,000 sq. ft. K. LaRocca expects it to be closer to 6,500 sq. ft. and compared it to the size of the South Slidell Branch.

**Public Comment:**

Cynthia Weatherly – Abita Springs, LA. She disagreed with an earlier public comment stating that the internet is widely available and inexpensive. She stated that 17% of Louisiana residents do not have internet access. A. Shaw reminded C. Weatherly that her comments should be related to the Lacombe library. C. Weatherly stated that Lacombe is experiencing expanding growth, which increases the need for library resources. She stated that libraries serve as community centers offering educational programs, computer access, and job searching resources. She stated that more space will enable the library to provide these services more effectively. She stated that libraries are not luxuries.

Johanna Miner – She stated that she knows the community well, as she has volunteered at many schools in St. Tammany Parish. She stated that she does not believe that Lacombe needs a new library. She stated that mothers and grandmothers have taken kids to the Lacombe library and have found egregious books. She stated there is no reason to expand the library to include more filth. She stated that she prays that a new library in Lacombe does not happen. She stated that she prays that the Director (K. LaRocca) and two Assistant Directors (B. Geiger and T. DiMaggio) will eventually be gone and she blamed them for purchasing the books.

Becky Bohm – She stated that she supports the new Lacombe Branch and stated that Louisiana has the 5<sup>th</sup> lowest literacy rate in the United States. She stated that there are no sexually explicit books in the library due to the new law and the library has gone above and beyond to ensure that. She stated that librarians just want children to read and any access to libraries is beneficial to the community.

Donna Bonnoitt – She stated that she does not agree with the Lacombe Branch replacement. She stated that \$300,000 to oversee the building of a 6,000 sq. ft. building is unrealistic. She stated that prices are increasing every week for construction. She stated that she does not understand why there is a \$14,000,000 budget next year. She asked why we cannot use money already in the coffers. A. Shaw reminded D. Bonnoitt that her comments should be related to the Lacombe library. D. Bonnoitt stated that she is on topic and speaking about the budget. A. Shaw explained that the Lacombe library is the

agenda item being discussed, not the budget. D. Bonnoitt stated that it is an unrealistic budget for that library.

Joe Impastato – He thanked the Board for serving and thanked K. LaRocca for her hard work. He stated that the Lacombe Branch was back up and running three days after receiving significant damage from Hurricane Francine. He spoke highly of the future location of the new branch and its proximity to Chahta-Ima Elementary School. He stated that he is working on safer connectivity from Bayou Lacombe Middle School to the new library location. He stated that there is no community with a greater need for a new library than Lacombe. He stated that his primary goal in running for office was to make improvements for the children in the Lacombe and District #7 community, as well as throughout the Parish. He stated that the new Lacombe library will be the jewel of the improvements in District #7. He encouraged the Board to support the project.

Lisa Rustemeyer – She stated that she lives closer to Lacombe now and referenced the census showing that some Lacombe residents live below the poverty line. She stated that the library is a tremendous value to the residents and it is important to uplift the community. She stated that she trusts the librarians to understand the needs of the Parish and the need for a new Lacombe library.

R. Belknap asked how many more employees will be needed to service the new facility. K. LaRocca stated that is one of the reasons for the people counters, as they will provide accurate statistics of where staff are needed. She estimates needing at least two additional employees for the new branch, but plans to redirect staff from other branches.

C. Gillio asked if the design services are being capped at \$300,000. K. LaRocca confirmed that capping it at \$300,000 is the best way to describe it. She explained that the Parish will get quotes and the cost is expected to be under \$300,000. C. Gillio asked if there will be a general contractor over this project. K. LaRocca confirmed that contractors will bid on the construction portion of the project in the construction phase. C. Gillio clarified that she has no problem with designating funds to build the Lacombe library, but is taken aback by the \$300,000 for the architect. She stated that the amount appears to be too high.

**Vote:**

R. Belknap moved to adopt the resolution to designate \$300,000 in capital funds for the architectural and design services needed for the Lacombe Branch replacement. It was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Belknap: Yes Cooper: Yes Georges: Yes Gillio: Abstained Kesler: Abstained  
Myers: Yes Shaw: Yes

Motion carried.

**E. Designation of Capital Funds – Slidell Branch**

**Discussion:**

K. LaRocca reported that the Slidell Branch Addition is part of the capital projects list presented to the Parish Council. The goal was to add 4,000 - 6,000 sq. ft. to the building, but due to the need for a roof replacement the amount of additional space will be contingent on the cost of the roof. The plan includes renovations such as carpeting, painting, and reorganizing the space in the existing building. The addition

will possibly include study rooms, a storytime room, and a maker space. K. LaRocca explained that there are rooms with those functions at the Madisonville and Covington branches, but none on the east side of the Parish. The goal is for the Parish to find an architect that will find a solution to the roof along with drawing up the plans for the addition. K. LaRocca explained that the addition will need to tie into the roof replacement.

K. LaRocca reported that after speaking with the Parish Engineering department, it was determined that \$300,000 should be enough for the architecture and design services. They indicated that the project's cost will indeed be near the estimated \$300,000 due to the need for an engineer to develop a plan for the roof replacement. Any leftover funds will go towards construction of the project. K. LaRocca clarified that the Board is not designating funds for the project itself, as we must wait until after the millage election before moving forward with that phase of the project. K. LaRocca reiterated that the funds for that project will be needed to run the library if the millage renewal fails. She emphasized that the roof will need to be replaced whether the millage renewal passes or fails. In order for the Parish to secure an architect, the Board will need to adopt a resolution to designate the funding.

J. Kesler asked if there is a way to split the two projects. K. LaRocca explained that the goal is to ensure that the roof and the addition fit together seamlessly. She confirmed that once the time comes to designate funds for construction, it can be designated in phases, and the Board does not need to designate the full amount at once.

R. Belknap asked if additional employees will be needed due to the increased size of the branch. K. LaRocca replied that there are no plans to add more staff.

C. Gillio stated that she completely understands that both an engineer and an architect are needed for this project.

**Public Comment:**

Cynthia Weatherly – Abita Springs, LA. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to advocate for an investment that can transform the community. She stated that libraries have been a pillar of our education, opportunity, and community growth. She stated that 15.6% of Slidell residents live below the poverty line. She stated that the library is a necessity. She stated that well-funded and well-maintained libraries can break down barriers by providing accessible tools for education, building skills, job preparedness, and creating opportunities for advancement.

Johanna Miner – She stated that K. LaRocca is not telling the truth regarding J. Miner's public records request. She asked who is protecting Jeff Corbin, then asked if Mike Cooper or Collin Sims is protecting Jeff Corbin. J. Miner left the podium.

C. Gillio declared a Point of Order for everyone in attendance following disruption in the audience.

Becky Bohm – She stated that she supports the funding for the improvements to the Slidell Branch.

Donna Bonnoitt – She stated that she is concerned about unrealistic expectations for these improvements. She compared building a library for \$300,000 and furnishing one for \$700,000. She stated that the roof will cost more than \$300,000. She stated that she would like to know how many



people come in and out of the library. She asked if the library keeps track of busy times. She stated that the expenses in the library are ridiculous.

C. Gillio asked for clarification that the \$300,000 is for architectural design and engineering, not the cost of the roof or construction. K. LaRocca confirmed that is correct.

R. Belknap asked if it is state law that the architect who designs the building has to supervise the construction and that they will be there to ensure that it is built in accordance with the plans and specifications. E. Couvillon confirmed that is correct.

A. Shaw asked K. LaRocca to further clarify that the cost of the architect is not the cost of the building. K. LaRocca reiterated that the \$300,000 is not for the actual construction. It is for the engineering and architectural services, as well as the cost for supervising the project.

R. Belknap stated that it could cost less than \$300,000 and K. LaRocca confirmed that is correct. K. LaRocca reiterated that it is the Parish who handles selecting and managing the contract.

**Vote:**

R. Belknap moved to adopt the resolution to designate capital funds for the architectural and design services needed for the Slidell Branch addition and renovation. It was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Belknap: Yes Cooper: Yes Georges: Yes Gillio: Yes Kesler: Yes Myers: Yes Shaw: Yes  
Motion carried.

**F. Board Meeting Schedule 2025**

**Discussion:**

B. Geiger presented the board meeting schedule for 2025. There are nine meetings scheduled, most of which are on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

J. Kesler asked why there is no January meeting. B. Geiger explained that the end of year financial statement is usually not ready in January, so the first meeting takes place in February. J. Kesler noted that between now and February 2025 there is only one meeting in December. B. Geiger confirmed that is correct. K. LaRocca explained that the bylaws require that the Board meets five times per year. She explained that the month of June is skipped due to the Summer Reading Program, confirmed B. Geiger's explanation of why there is no meeting in January, and stated that there is no meeting in November due to Thanksgiving.

T. Myers asked about the door count for Madisonville Branch on the service statistics for September. She asked if the door count was a misprint, as it seems low compared to the other branches. K. LaRocca stated that she will verify the figures and will report back to her.

In response to J. Kesler's comment about the number of meetings, E. Couvillon clarified that if time-sensitive business comes up during the year, the Board can schedule special meetings with 24 hours' notice to comply with Louisiana's Open Meetings law.

**Public Comment:**

Cynthia Weatherly – Abita Springs, LA. She stated that she is concerned about how the Board is going to address 150 book challenges over the next year with this limited schedule. She suggested increasing the number of meetings so that the issue can be addressed, unless there is another solution.

**Vote:**

C. Gillio moved to approve the 2025 Board Meeting Schedule. It was seconded by P. Georges.

Roll call vote: Belknap: Yes Cooper: Yes Georges: Yes Gillio: Yes Kesler: Yes Myers: Yes Shaw: Yes  
Motion carried.

**3. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by R. Belknap and was seconded by P. Georges. All were in favor, none were opposed, and none were absent. Motion carried.

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Pam Georges, Secretary/Treasurer



**St. Tammany Parish Library - General Fund  
Balance Sheet  
October 31, 2024**

2

**ASSETS**

**Current Assets**

Cash	\$	8,423,958.03
Cash - Health Claims		(12,670.30)
Due from Paylocity		726.78
Returned Checks		0.00
Ad Valorem Receivable - 2024		10,395,742.50
Ad Valorem Receivable - 2022		0.00
Ad Valorem Receivable - 2023		0.00
Due from State of Louisiana		204,725.92
Prepaid Expenses		29,265.56

**Total Current Assets** **19,041,748.49**

**Other Assets**

Deposits		1,981.00
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**Total Other Assets** **1,981.00**

**Total Assets** **\$ 19,043,729.49**

**LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE**

**Current Liabilities**

Accrued Expenses	\$	32,787.00
Accrued Salaries		186,574.09
Deferred Inflows - Ad Valorem		357,579.00
Elective Benefits Payable		(2,756.25)
Retirement Payable		68,928.10
Health Claims Payable		196,493.55
Due to Employee		219.82

**Total Current Liabilities** **839,825.31**

**Fund Balance**

Fund Balance		18,203,904.18
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**Total Fund Balance** **18,203,904.18**

**Total Liabilities & Fund Balance** **\$ 19,043,729.49**

**St. Tammany Parish Library**  
**Statement of Changes in Fund Balance**  
**For the Ten Months Ending October 31, 2024**

3

Beginning Fund Balance	\$	17,448,487.03
Net Income		755,417.15
		<hr/>
Ending Fund Balance	\$	<u>18,203,904.18</u>



**St. Tammany Parish Library-General Fund  
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures  
For the Ten Months Ending October 31, 2024**

4

	<u>Current Period Actual</u>	<u>Year to Date Actual</u>	<u>Yearly Total Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>YTD Act to YTD Budget</u>
<b>Revenues</b>					
Ad Valorem Taxes	\$ 1,039,574.25	\$ 10,534,003.98	12,474,891.00	1,940,887.02	84.44
State Revenue Sharing	22,025.17	220,251.70	264,302.04	44,050.34	83.33
Fines/Fees	7,590.45	81,505.55	76,000.00	(5,505.55)	107.24
Interest Income	13,950.08	176,650.87	194,000.00	17,349.13	91.06
Insurance Proceeds	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Donations Received	432.48	17,272.66	50,000.00	32,727.34	34.55
Miscellaneous Income	0.00	4,618.28	0.00	(4,618.28)	0.00
Summer Reading Shirt Sales	0.00	1,409.68	2,120.00	710.32	66.49
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>1,083,572.43</b>	<b>11,035,712.72</b>	<b>13,061,313.04</b>	<b>2,025,600.32</b>	<b>84.49</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Library Administration	405,622.08	4,502,387.42	5,705,000.00	1,202,612.58	78.92
Employee Benefits	142,674.89	1,747,015.84	2,311,480.00	564,464.16	75.58
Advertising,Dues & Subscriptio	5,720.90	30,945.45	55,500.00	24,554.55	55.76
Signage	0.00	774.38	2,000.00	1,225.62	38.72
Printing, Duplicating & Bindin	395.50	13,786.14	23,000.00	9,213.86	59.94
Promotional Production	1,629.42	14,941.12	15,000.00	58.88	99.61
Utilities	30,885.04	252,281.41	337,470.00	85,188.59	74.76
Communications	6,929.41	88,144.06	135,800.00	47,655.94	64.91
Leases	26,424.52	268,647.12	331,750.00	63,102.88	80.98
Maintenance of Property & Equi	34,202.75	563,973.78	688,750.00	124,776.22	81.88
Maintenance Services (Building	22,485.82	201,168.36	271,605.00	70,436.64	74.07
Professional Services	20,541.94	232,841.24	279,425.00	46,583.76	83.33
Insurance and Claims	0.00	298,120.16	298,414.00	293.84	99.90
Operating Supplies	18,831.04	166,702.08	192,950.00	26,247.92	86.40
Travel & Continuing Education	6,820.38	36,544.62	69,000.00	32,455.38	52.96
Public Relations/Programming	7,800.50	93,060.11	125,200.00	32,139.89	74.33
Capital Outlay-Non-Book Acq.	52,818.75	405,457.36	572,000.00	166,542.64	70.88
Capital Outlay-library Res. Ac	143,577.80	1,190,668.11	1,437,500.00	246,831.89	82.83
Outreach	52,358.11	172,836.81	425,000.00	252,163.19	40.67
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>979,718.85</b>	<b>10,280,295.57</b>	<b>13,276,844.00</b>	<b>2,996,548.43</b>	<b>77.43</b>
<b>Excess of Revenues/(Expenditur</b>	<b>\$ 103,853.58</b>	<b>\$ 755,417.15</b>	<b>(215,530.96)</b>	<b>(970,948.11)</b>	<b>(350.49)</b>

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**



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**St. Tammany Parish Library-General Fund  
Schedule of Expenditures  
For the Ten Months Ending October 31, 2024**

	<u>Current Period Actual</u>	<u>Year to Date Actual</u>	<u>Yearly Total Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>YTD Actual to YTD Budget</u>
<b>Library Administration</b>					
Library Salaries	\$ 405,622.08	\$ 4,502,387.42	\$ 5,705,000.00	1,202,612.58	78.92
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 405,622.08</b>	<b>\$ 4,502,387.42</b>	<b>\$ 5,705,000.00</b>	<b>1,202,612.58</b>	<b>78.92</b>
<b>Employee Benefits</b>					
FICA/ Supplemental Retirement	\$ 8,910.72	\$ 99,074.82	\$ 120,000.00	20,925.18	82.56
Retirement Contributions	45,034.95	447,024.28	531,480.00	84,455.72	84.11
Health Insurance Expense	24,970.83	266,126.83	440,000.00	173,873.17	60.48
Health Trust	63,758.39	916,163.05	1,197,000.00	280,836.95	76.54
Worker's Compensation Expense	0.00	18,626.86	22,000.00	3,373.14	84.67
Employee Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 142,674.89</b>	<b>\$ 1,747,015.84</b>	<b>\$ 2,311,480.00</b>	<b>564,464.16</b>	<b>75.58</b>
<b>Advertising, Dues &amp; Subscriptions</b>					
Publication of Legal Notices	\$ 0.00	\$ 4,162.49	\$ 15,500.00	11,337.51	26.85
Membership Dues	0.00	5,465.00	7,500.00	2,035.00	72.87
Advertising	5,720.90	21,317.96	32,500.00	11,182.04	65.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,720.90</b>	<b>\$ 30,945.45</b>	<b>\$ 55,500.00</b>	<b>24,554.55</b>	<b>55.76</b>
<b>Signage</b>					
Signage	\$ 0.00	\$ 774.38	\$ 2,000.00	1,225.62	38.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 774.38</b>	<b>\$ 2,000.00</b>	<b>1,225.62</b>	<b>38.72</b>
<b>Printing, Duplicating &amp; Binding</b>					
Printing	\$ 395.50	\$ 9,092.62	\$ 13,000.00	3,907.38	69.94
Book Binding	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
Patron Cards	0.00	4,693.52	5,000.00	306.48	93.87
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 395.50</b>	<b>\$ 13,786.14</b>	<b>\$ 23,000.00</b>	<b>9,213.86</b>	<b>59.94</b>
<b>Promotional Production</b>					
Promotional Production	\$ 1,629.42	\$ 14,941.12	\$ 15,000.00	58.88	99.61
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,629.42</b>	<b>\$ 14,941.12</b>	<b>\$ 15,000.00</b>	<b>58.88</b>	<b>99.61</b>

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**St. Tammany Parish Library-General Fund  
Schedule of Expenditures  
For the Ten Months Ending October 31, 2024**

	<u>Current Period Actual</u>	<u>Year to Date Actual</u>	<u>Yearly Total Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>YTD Actual to YTD Budget</u>
<b>Utilities</b>					
Electricity	\$ 26,607.22	\$ 214,781.63	\$ 287,220.00	72,438.37	74.78
Gas	149.79	2,025.71	3,250.00	1,224.29	62.33
Water	4,128.03	35,474.07	47,000.00	11,525.93	75.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 30,885.04</b>	<b>\$ 252,281.41</b>	<b>\$ 337,470.00</b>	<b>85,188.59</b>	<b>74.76</b>
<b>Communications</b>					
Postage	\$ 73.80	\$ 10,268.86	\$ 19,000.00	8,731.14	54.05
Voice Line	4,282.41	52,545.82	77,500.00	24,954.18	67.80
Data Lines (Internet)	2,573.20	25,176.94	38,300.00	13,123.06	65.74
Courier/Shipping	0.00	152.44	1,000.00	847.56	15.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,929.41</b>	<b>\$ 88,144.06</b>	<b>\$ 135,800.00</b>	<b>47,655.94</b>	<b>64.91</b>
<b>Leases</b>					
Building Lease Expense	\$ 26,424.52	\$ 266,173.94	\$ 323,000.00	56,826.06	82.41
Equipment Lease Expense	0.00	2,473.18	6,000.00	3,526.82	41.22
Vehicle Lease Expense	0.00	0.00	2,750.00	2,750.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 26,424.52</b>	<b>\$ 268,647.12</b>	<b>\$ 331,750.00</b>	<b>63,102.88</b>	<b>80.98</b>
<b>Maintenance of Property &amp; Equipment</b>					
Custodial and Janitorial	\$ 16,592.05	\$ 183,110.21	\$ 215,000.00	31,889.79	85.17
Grounds/Lawn Maintenance	7,173.00	62,302.00	85,000.00	22,698.00	73.30
Maintenance Supplies	871.31	6,971.44	10,000.00	3,028.56	69.71
Fuel & Lube	4,225.33	22,895.70	33,000.00	10,104.30	69.38
Vehicle Repairs	21.99	8,743.54	10,000.00	1,256.46	87.44
Small Tools	0.00	2,793.53	3,000.00	206.47	93.12
Office Machine & Equip Repair	0.00	718.52	1,000.00	281.48	71.85
Network Utility Software	2,094.00	152,426.95	157,250.00	4,823.05	96.93
Solinet (OCLC) Cost	853.45	31,820.27	32,000.00	179.73	99.44
Polaris Maintenance	0.00	54,914.33	55,000.00	85.67	99.84
PC Network Maintenance & Repai	0.00	8,091.65	11,500.00	3,408.35	70.36
Hurricane Disaster Costs	2,371.62	29,185.64	76,000.00	46,814.36	38.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 34,202.75</b>	<b>\$ 563,973.78</b>	<b>\$ 688,750.00</b>	<b>124,776.22</b>	<b>81.88</b>
<b>Maintenance of Services (Buildings)</b>					
Physical Plant	\$ 12,286.85	\$ 129,109.03	\$ 150,000.00	20,890.97	86.07
Plumbing, Heating and AC	2,563.26	46,753.83	66,500.00	19,746.17	70.31
Electrical	226.34	3,388.61	13,000.00	9,611.39	26.07
Sanitation	359.37	6,101.89	12,000.00	5,898.11	50.85
Pest Control	660.00	6,280.00	7,550.00	1,270.00	83.18



**St. Tammany Parish Library-General Fund**  
**Schedule of Expenditures**  
**For the Ten Months Ending October 31, 2024**

8

	<u>Current Period Actual</u>	<u>Year to Date Actual</u>	<u>Yearly Total Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>YTD Actual to YTD Budget</u>
Termite Contract	0.00	2,270.00	4,555.00	2,285.00	49.84
Carpet Cleaning	6,390.00	7,265.00	18,000.00	10,735.00	40.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 22,485.82</b>	<b>\$ 201,168.36</b>	<b>\$ 271,605.00</b>	<b>70,436.64</b>	<b>74.07</b>
<b>Professional Services</b>					
Payroll Service Fees	\$ 3,164.64	\$ 32,627.49	\$ 38,600.00	5,972.51	84.53
Financial	460.00	46,531.65	51,000.00	4,468.35	91.24
Consultants	119.96	51,484.05	70,000.00	18,515.95	73.55
Security	797.34	6,051.66	14,000.00	7,948.34	43.23
Web Design Consultant	0.00	80,146.39	89,825.00	9,678.61	89.23
Movers	16,000.00	16,000.00	16,000.00	0.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 20,541.94</b>	<b>\$ 232,841.24</b>	<b>\$ 279,425.00</b>	<b>46,583.76</b>	<b>83.33</b>
<b>Insurance and Claims</b>					
Library Property Insurance	\$ 0.00	\$ 199,811.83	\$ 200,000.00	188.17	99.91
Flood Insurance	0.00	29,563.00	29,600.00	37.00	99.88
Vehicle Insurance	0.00	38,460.00	38,460.00	0.00	100.00
LBOC Liability	0.00	4,607.33	4,676.00	68.67	98.53
General Liability	0.00	25,678.00	25,678.00	0.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 298,120.16</b>	<b>\$ 298,414.00</b>	<b>293.84</b>	<b>99.90</b>
<b>Operating Supplies</b>					
Office Supplies	\$ 1,739.37	\$ 26,308.59	\$ 33,000.00	6,691.41	79.72
Bank Service Charges	1,145.10	13,413.83	16,500.00	3,086.17	81.30
Book Preparation Supplies	3,264.59	35,804.02	47,000.00	11,195.98	76.18
Computer/Printer Supplies	11,886.38	82,253.79	86,700.00	4,446.21	94.87
Programming Supplies	795.60	8,921.85	9,750.00	828.15	91.51
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 18,831.04</b>	<b>\$ 166,702.08</b>	<b>\$ 192,950.00</b>	<b>26,247.92</b>	<b>86.40</b>
<b>Travel and Continuing Education</b>					
Staff Travel - Local	\$ 1,189.05	\$ 13,877.62	\$ 22,000.00	8,122.38	63.08
Library In-service Training	1,739.66	3,200.80	12,000.00	8,799.20	26.67
Conventions & Seminars	3,891.67	19,466.20	35,000.00	15,533.80	55.62
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,820.38</b>	<b>\$ 36,544.62</b>	<b>\$ 69,000.00</b>	<b>32,455.38</b>	<b>52.96</b>
<b>Public Relations/Programming</b>					

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**St. Tammany Parish Library-General Fund  
Schedule of Expenditures  
For the Ten Months Ending October 31, 2024**

	<u>Current Period Actual</u>	<u>Year to Date Actual</u>	<u>Yearly Total Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>YTD Actual to YTD Budget</u>
Summer Reading Program	\$ 1,446.18	\$ 33,337.94	\$ 45,000.00	11,662.06	74.08
Summer Reading T-shirts	0.00	6,290.63	7,200.00	909.37	87.37
Adult Programming	6,120.89	32,112.71	38,000.00	5,887.29	84.51
Young Adult Programming	167.79	14,522.36	15,000.00	477.64	96.82
Juvenile Programming	65.64	6,796.47	20,000.00	13,203.53	33.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 7,800.50</b>	<b>\$ 93,060.11</b>	<b>\$ 125,200.00</b>	<b>32,139.89</b>	<b>74.33</b>
<b>Capital Outlay-Non-Book Acq</b>					
Landscape Additions	\$ 14,380.00	\$ 22,057.06	\$ 66,000.00	43,942.94	33.42
Imp Phys Plant	33,737.07	68,805.22	110,000.00	41,194.78	62.55
Vehicles	0.00	42,632.37	43,000.00	367.63	99.15
Office Equip, Furn & Shelving	1,895.99	23,293.95	60,000.00	36,706.05	38.82
Telephones & Telephone Syste	0.00	11,207.00	12,000.00	793.00	93.39
PC Network	1,557.71	139,946.98	163,000.00	23,053.02	85.86
Integrated Lib Automation Sys	0.00	6,726.02	8,000.00	1,273.98	84.08
Cameras	0.00	0.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00
Audio/Visual Equipment	1,247.98	90,788.76	104,000.00	13,211.24	87.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 52,818.75</b>	<b>\$ 405,457.36</b>	<b>\$ 572,000.00</b>	<b>166,542.64</b>	<b>70.88</b>
<b>Capital Outlay-Library Res. Acq.</b>					
Adult Books	\$ 15,097.70	\$ 183,541.83	\$ 205,000.00	21,458.17	89.53
Lease/Purchase Books	0.00	10,966.20	11,400.00	433.80	96.19
Juvenile Books	18,549.72	54,592.63	105,000.00	50,407.37	51.99
Young Adults	3,229.23	9,841.74	15,000.00	5,158.26	65.61
Music Recordings	122.88	1,870.96	2,500.00	629.04	74.84
Adult Reference	11,326.56	92,950.35	111,000.00	18,049.65	83.74
Juvenile Reference	15,411.01	34,770.96	45,000.00	10,229.04	77.27
Periodicals	199.00	49,128.97	50,000.00	871.03	98.26
Audio Recordings	3,144.60	7,213.02	10,100.00	2,886.98	71.42
Video Recordings	5,297.75	35,299.65	60,000.00	24,700.35	58.83
Genealogy	308.09	6,308.78	7,000.00	691.22	90.13
Microfilm	0.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00	100.00
Downloadable Media	61,699.72	365,215.98	415,000.00	49,784.02	88.00
CD/Software	0.00	57,153.92	65,000.00	7,846.08	87.93
Internet Database Subscription	9,191.54	279,313.12	333,000.00	53,686.88	83.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 143,577.80</b>	<b>\$ 1,190,668.11</b>	<b>\$ 1,437,500.00</b>	<b>246,831.89</b>	<b>82.83</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>					
Outreach FF & E	\$ 4,523.60	\$ 9,526.75	\$ 25,000.00	15,473.25	38.11
Outreach Vehicle	0.00	55,566.00	160,000.00	104,434.00	34.73
Outreach Opening Day Collectio	7,422.26	45,409.70	60,000.00	14,590.30	75.68
Causeway FF & E	27,632.88	29,710.42	130,000.00	100,289.58	22.85

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**St. Tammany Parish Library-General Fund  
 Schedule of Expenditures  
 For the Ten Months Ending October 31, 2024**

	<u>Current Period Actual</u>	<u>Year to Date Actual</u>	<u>Yearly Total Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>YTD Actual to YTD Budget</u>
Covington FF&E & Acoustic Wor	<u>12,779.37</u>	<u>32,623.94</u>	<u>50,000.00</u>	<u>17,376.06</u>	<u>65.25</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$ <u><u>52,358.11</u></u>	\$ <u><u>172,836.81</u></u>	\$ <u><u>425,000.00</u></u>	<u><u>252,163.19</u></u>	<u>40.67</u>

# Director's Report

December 9, 2024

## FACILITIES

Subsurface drainage was installed at the Covington branch in the front of the building where there was a water collection issue during heavy rain in the past.

Three quotes were obtained for the landscape improvements in the front of the Covington branch. Alternative Services turned in the lowest quote at \$18,950.00 for the base quote. With the two alternates, Alternative Services still had the lowest total quote. Gardner LLC also submitted a quote, the base was \$28,093.00 and KBarber Enterprises, LLC submitted a base quote of \$21,425.00.

The modular study room was installed at the Covington branch.

The Request for Quotes for the elevator at the Annex was published by the Parish Procurement Department on November 19th. Quotes are due on December 17th. There was a pre-quote meeting on December 2nd.

## MARKETING AND OUTREACH

Maria Condatore, Children's Services Assistant, and Jessica Troske, Causeway Children's Librarian provided outreach at the Covington Fall Fest in Covington on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Amy Strain, Folsom Branch Manager, promoted library services at the Trunk-R-Treat at Magnolia Park in Folsom on October 31<sup>st</sup>. She also attended the Kiwanis meeting on November 5<sup>th</sup> and on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. On November 21<sup>st</sup> she provided outreach as part of the Kiwanis Terrific Kids event at Folsom Elementary School.

Jackie Riecke, Public Relations and Community Coordinator and Jenny Mayer, Children's Services Coordinator promoted library services and programs on the Lake and the Highway radio stations on November 1st.

Ramona Elder, Mandeville Children's Librarian, and Jessica Troske provide outreach at the Our Lady of the Lake Festival of the Lake on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Alexis Davis, Slidell Children's Librarian, Eugenie Brignac, Madisonville Children's Librarian, Erika Dawson, South Slidell Children's Librarian, Nicole Coco and Erin Kennedy, Library Associates, Jenny Mayer, Maria Condatore, and Jess Troske provide outreach at the Three Rivers Art Festival on November 9<sup>th</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup>.

Byron Holdiman, Reference Coordinator, and Barret Reich, Mandeville Reference Librarian, provided information about the Library's Veterans History Project at the St. Tammany Parish Veterans Day 2024 event on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

Jennifer Rifino, Teen Services Coordinator, attended the St. Tammany Commission on Families meeting and the LA Children & Youth Prevention Coalition meeting on November 12<sup>th</sup>.

Tanya DiMaggio, Assistant Director of Support Services, was a guest speaker on November 19<sup>th</sup> for the Mandeville Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution's meeting. Tanya spoke about STPL's programs and services that foster family literacy.

Jessica Troske provided storytime to St. Timothy Preschool on November 1<sup>st</sup> and Covington Head Start on November 18<sup>th</sup>. She performed outreach at Pineview Middle School Literacy Night on November 14<sup>th</sup>. On November 25<sup>th</sup> she provided a special Storywalk<sup>®</sup> and storytime event for the Parenting Center of St. Tammany Health System.

Kellie Nelson, Causeway Reference Librarian, Erika Dawson, and Alexis Davis provided outreach at the STEM Quest Innovation Day at Pelican Park on November 25<sup>th</sup>.

Cathy Badon, Slidell Children's Assistant, Barbara Vidacovich, Library Associate, Jessica Troske, Eugenie Brignac, Ramona Elder, and Jenny Mayer provided outreach at the Holiday of Lights on December 6<sup>th</sup> and December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Rhonda Spiess, Lacombe Branch Manager, provided storytime at A-Z Preschool, Chahta-Ima Elementary, Lacombe-Mandeville Headstart School, and Mayfield Elementary School throughout November and December.

Adele Salzer, Pearl River Branch Manager, provided a total of 12 storytime presentations at Regina Coeli Headstart throughout November and the beginning of December.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Tanya DiMaggio attended Leadership Northshore Law Enforcement Day on November 6<sup>th</sup> and attended Leadership Skills Day on December 4<sup>th</sup> for Leadership Northshore.

## **PERSONNEL**

As of November 25<sup>th</sup>, Ramona Elder previously Children's Librarian at Mandeville, is now the Genealogy Librarian at the Covington branch.

Josh Ferreras was hired as the new Computer Support Technician for IT.



## CONTRACTS

- **Alternative Services** for landscape work at Covington for \$22,085.00 - quotes
- **Teamviewer** renewed for remote access to computers for \$12,093.75 - quotes
- **Candid** renewed for Foundation Directory (database) for \$5995.00 (used to be called the Funding Information Network) - sole source
- **Ebsco** renewed for **My Heritage** (database) for \$24,808 - sole source

## FINANCIAL

The Library appeared before the Parish Council Finance Committee on November 4<sup>th</sup> at 11 am. Kelly LaRocca answered questions from several parish council members. The meeting was recorded and is available to view

here: <http://75.131.66.146/CablecastPublicSite/show/2845?channel=1>. The Parish will consider the Library's budget as part of their overall budgetary adoption process at the December 5th Parish Council meeting.

## PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

We currently have 2 public records request results at the DA's office for review. We have no other open public records requests in the library's possession.

## STATEMENTS OF CONCERN

We currently have 115 statements of concern on 111 titles. The LBOC will decide on two titles tonight. Library staff continue to read titles, hold meetings, and make recommendations. The remaining statements of concern are still pending review.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

**Goal 2** - The Accessibility Committee met on November 20<sup>th</sup> to make final decisions about calming room equipment. Equipment has been ordered.

**Goal 3** - The Check Out Louisiana pilot program has been very successful. On October 17<sup>th</sup> backpacks were checked out. All 45 of the State Park passes that we received were dispersed to patrons by the week of November 4<sup>th</sup>. We received five more passes from the State Library. The State Library is negotiating to get more passes for the libraries that are participating in the pilot.

## TRANSITION OF MATERIALS

### Graphic Novel Review

No graphic novels have been transferred to Graphic Novels Restricted since October 30, 2024.

### Young Adult Fiction Review

Young Adult Fiction titles reviewed since October 30, 2024

#### Young Adult Fiction Moved to Adult Fiction

<i>The Winter Duke</i>	by Bartlett, Claire Eliza
<i>Daylighters</i>	by Caine, Rachel
<i>Chosen</i>	by Cast, P. C.
<i>Clockwork Princess</i>	by Clare, Cassandra
<i>Lady Midnight</i>	by Clare, Cassandra
<i>Whiteout</i>	by Clayton, Dhonielle
<i>Little &amp; Lion</i>	by Colbert, Brandy
<i>The game of lives</i>	by Dashner, James
<i>Looking for Alaska</i>	by Green, John
<i>Monday's not coming</i>	by Jackson, Tiffany D.
<i>The DUFF: designated ugly fat friend</i>	by Keplinger, Kody
<i>Darius the Great deserves better</i>	by Khorram, Adib
<i>Kiss &amp; Tell</i>	by Khorram, Adib
<i>The Honeys</i>	by La Sala, Ryan
<i>The Gentleman's Guide to Getting Lucky</i>	by Lee, Mackenzi
<i>The Gentleman's Guide to Vice And Virtue</i>	by Lee, Mackenzi
<i>Man o' War</i>	by McCarthy, Cory
<i>Cursed</i>	by Meyer, Marissa
<i>Gilded</i>	by Meyer, Marissa
<i>Nick and Charlie: a Heartstopper novella</i>	by Oseman, Alice
<i>Concrete Rose</i>	by Thomas, Angie

To date, 1,090 Young Adult Fiction titles have been reviewed:

153 titles have been moved to the Adult Collection

937 titles have been moved to the Teen Collection

## September 2024 Service Statistics

Branch	Adult Books	CD	DVD	ILL	Juv Bks	Mag	Pbks	YA	Virtual	Total Circulation	Computer Usage	Door Count	Wireless Inside	Wireless Outside
Admin/Annex	258	42	55	23	35	0	0	164		577				
Abita	628	27	226	16	604	15		25		1,541	145	1,608	111	212
Bush	264	21	196	3	161	10		5		660	79	916	60	106
Causeway	1801	170	566	19	1771	16		109		4,452	400	4,105	678	720
Covington	3419	262	1594	24	3638	65	47	141		9,190	881	6,066	2,110	854
Folsom	398	35	277	5	357	57		17		1,146	148	1,392	119	145
Lacombe	258	13	146	6	356		5	25		809	187	2,233	135	139
Lee Road	304	47	75		303	9	1	9		748	23	609	39	157
Madisonville	1075	93	474	31	1932	18		88		3,711	327	3,622	772	402
Mandeville	2456	163	904	30	3543	34		160		7,290	802	5,999	715	454
Pearl River	366	11	130	13	285	20	143	17		985	221	1,739	100	213
Slidell	3182	258	1075	31	3142	108	124	287		8,207	1,689	10,809	1,445	969
South Slidell	546	71	546	20	902	27	5	52		2,169	1,222	5,019	834	2,192
Virtual <sup>1</sup>									34,697	34,697				
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,955</b>	<b>1,213</b>	<b>6,264</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>17,029</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>1,099</b>	<b>34,697</b>	<b>76,182</b>	<b>6,124</b>	<b>44,117</b>	<b>7,118</b>	<b>6,563</b>

1 - Virtual stats include Overdrive, Tumblebooks, 3M Cloud Library, Rbdigital, Hoopla

CD=CompactDisc; DVD=DigitalVersatileDisc; ILL=InterLibraryLoan; Mag=Magazines  
Pbks=Paperbacks; YA=Young Adult

**Patrons Registered:            674**

## October 2024 Service Statistics

Branch	Adult Books	CD	DVD	ILL	Juv Bks	Mag	Pbks	YA	Virtual	Total Circulation	Computer Usage	Door Count	Wireless Inside	Wireless Outside
Admin/Annex	290	48	101	30	102	0	0	134		705				
Abita	694	38	239	14	552	9	0	25		1,571	146	1,960	20	21
Bush	201	19	225	9	244	0	0	8		706	73	1,044	15	19
Causeway	1117	102	394	20	1206	19	0	126		2,984	288	4,886	78	68
Covington	3459	268	1539	30	3809	54	47	183		9,389	1,041	7,591	231	83
Folsom	401	40	254	6	333	46	0	23		1,103	150	1,422	14	11
Lacombe	251	25	300	3	327	1	12	12		931	240	3,862	16	15
Lee Road	326	18	68	4	265	0	0	10		691	52	828	12	31
Madisonville	1085	99	448	20	1833	18	0	83		3,586	326	3,785	114	51
Mandeville	2828	220	973	46	4256	34	0	163		8,520	1,036	7,259	70	52
Pearl River	419	10	276	20	251	2	47	11		1,036	297	1,860	5	22
Slidell	3367	310	1333	57	3632	86	209	288		9,282	2,054	12,757	194	253
South Slidell	679	50	526	25	993	35	3	48		2,359	1,398	6,555	95	129
Virtual <sup>1</sup>									35,466	35,466				
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,117</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>6,676</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>17,803</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>1,114</b>	<b>35,466</b>	<b>78,329</b>	<b>7,101</b>	<b>53,809</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>755</b>

1 - Virtual stats include Overdrive, Tumblebooks, 3M Cloud Library, Rbdigital, Hoopla

CD=CompactDisc; DVD=DigitalVersatileDisc; ILL=InterLibraryLoan; Mag=Magazines  
Pbks=Paperbacks; YA=Young Adult

**Patrons Registered:            623**

Jan. - Oct. YTD 2024  
Service Statistics

Branch	Adult Books	CD	DVD	ILL	Juv Bks	Mag	Pbks	YA	Virtual	Total Circulation	Computer Usage	Door Count	Wireless Inside	Wireless Outside
Admin/Annex	3,631	474	1,021	286	2,308	4		1073		8,797				
Abita	6656	428	2182	223	5532	150		265		15,436	1,645	19,304	1,058	2,024
Bush	2058	160	3137	63	2084	80		78		7,660	918	9,299	450	950
Causeway	21404	1459	7584	360	20661	330		1573		53,371	4,834	54,559	7,262	7,368
Covington	36221	2946	18049	332	42301	667	568	1931		103,015	11,225	69,898	19,269	7,868
Folsom	4493	294	3043	82	3895	705		176		12,688	2,174	13,743	1,012	1,318
Lacombe	2995	182	2114	70	3818	43	95	211		9,528	2,361	31,171	1,184	1,221
Lee Road	3007	258	896	29	3271	61	21	127		7,670	478	6,833	470	1,509
Madisonville	13118	1122	4919	280	21179	227		1111		41,956	3,515	46,427	7,418	3,761
Mandeville	27886	2467	10207	451	42114	575	55	2184		85,939	9,263	66,358	6,563	4,204
Pearl River	4242	153	2023	162	2694	108	858	147		10,387	2,277	22,280	853	1,767
Slidell	37434	2687	13307	366	38499	981	2003	3123		98,400	18,657	113,904	11,832	17,559
South Slidell	6234	672	5924	210	9189	154	44	704		23,131	13,040	56,372	7,109	9,658
Virtual <sup>1</sup>									353,211	353,211				
<b>Total</b>	<b>169,379</b>	<b>13,302</b>	<b>73,385</b>	<b>2,914</b>	<b>197,545</b>	<b>4,085</b>	<b>3,644</b>	<b>12,703</b>	<b>353,211</b>	<b>831,189</b>	<b>70,387</b>	<b>510,148</b>	<b>64,480</b>	<b>59,207</b>

1 - Virtual stats include Overdrive, Tumblebooks, 3M Cloud Library, Rbdigital, Hoopla

CD=CompactDisc; DVD=DigitalVersatileDisc; ILL=InterLibraryLoan; Mag=Magazines  
Pbks=Paperbacks; YA=Young Adult

**Patrons Registered: 7,570**



**St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control  
Resolution to Amend Statements of Concern about Library  
Resources Policy to Shorten Public Speaking Time**

December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**WHEREAS**, the St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control has adopted a policy relative to Statements of Concern about Library Resources;

**WHEREAS**, the current policy allows the individual(s) submitting a statement of concern five (5) minutes speaking time and allows all other members of the public three (3) minutes to speak on statements of concern being considered on a Library Board of Control meeting agenda;

**WHEREAS**, in order for the Board of Control to expeditiously and efficiently review statements of concern at its public Board meetings, it is necessary to shorten the public speaking time to two (2) minutes for all speakers.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control amends the Statements of Concern about Library Resources Policy as set forth below:

**A. General**

The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the use of library materials by minor children rests with their parents or legal guardians. While a person may reject material for themselves and for their minor children, an individual may not exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of others to read, see, or hear.

**B. Process**

1. Any person residing in St. Tammany Parish who has reached the age of majority and who holds a St. Tammany Parish Library card and wishes to express concerns about library materials, programs, or displays may complete a “Statement of Concern About Library Resources” form, also referred to as a “Request for Reconsideration” pursuant to La. R.S. 25:225. However, processing a Statement of Concern form entails significant cost and time commitments. Therefore, anyone who has a concern about library resources is encouraged to discuss their concerns with a library staff member before filing a Statement of Concern form.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
310 WEST 21<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE COVINGTON, LA 70433  
PH: (985) 871-1219 FAX: (985) 871-1224

ABITA SPRINGS (985) 893-6285

COVINGTON (985) 893-6280

MADISONVILLE (985) 845-4819

BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER  
(985) 626-5314

FOLSOM (985) 796-9728

MANDEVILLE (985) 626-4293

BUSH (985) 886-3588

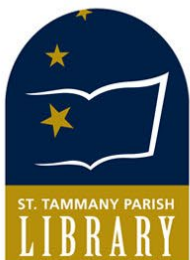
LACOMBE (985) 882-7858

PEARL RIVER (985) 863-5518

CAUSEWAY (985) 626-9779

LEE RD (985) 893-6284

SLIDELL (985) 646-6470



The Statement of Concern form shall be available at the library circulation desk, the library's website, by email request, and at all Library Board of Control meetings. All completed Statement of Concern forms will be forwarded to the Library Director and to each member of the Library Board of Control. Upon receipt of the Statement of Concern form the Director will confirm receipt to the complainant(s). Statements of Concern that do not meet the submission criteria will not be considered.

2. Any Statement of Concern seeking to restrict access by a minor to a digital resource categorized as Adult and thus only available to Adult, Juvenile, and Juvenile Unrestricted cards, shall not be considered.

The Director will select two or more staff members to serve on an internal committee to review each Statement of Concern and the subject of the concern. Committee members will be chosen by the Director based on the type of material under review and taking into consideration the staff member's education and experience. A decision will be made within 45 days of the Director receiving the Statement of Concern Form, unless a longer period is authorized by the Library Board of Control, in which case the complainant(s) shall receive notice.

3. The committee members shall:

a. Review the material in its entirety.

b. Create and consider a resume of the material which can include:

- A brief synopsis
- Reviews in standard evaluation guides
- Topical information concerning the material
- Circulation information
- Information about holdings in other public libraries
- Awards received
- Biographical information about the author/producer
- Library of Congress Subject Headings
- Publisher, vendor, and/or reviewer audience recommendations
- Indication that purchase was made per patron request, if that information is available
- Number of copies sold in the United States, if that information is available

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
310 WEST 21<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE COVINGTON, LA 70433  
PH: (985) 871-1219 FAX: (985) 871-1224

ABITA SPRINGS (985) 893-6285

COVINGTON (985) 893-6280

MADISONVILLE (985) 845-4819

BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER  
(985) 626-5314

FOLSOM (985) 796-9728

MANDEVILLE (985) 626-4293

BUSH (985) 886-3588

LACOMBE (985) 882-7858

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CAUSEWAY (985) 626-9779

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- c. Consider the suitability for age level of current placement
- d. Consider present and potential relevance to community needs
- e. Conduct a discussion to reach a decision
- f. Submit a written report to the Director with the decision made based on the result of the committee's efforts.

4. The Director shall notify the complainant in writing of the committee's decision and their right to appeal that decision to the Library Board of Control, except as provided in La. R.S. 25:225C(2)(d)(ii) . A copy of the decision will be mailed to each member of the Library Board of Control.

5. Pursuant to La. R.S. 25:225C(2)(d)(ii), any Statements of Concern of a library material that may include sexually explicit material available to minors shall be reviewed by the Library Board of Control under the procedures outlined in Subsection C(2-5) of this Section.

### C. Right to Appeal

- 1. The complainant may appeal to the Library Board of Control by contacting the Assistant Director within 30 days of mailing of the committee's decision and requesting to be placed on the agenda of the next available scheduled board meeting. The Assistant Director must notify the Library Board of Control of the appeal being placed on the agenda.
- 2. A complainant will have ~~five~~ **two** minutes to address the Library Board of Control about the specific challenged material on the original Statement of Concern form.
- 3. A period of public comment will precede any action taken by the Board. Any member of the public wishing to address the Board shall be allowed to speak for two minutes.
- 4. The Library Board of Control shall vote to affirm, modify, reject, or take under advisement the committee's decision. Matters taken under advisement shall be renoticed for a future meeting. Upon modification or rejection of the decision of the committee, the Board shall decide what action will be taken in response to the

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Statement of Concern. The decision of the Board shall be rendered by a majority vote. In the event there is a tie, the committee's decision is affirmed.

- 5. The complainant(s) will be notified in writing of the decision of the Library Board of Control.

D. The decision on a Statement of Concern about specific materials, programs, or displays will remain in effect for five years. Within this five-year period complainants submitting a new Statement of Concern on a decided title, program, or display shall receive a copy of the current decision.

THIS RESOLUTION HAVING BEEN SUBMITTED TO A VOTE, THE VOTE THEREON WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Moved for adoption by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_,

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

AND THIS RESOLUTION WAS DECLARED DULY ADOPTED ON THIS DAY, THE 9th DAY OF DECEMBER 2024, AT A MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL, A QUORUM OF THE MEMBERSHIP BEING PRESENT.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ann Shaw, Board President

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**Statement of Concern about Library Resources**

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Have you read the attached St. Tammany Parish Library Collection Development policy?

Yes  No

Have you read the attached St. Tammany Parish Library's Statements of Concern About Library Resources policy? Yes  No

Please note that processing a Statement of Concern form entails significant cost and time commitments. Therefore, anyone who has a concern about library resources is encouraged to discuss their concerns with a library staff member before filing a Statement of Concern form.

Date 03/05/24 Library Card Number [REDACTED]

Name Lisa Rustemeyer

Residence Address [REDACTED]

City Mandeville State LA Zip 70433

Mailing Address (same) [REDACTED]  
If different from Residence Address

City Mandeville State LA Zip 70448

Telephone [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

How would you prefer to receive correspondence about this Statement of Concern?

Email  Residence/Mailing Address

Is this complaint related to LA R.S. 25:225 (Access of Materials to Minors)?

Yes  No

If you answered Yes, please identify specific page numbers that concern you?

I don't know the answer to this question. I think it's been moved to concerns about the new  
however I have no concern about this work not meeting the new law's requirements.

Form continues on the next page

## *Statement of Concern about Library Resources*

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Book       Audiovisual       Magazine/Newspaper       Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Library Program       Display       Electronic Resource       \_\_\_\_\_

2. Title \_\_\_\_\_ The Hate U Give \_\_\_\_\_

3. Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_ Angie Thomas \_\_\_\_\_

4. At which branch library or in which electronic resource did you encounter this material or resource?  
I don't remember - I put it on  
\_\_\_\_\_ hold and it was transferred \_\_\_\_\_

5. What brought this resource to your attention?

I saw it on the list of  
materials to be moved  
from YA to adult and  
was concerned.

6. Did you review/read the entire item? If not, what sections did you review/read?

yes, , I read this book  
in its entirety

7. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

please move this book back to young adult. We need  
books like these where teens can access them freely  
when perusing the section for YA materials.

It's won several awards and received critical praise for Thomas's writing and timely  
subject matter. In writing the novel, Thomas attempted to expand readers'  
understanding of the Black Lives Matter movement as well as difficulties faced by  
black Americans who employ code switching. It was also made into a movie that  
received the NAACP image award.

Form continues on the next page

## *Statement of Concern about Library Resources*

8. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes, or sections. Please comment on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

I only object to the placement. The book has no sexually explicit passages (even according to Book Looks!) and is excellent material relevant to teens so that they can understand issues that relate to people of color, or so they can see themselves in this story, The main character is caught between two worlds, which is stressful and complex. She must find her way through high school and the systemic racism that surrounds her, achieving her goals while making decisions that will affect her life and those she cares about.

I'd like to cite another part of the Louisiana legal code: RS 25:31 ==> <https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/Law.aspx?p=y&d=84402>

9. In its place, what material or resource would you recommend on this topic?

More books like this to build empathy in teens, so that we can all understand each other no matter the color of our skin.

NOTE: This statement will be forwarded to Library Board of Control. You will be advised in writing of the decision. Thank you for your concern and input. Information submitted to a public body, such as this form, may be subject to public records requests pursuant to the provisions of the Louisiana Public Records Law, La. R.S. 44:1, et seq.

## Chapter 4. Collection Development

### Section 403. Criteria for Selection

*Effective Date: TK*

*Revision Date: 10/23/2023*

The Library Director shall consider several factors follows in making selections. Not all the following factors apply to every book or material format to be considered. Works of imagination are judged on different factors than are works of information or opinion.

- Purpose: use of material, factual information, general knowledge or information.
- Authorship: professional and literary significance of the author.
- Authority: especially inclusion in indexes, bibliographies, other professional references for all material formats.
- Opinions: attention to critics, reviewers and the public.
- Scope: comprehensiveness and depth of treatment.
- Content: objectivity, clarity, accuracy and logic of presentation.
- Presentation: presentation in a manner appropriate for the intended audience.
- Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience.
- Suitability of physical format for library use.
- Timeliness: present and potential relevance to community needs representation of important movement, genre, or trend of culture.
- Relation to existing library collection and other materials on the subject and availability of materials in the surrounding geographic area.
- Cost: budget guidelines, stability and needs.
- Publisher: reputation and sustained presence in the marketplace.
- Gift materials shall be accepted using the same criteria as purchased material.

Community standards for St. Tammany Parish shall be considered when acquiring library material that would be accessible to a minor through donation or purchase.

The library uses a number of metrics to determine community standards:

- Usage statistics gathered from the Integrated Library System, including circulation numbers and number of holds for specific items
- Patron requests
- Feedback from branch staff
- Titles assigned to students in the public and parochial school systems
- Parish demographics

The Library shall follow all Louisiana laws and St. Tammany Parish ordinances that pertain to the purchasing and placement of library materials. Materials cataloged in the children's (Juvenile) and teen's (Young Adult) collections shall not contain sexually explicit material, textual, visual, or audio, produced in any medium, that depicts or describes sexual conduct as defined by La. R.S. 25:225B(3) or the most recent version which is adopted herein by reference.

## **Section 405. Additional Criteria for the Selection of Non-Book and Special Materials**

*Effective Date: TK*

*Revision Date: TK*

- A. Audio cassettes/CDs for adults and juveniles shall be selected on the same criteria standards as books and other library material.
- B. Compact discs shall be selected on importance of composers, performing organizations, conductors and quality of reproduction.
- C. A collection of literacy materials shall be maintained to cooperate with local efforts to teach literacy skills to beginning readers.
- D. Newspapers provide a valuable, current source of local and regional information and shall be selected first upon their local value and secondly upon space availability.
- E. Pamphlets shall be selected using the same criteria that are used for books.
- F. Paperbacks or soft cover books which supplement the hardcover book collection of the library shall use the same selection criteria as for hardcover materials.
- G. Periodicals are often the most current source of information that has yet or may never appear in book form. An important consideration shall be the availability of content through indexes, abstracts and bibliographies.
- H. Textbooks are selected only when no other material in a given field is available. Students' demand for textbooks should be satisfied by attending schools/colleges.
- I. Audio Visuals
  - 1. Audio visuals collection shall concentrate on self-education, self-improvement, informational, recreational, and general entertainment videos.
  - 2. To serve all levels of the public, Audio Visuals have no restrictive time frame for purchase.
- J. Electronic Databases shall be selected on many of the same factors as used for print materials.

## **Section 407. Statements of Concern about Library Resources**

*Effective Date: 12/13/2022*

*Revision Date: 10/23/2023*

### **A. General**

The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the use of library materials by minor children rests with their parents or legal guardians. While a person may reject material for themselves and for their minor children, an individual may not exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of others to read, see, or hear.

### **B. Process**

1. Any person residing in St. Tammany Parish who has reached the age of majority and who holds a St. Tammany Parish Library card and wishes to express concerns about library materials, programs, or displays may complete a "Statement of Concern About Library Resources" form, also referred to as a "Request for Reconsideration" pursuant to La. R.S. 25:225. However, processing a Statement of Concern form entails significant cost and time commitments. Therefore, anyone who has a concern about library resources is encouraged to discuss their concerns with a library staff member before filing a Statement of Concern form.

The Statement of Concern form shall be available at the library circulation desk, the library's website, by email request, and at all Library Board of Control meetings. All completed Statement of Concern forms will be forwarded to the Library Director and to each member of the Library Board of Control. Upon receipt of the Statement of Concern form the Director will confirm receipt to the complainant(s). Statements of Concern that do not meet the submission criteria will not be considered.

Any Statement of Concern seeking to restrict access by a minor to a digital resource categorized as Adult and thus only available to Adult, Juvenile, and Juvenile Unrestricted cards, shall not be considered.

2. The Director will select two or more staff members to serve on an internal committee to review each Statement of Concern and the subject of the concern. Committee members will be chosen by the Director based on the type of material under review and taking into consideration the staff member's education and experience. A decision will be made within 45 days of the Director receiving the Statement of Concern Form, unless a longer period is authorized by the Library Board of Control, in which case the complainant(s) shall receive notice.

3. The committee members shall:

- a. Review the material in its entirety.
- b. Create and consider a resume of the material which can include:
  - A brief synopsis



- Reviews in standard evaluation guides
  - Topical information concerning the material
  - Circulation information
  - Information about holdings in other public libraries
  - Awards received
  - Biographical information about the author/producer
  - Library of Congress Subject Headings
  - Publisher, vendor, and/or reviewer audience recommendations
  - Indication that purchase was made per patron request, if that information is available
  - Number of copies sold in the United States, if that information is available
- c. Consider the suitability for age level of current placement
  - d. Consider present and potential relevance to community needs
  - e. Conduct a discussion to reach a decision
  - f. Submit a written report to the Director with the decision made based on the result of the committee's efforts.

4. The Director shall notify the complainant in writing of the committee's decision and their right to appeal that decision to the Library Board of Control, except as provided in La. R.S. 25:225C(2)(d)(ii). A copy of the decision will be mailed to each member of the Library Board of Control.

5. Pursuant to La. R.S. 25:225C(2)(d)(ii), any Statements of Concern of a library material that may include sexually explicit material available to minors shall be reviewed by the Library Board of Control under the procedures outlined in Subsection C(2-5) of this Section.

### C. Right to Appeal

1. The complainant may appeal to the Library Board of Control by contacting the Assistant Director within 30 days of mailing of the committee's decision and requesting to be placed on the agenda of the next available scheduled board meeting. The Assistant Director must notify the Library Board of Control of the appeal being placed on the agenda.
2. A complainant will have five minutes to address the Library Board of Control about the specific challenged material on the original Statement of Concern form.
3. A period of public comment will precede any action taken by the Board.
4. The Library Board of Control shall vote to affirm, modify, reject, or take under advisement the committee's decision. Matters taken under advisement shall be renoticed for a future meeting. Upon modification or rejection of the decision of the committee, the Board shall decide what action will be taken in response to the

Statement of Concern. The decision of the Board shall be rendered by a majority vote. In the event there is a tie, the committee's decision is affirmed.

5. The complainant(s) will be notified in writing of the decision of the Library Board of Control.

D. The decision on a Statement of Concern about specific materials, programs, or displays will remain in effect for five years. Within this five-year period complainants submitting a new Statement of Concern on a decided title, program, or display shall receive a copy of the current decision.

## ***THE HATE U GIVE* by Angie Thomas**

Balzer & Bray/Harperteen, 2017

### **PUBLISHER'S SUMMARY**

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does--or does not--say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

### **LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT HEADINGS**

Police-community relations

Race relations

Police shootings

Witnesses

African American

**PUBLISHER RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP:** 14 and up

### **HOLDINGS AND CIRCULATION**

- 4 print copies at Covington, Folsom, Pearl River, and Slidell/ Shelved in Adult Fiction/ Call number NA Thom (Adult Collection)
- 2 Books on CD at Covington and Slidell/Call number CD Thom (Adult Collection)
- Cloud E-audiobook
- Originally YA moved to adult after review

Purchased in March 2017. Available on shelf April 2017.

Total circulation on all print copies: 182

Total circulation on all Books on CD: 28

Total circulation on E-audiobook: 0

Total circulation on all DVDs: 214

### **OTHER LIBRARY HOLDINGS**

Held in 6 libraries. \*Worldcat / 3566 libraries in OCLC

Jefferson Parish Library – Young Adult Fiction

Hancock County Library System – Young Adult Fiction

Livingston Parish Library – Young Adult Fiction

**PATRON REQUEST/SUGGEST A PURCHASE:** N/A

## REVIEWS

### **Publishers Weekly (11/28/2016):**

At home in a neighborhood riven with gang strife, Starr Carter, 16, is both the grocer's daughter and an outsider, because she attends private school many miles away. But at Williamson Prep, where she's among a handful of black students, she can't be herself either: no slang, no anger, no attitude. That version of herself--"Williamson Starr"--"doesn't give anyone a reason to call her ghetto." She's already wrestling with what Du Bois called "double consciousness" when she accepts a ride home from Khalil, a childhood friend, who is then pulled over and shot dead by a white cop. Starr's voice commands attention from page one, a conflicted but clear-eyed lens through which debut author Thomas examines Khalil's killing, casual racism at Williamson, and Starr's strained relationship with her white boyfriend. Though Thomas's story is heartbreakingly topical, its greatest strength is in its authentic depiction of a teenage girl, her loving family, and her attempts to reconcile what she knows to be true about their lives with the way those lives are depicted--and completely undervalued--by society at large. Ages 14-up. Agent: Brooks Sherman, Bent Agency. (Feb.) Copyright 2016 Publishers Weekly, LLC Used with permission.

### **Kirkus Reviews (12/15/2016):**

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter is a black girl and an expert at navigating the two worlds she exists in: one at Garden Heights, her black neighborhood, and the other at Williamson Prep, her suburban, mostly white high school. Walking the line between the two becomes immensely harder when Starr is present at the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend, Khalil, by a white police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Khalil's death becomes national news, where he's called a thug and possible drug dealer and gangbanger. His death becomes justified in the eyes of many, including one of Starr's best friends at school. The police's lackadaisical attitude sparks anger and then protests in the community, turning it into a war zone. Questions remain about what happened in the moments leading to Khalil's death, and the only witness is Starr, who must now decide what to say or do, if anything. Thomas cuts to the heart of the matter for Starr and for so many like her, laying bare the systemic racism that undergirds her world, and she does so honestly and inescapably, balancing heartbreak and humor. With smooth but powerful prose delivered in Starr's natural, emphatic voice, finely nuanced characters, and intricate and realistic relationship dynamics, this novel will have readers rooting for Starr and opening their hearts to her friends and family. This story is necessary. This story is important. (Fiction. 14 & up) COPYRIGHT(2016) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

### **Booklist (12/15/2016):**

Grades 9-12 \*Starred Review\* Sixteen-year-old Starr lives in two very different worlds: one is her home in a poor black urban neighborhood; the other is the tony suburban prep school she attends and the white boy she dates there. Her bifurcated life changes dramatically when she is the only witness to the unprovoked police shooting of her unarmed friend Khalil and is challenged to speak out though with trepidation about the injustices being done in the event's wake. As the case becomes national news, violence erupts in her neighborhood, and Starr finds herself and her family caught in the middle. Difficulties are exacerbated by their encounters with the local drug lord for whom Khalil was dealing to earn money for his impoverished family. If there is to be hope for change, Starr comes to realize, it must be through the exercise of her

voice, even if it puts her and her family in harm's way. Thomas' debut, both a searing indictment of injustice and a clear-eyed, dramatic examination of the complexities of race in America, invites deep thoughts about our social fabric, ethics, morality, and justice. Beautifully written in Starr's authentic first-person voice, this is a marvel of verisimilitude as it insightfully examines two worlds in collision. An inarguably important book that demands the widest possible readership. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: From the moment this book sold, it has been high-profile. An in-the-works movie adaptation will further push this to the head of the class.(Reprinted with permission of Booklist, copyright 2016, American Library Association.)

**School Library Journal (01/01/2017):**

**Gr 8 Up**--After Starr and her childhood friend Khalil, both black, leave a party together, they are pulled over by a white police officer, who kills Khalil. The sole witness to the homicide, Starr must testify before a grand jury that will decide whether to indict the cop, and she's terrified, especially as emotions run high. By turns frightened, discouraged, enraged, and impassioned, Starr is authentically adolescent in her reactions. Inhabiting two vastly different spheres--her poor, predominantly black neighborhood, Garden Heights, where gangs are a fact of life, and her rich, mostly white private school--causes strain, and Thomas perceptively illustrates how the personal is political: Starr is disturbed by the racism of her white friend Hailey, who writes Khalil off as a drug dealer, and Starr's father is torn between his desire to support Garden Heights and his need to move his family to a safer environment. The first-person, present-tense narrative is immediate and intense, and the pacing is strong, with Thomas balancing dramatic scenes of violence and protest with moments of reflection. The characterization is slightly uneven; at times, Starr's friends at school feel thinly fleshed out. However, Starr, her family, and the individuals in their neighborhood are achingly real and lovingly crafted. **VERDICT** Pair this powerful debut with Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely's *All American Boys* to start a conversation on racism, police brutality, and the Black Lives Matter movement.--*Mahnaz Dar*, School Library Journal Copyright 2017 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

**Voice of Youth Advocates (02/01/2017):**

Sometimes you can do everything right and things will still go wrong. The key is to never stop doing right. This is what sixteen-year-old Starr Carter's mother tells her after she experiences the worst night of her life. After attending a party that she was not supposed to be at, shots ring out. Starr and her childhood friend Khalil safely escape and begin their drive home, but not long after, they see blue flashing lights in the rearview mirror so Khalil pulls over. These are the last few minutes of his life. Starr is living between two worlds: her predominantly white private school and life in an impoverished African American neighborhood. At school, Starr finds herself censoring the way she talks and acts, but at home she feels like an outsider too. Things get exponentially worse after Khalil is murdered by the police officer. Starr struggles with being the one left alive, being the only witness to a horrific crime, and how she should honor Khalil's memory, all while trying to keep herself and her family safe. *The Hate U Give* is an important and timely novel that reflects the world today's teens inhabit. With news reports seeming to constantly feature police brutality, Thomas gives an honest and true voice to a victim. Starr's struggles create a complex character, and Thomas boldly tackles topics like racism, gangs, police violence, and interracial dating. Authenticity is critical in novels, and Thomas delivers an

authentic plot with realistic, relatable characters. This novel educates readers from any background about the police brutality and racism that led to the Black Lives Matter movement. This topical, necessary story is highly recommended for all libraries. Loryn Aman.5Q 5P J S

**BookPage (03/01/2017):**

When Starr was 12, her parents taught her the facts of life. Her mother explained the mysteries of sex, while her father instructed her on how African Americans behave if stopped by police. Four years later, Starr remembers her father's words when she and her childhood friend, Khalil, are pulled over. But when Khalil makes an innocent move, the policeman shoots. Starr watches in horror as Khalil dies in the street. The media picks up the story, depicting Khalil as a gang member and drug dealer. Starr, who attends a prestigious, predominantly white high school, is repulsed by the sensationalism and initially tries to deny her involvement. But she learns that such silence grants free reign to racist justifications for violent policing of her tight-knit black community. Starr's life is rife with contradictions. Her neighborhood friends live in a world where violent death is a real threat, while her wealthier school friends view Khalil's death as an excuse to skip school. Starr's father is a former gang leader who is dedicated to improving their community, while her uncle is a police detective who lives in a safer neighborhood.

In her debut novel, Angie Thomas breathes life into the incidents that inspired the Black Lives Matter movement, with nuanced characters and complex subplots. Like Kekla Magoon's *How It Went Down*, the novel explores the ambiguity of perspective, but in this case, it's always from Starr's deeply personal viewpoint. COPYRIGHT(2017) BookPage, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

**Horn Book Magazine (03/01/2017):**

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter lives a life many African American teenagers can relate to: a life of double consciousness. Caught between her rough, predominantly black neighborhood and the proper, predominantly white prep school she attends, Starr has learned how to speak with two different voices and only say certain things around certain people. This precarious balance is broken when Starr witnesses the shooting of her (unarmed) childhood friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. What follows is a gut-wrenching chain of events that alters all Starr holds dear. New relationships are forged, old ones are severed, and adversaries arise as Starr's family, friends, school, and neighborhood react to Khalil's death, including questioning who Khalil was, and whether his death was justified. Between her neighborhood's no-snitching code and inaccurate media portrayals, Starr must decide whether or not to speak out and her decision could endanger her life. With a title taken from rapper Tupac Shakur's acronym THUG LIFE (The Hate U Give Little Infants Fucks Everybody), the novel introduces numerous components of the urban experience, thug life included. From drug addicts to police officers, most characters are multifaceted, proving that Starr's world is not all black or white (or black vs. white, for that matter). The story, with so many issues addressed, can feel overwhelming at times, but then again, so can the life of an African American teen. Debut author Thomas is adept at capturing the voices of multiple characters, and she ultimately succeeds in restoring Starr's true voice. Thomas has penned a powerful, in-your-face novel that will similarly galvanize fans of Kekla Magoon's *How It Went Down* (rev. 11/14) and Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely's *All American Boys* (rev. 11/15). eboni njoku(Copyright 2017 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

**Shelf Awareness (12/19/2017):**

Many 16-year-olds think nobody understands them, but Starr Carter is sure of it, because she's two people on purpose. During the school day, she's "Williamson Starr," one of a handful of black students at her suburban private school, "approachable" to her friends and her white boyfriend. When she goes home to Garden Heights, a predominantly black neighborhood, she's just "Big Mav's daughter who work in the store." Starr is well-practiced in keeping her worlds apart, but when she witnesses her childhood friend Khalil's murder, after a cop pulls them over for a broken taillight, the split becomes simultaneously more necessary and nearly impossible. In her debut novel, Angie Thomas creates what might be one of the decade's most vivid voices in YA fiction. Readers who recognize the first half of rapper Tupac's acronym for THUG LIFE in the title of the book--*The Hate U Give*--will thrill to the representation of Starr's multiple worlds; those who aren't familiar with Tupac's oeuvre will learn more about his work, and much more besides. Though the appalling scenario depicted here is sadly familiar, Thomas's clear and honest writing moves beyond sound bites to represent the real people and communities behind the headlines. COPYRIGHT(2017) Shelf Awareness, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

**Angie Thomas** is the author of the award-winning, #1 *New York Times* bestselling novels *The Hate U Give*, *On the Come Up*, and *Concrete Rose*, as well as *Find Your Voice: A Guided Journal for Writing Your Truth*. A former teen rapper who holds a BFA in creative writing, Angie was born, raised, and still resides in Mississippi. You can find her online at [www.angiethomas.com](http://www.angiethomas.com).

**AWARDS & LISTS**

2018 Coretta Scott King Award (honor book)  
2018 Michael L. Printz Award (honor book)  
2018 William C. Morris YA Debut Award Winner  
2017 Kirkus Prize (finalist)

**RESOURCES**

Ingram Content Group, LLC  
Books in Print 2.0  
Worldcat  
Individual library websites (for holdings info)



November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

Ms. Lisa Rustemeyer  
[Redacted]  
Mandeville, LA 70448

Dear Ms. Rustemeyer,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control’s policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

You asked that this book be moved back to the YA collection. This title originally had a Statement of Concern citing sexual content that was harmful to minors. When the Statement of Concern was rescinded, staff reviewed the text for sexual content as defined by La. R.S. 25:225 and as directed by the Board. The staff found content on page 81 that we felt met the criteria in La. R.S. 25:225 B(3)(c) “Actual, simulated, or animated touching, caressing, or fondling of, or other similar physical contact with, a pubic area, anus, female breast nipple, covered or exposed, whether alone or between humans, animals, or a human and an animal, of the same or opposite sex, in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification”, the book was moved to the Adult Fiction collection so that a Restricted or Semi-restricted library card would not be able to check the book out.

The book was not moved because of the subject matter or themes of the book. The review committee noted that the pre-sexual activity stops in a healthy and mature way, modeling consent and a healthy adolescent relationship.

You also asked that we consider LA RS 25:31 in the placement of this book. The staff agrees that Louisiana citizens have a right to adequate information to meet their individual needs and Louisiana citizens have a right to be able to locate and use all information sources available. The staff did not find that the placement was in violation of this law. The placement of the book in the Adult Collection allows the Library to be compliant with the directives of the Board and acknowledges that parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. Each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what their own children will read or hear.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
1112 WEST 21<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE COVINGTON, LA 70433  
PH: (985) 871-1219 FAX: (985) 871-1224

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MANDEVILLE (985) 626-4293

BUSH (985) 886-3588

LACOMBE (985) 882-7858

PEARL RIVER (985) 863-5518

CAUSEWAY (985) 626-9779

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SOUTH SLIDELL (985) 781-0099





The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 9th, 2024, where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes. If you are unable to attend, you may submit a written statement to be included in the record of the meeting.

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,



Kelly LaRocca, Director

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## ***Statement of Concern about Library Resources***

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Date 11-22-2022

Name Rosalind Murr

Address [REDACTED]

City Covington State La Zip 70433

Telephone [REDACTED]

Representing \_\_\_\_\_ (self) \_\_\_\_\_ (organization)

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Book                      \_\_\_\_\_ Newspaper                      \_\_\_\_\_ Other  
\_\_\_\_\_ Magazine                      \_\_\_\_\_ Content of Library Program  
\_\_\_\_\_ Audiovisual                      \_\_\_\_\_ Electronic Resource

2. Title Triangles

Author/Producer Ellen Hopkins

3. What brought this title to your attention?

I heard it had questionable material and upon reading was horrified!

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

I read the book in its entirety.

5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

Remove it from any children's sections, ask for ID to check out and not allowable for a minor to download.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

This is breaking child

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?

Something that does not break state obscenity laws for children.

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.



## ***Statement of Concern about Library Resources***

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Date 11-27-2022

Name Sabrina Scott

Address [REDACTED]

City Youngsville State LA Zip 70592

Telephone [REDACTED]

Representing  (self) \_\_\_\_\_ (organization)

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Book                      \_\_\_\_\_ Newspaper                      \_\_\_\_\_ Other  
 Magazine                      \_\_\_\_\_ Content of Library Program  
 Audiovisual                      \_\_\_\_\_ Electronic Resource

2. Title Triangle

Author/Producer Ellen Hopkins

3. What brought this title to your attention?

Content violates RS 14:91.11, RS 17:100.7, RS 14:81.1 LA Children's Code (2), a (definition of mental abuse or neglect) failure to protect minors., Children's Code Preamble 101 - Parents recognized as supreme authority over their children, Oath of Office by Public Officials to uphold and defend the Constitution of Louisiana and of the United States for America.

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

Yes

5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

Restrict access to minors via age verification. Book should be placed in an age restricted section of the library in order to protect children from graphic content while browsing.

Ellen Hopkins books should be removed from the STPL system. We should not be funding these types of books. Adults can purchase privately if desired.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

Strong sexual content involving minors, derogatory racial slurs, dysfunctional sexual behaviors involving manipulation, mind games, may trigger or entice adolescents with low self esteem, underage sexual discussion, externalizing self value through promiscuous sexual behavior. Alcohol and drug abuse and risky behavior associated with it.

Grossly demeaning sexual behavior , as well as drug and alcohol abuse that add no value to society.

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?

Age appropriate guidance teaching self value from within, not validation from dysfunctional sexual behavior (external source).

Ellen Hopkins books should be removed from the STPL system. I disagree with public funds purchasing books with such psychological dysfunction especially to minors.

Materials that do not violate the existing laws and statutes.

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.

### 3. What brought this title to your attention?

Content violates the state obscenity statutes

2021 Louisiana Laws

Revised Statutes

Title 14 - Criminal Law

§91.11.

2) "Material harmful to minors" is defined as any paper, magazine, book, newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, composition, publication, photograph, drawing, picture, poster, motion picture film, video tape, video game, figure, phonograph record, album, cassette, compact disc, wire or tape recording, or other similar tangible work or thing which exploits, is devoted to or principally consists of, descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality for commercial gain, and when the trier of fact determines that each of the following applies:

(a) The material incites or appeals to or is designed to incite or appeal to the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors.

(b) The material is offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors.

(c) The material taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.

(3) For the purpose of this Section "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality" includes the depiction, display, description, exhibition or representation of:

(a) Ultimate sexual acts, normal or perverted, actual, simulated, or animated, whether between human beings, animals, or an animal and a human being;

(b) Masturbation, excretory functions, or exhibition, actual, simulated, or animated, of the genitals, pubic hair, anus, vulva, or female breast nipples;

(c) Sadoomasochistic abuse, meaning actual, simulated, or animated, flagellation or torture by or upon a person who is nude or clad in undergarments or in a costume which reveals the pubic hair, anus, vulva,



genitals, or female breast nipples, or the condition of being fettered, bound, or otherwise physically restrained, on the part of one so clothed;

(d) Actual, simulated, or animated, touching, caressing, or fondling of, or other similar physical contact with, a pubic area, anus, female breast nipple, covered or exposed, whether alone or between human\*, animals or a human and an animal, of the same or opposite sex, in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification; or

(e) Actual, simulated, or animated, stimulation of the human genital organs by any device whether or not the device is designed, manufactured, and marketed for such purpose.

(4) "Minor" means any person under the age of eighteen years.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

Violates Content violates the state obscenity statutes  
for minors.

2021 Louisiana Laws

Revised Statutes

Title 14 - Criminal Law

Not suitable for minors

Summary of Concerns:

This book has sexually obscene sexual activities including sadomasochism; sexual nudity; profanity; alcohol abuse; drug use; controversial religious commentary; and alternate sexualities.

3 Once upon a time, I might have slid a leg up over Jace, reveled in the way he

stirred, hot and hard before the rest of him surfaced from dreams.

8 Did I ever tell you that sweaty women turn me on?

"Thus, your addiction to beach volleyball?" I go over for a morning kiss, sex is the farthest thing from my mind.

Jace. However, is totally in the mood, as advertised by the twitch of his hard-on.

Come on. We haven't had a morning go in a while, and I don't have to be in the office until nine. He coaxes me toward the unmade bed. Pretty please?

I start to protest, to say something about having to change the sheets, but it's simpler just to give in for the ten whole minutes it will take to make him a satisfied man. And me a dutiful wife. He leans me, stomach against the rumpled spread, over the bed, tugs down my shorts. I close my eyes as he slips two fingers inside me.

See now? You're ready for me. Strangely, I am, and when he pushes more than his fingers inside, the sex is comfortable. Easy. No work at all. It doesn't even take ten minutes until I feel the familiar tightening of his thighs. Jace comes. I don't. He punctuates his final thrust with a soft Oomph. Pulls away, sticky, starts again for the shower.

12 The angel of making men horny meets up with the angel of making women stupid.

"Let's create a problem for some lame earthly couple," he says.

(Making Men Horny Angel has to be a guy. Why would a woman angel bother with making me horny?)

Uh, you mean, like rip a condom and SNAP...baby?

...So off they go to see God, who's kicking back with a bottle of brilliant red wine and a couple of cute Waiting on God in Short Togas and Crooked Haloes Angels.

God, who is not so amused, booms: IT'S BEEN A CRAP CENTURY AND I'M REALLY NOT IN THE MOOD FOR GAMES. PICK A RANDOM PAIR OF COLLEG BEER PONGERS AND GIVE THEM A GIRL. AND JUST FOR KICKS, MAKE HER LIFE A CLUSTER SCREW. LOUSY CHILDHOOD. MISERABLE MARRIAGE. AND HEY, WHY NOT TOSS IN A SMART-ASS GAY KID AND ANOTHER ONE WHO NEVER WALK- IN FACT, ONE WHO

WILL NEVER GROW UP? MARISSA JOY SNYDER TRASK? FUCK HER!

All I can say is, he must be turning cartwheels up there. Sipping champagne.

Smoking cigars.

15 I might have considered abortion. Had I known a thing at all about spinal muscular atrophy, I would have run, full speed, to the nearest gated clinic.

...Shane just got "gay."

17 Now, what his interests are outside these walls, I really can't say, though I'm more than a little sure they revolve around marijuana. I can smell the barely masked scent of it now, leaking out from under his bedroom door.

19 I'm smoking weed and checking out a little guy-on-guy action.

"Wha...?" For the first time, I look beyond the smoke, resin, and incense-stained saucer to the computer screen, where one very buff and obviously very gay guy is doing unmentionable things to another very buff and obviously even gayer guy's oily backside.

20 That's top-quality weed. Want me to turn you on to my connection?

Page Content

26 Breakfasts in bed, followed by protracted post-French toast lovemaking.

30 Holly, who is on her third very strong mojito, has hitched a leg over Grant's knee, effectively airing out her crotch. Hope she's wearing panties. But if I were taking bets, I'd guess no way. And I can also imagine where Grant's fingers are creeping. Half of me is grossed out. The other half really wants to look. Holly acts all innocent, like nothing's going on under the table. But everyone here, including Average Guy, who is sloppy drunk and leaning toward belligerent, knows otherwise.

32 Four mojitos. Approximately one per hour. I actually feel okay driving home, though I'm pretty sure I wouldn't want to get pulled over right now.

34 Unless you want to consider underage drinking, plus marijuana and ketamine.

...A little weed, Mom. I don't indulge in the hard stuff.

36 I get another whiff of sex.

...I get the urge to run after her, pull her to me, daughter to mother, confide that sex isn't the way to make a man love you. That love and sex can, in fact, remain independent of one another. Maybe even should.

40 His fingers snake into my hair, pull my face into his and when his mouth covers mine, rum and mint flavor his tongue. The kiss I return is not gentle, and when his body rocks against mine, he is hard against the throb growing faster, faster, between my legs.

He is strong. My heart pounds as he wraps my right leg around his hip, lifts. Beneath my short denim skirt, he finds nothing but skin and hot, wet pulsing. His fingers start there, work their way inside. My body screams for orgasm, but not like that. "Fuck me, " I beg. His eyes, feral, meet mine. He smiles, props me up on his knee. Unzips his fine silk trousers, brings the swollen knob of his cock just outside my thrumming slit. Stops. "Say please."

53 A HIGH SCHOOL HOOKUP

That's what we were, me a stoner and Steve a defensive lineman jock who liked getting buzzed when he wasn't knocking down quarterbacks.

...It was normal. And so was sex, of the unprotected variety. I had an unforgettable senior year- cherry popped just before Christmas. Pregnant by Easter.

54 He came home, relaxed with a beer or ten.

...Meds for the pain. Addiction to meds.

56 Minus the fake tits, of course, and plus a few zits.

57 She keeps blasting away at something on screen..."Wait. What are you shooting? Not kids?"

Don't worry, says Chad. They're not American kids. They're Muslims.

70 WE SHED ALL PRETENSE QUICKLY

Before we finish the first drink, it's clear we're both here for sex. When the under-the-table foreplay becomes too intense, Grant pays the bill and we walk down the street to a cheap motel. Okay, it's a dive. It doesn't have hourly rates, but by the

looks of things, it should have.

...Grant is already out of his clothes.

...Instead, what I get from this stranger is the same sex waiting at home.

Page Content

Missionary. Ordinary. He comes. I don't. Done. I leave him there, dozing. Walk back to my car, past hookers and drug dealers. Feeling cheaper than the room.

71 SEX WITH A STRANGER

Is an eye-opening experience. Just when you think you know all there is to know, come to find out you ain't learned everything yet. No strings means doing things your way, but only if you happen to be the top. When you're not, it means accepting the particular brand of sex you're being offered, mostly without complaint. That's when things get sticky, and not just literally. Saying stop can be problematic when your partner is headlong into orgasm. Asking for longer or gentler or once more, with feeling, is quite often disappointing.

Sex with a stranger can fill in the blanks, but whether or not you like the turn of phrase depends on the stranger.

77 He's worn the scent as long as I've know him and it conjures powerful memories of sneaking off to an Oregon barn for long, lustful (but sex-free) make-out sessions.

Sex-free, because we were only fourteen, and though the examples set for us by our hippie parents was uncommitted rutting, somehow both Drew and I believed in love.

79 "He smokes weed and watches gay porn..."

92 Like telling your parents you're spending the night at your girlfriend's, when in fact you're going to a drug- and booze-soaked party with your horny boyfriend.

107 "It's not even ten in the morning, and you're drinking? Not only that, but getting drunk right there beside your daughter's bed? Are you crazy?"

112 Mom and Dad rated the scruffy tent so they could have scruffy sex on their scruffy air mattress.

...Which makes me wonder how many bears prowled close by Marissa and me while Mom and Dad indulged in a little growl-and-howl nookie.

118 Then again, I do have an excuse, because while she has easy access to regular sex, I almost definitely do not. I haven't slept with a guy in six months. I'm getting a wee bit antsy.

119 I really need to get a [sex] life.

120 No sex, not even amazing sex (and it was that), is worth the kind of verbal abuse that man threw at me. To top it all off, I found out he's married but he expected me to stay with him. Uh...right. I put an immediate end to it. To us. To amazing sex, or any sex except the battery-operated kind. But while that might take the edge off, it only whets my appetite for a more impressive menu. Solo orgasm isn't even a decent appetizer.

121 Porn princesses ser Hand Job and pretzel snacks, along with fifteen-dollar drinks.

Order appetizers from column one:

Girl-Girl

Massage (Give or Get)

Oral Delight.

Every thing is a la carte, with entrees from

Around the World:

Full French

Page Content

Asian Wet

Neapolitan

While your main course is prepared, you can enjoy a

Vibrator Show.

Front-row seats run a little more, but you don't want a

Half-and-Half

view. Finish your meal with a

Whipped Cream Party



Champagne Party

or maybe just a little

Love at the Y.

122 Can't believe you can get stuck writing sex scenes. Then again, since most (make that all) of the sex I've had for the past couple of years has been pretty uninspired, trying to write a believable orgasm is taking a lot of imagination. Jace said he hoped I'd pick up pointers from my current reading.

...Can't remember the last time he went down on me. Cunnilingus is barely even a memory. Maybe I need a girlfriend. One with an active tongue. I've never been with a woman.

128 And while sex is most certainly enhanced by love, love isn't necessarily better just because it comes with a penis.

133 Other than the usual "safe sex, please" warnings, I try not to probe too deeply into that part of his life. I don't need, or want, the details. Would I feel differently if he were straight? Maybe. But seems to me a father would be more interested in his son's sex life than a mother would. I don't think Christian wants to know the details of our gay son's sex life either, though.

135 He spent the morning working in the study, then started on the whiskey at lunch.

140 HE SMELLS OF WHISKY-BEADED SWEAT

But permeating that is the scent of male. Testosterone or pheromone, wherever it is carried, it cannot be ignored. Though his back is to me, I reach for him, and when he turns, I throw myself into his arms and we are kissing with a ferocity that only strangers share. His hands snarl into my hair, pin my head to the pillow as his mouth travels my neck, teeth and tongue working in unison, to the taut knots that are my nipples. He grows rigid against my leg and I sigh but say nothing, afraid words will wake me from whatever dream this has become. One hand comes loose from my hair.

It moves down between my legs, finds undertow. One finger, two, go inside me.

Three. Plunging. I am close but fight cresting with all I have. He licks along my

torso and his face seeks the V between my thighs, tongue joining fingers. This is something remembered. But when he pushes inside me, the intensity of his thrusts is nothing I've ever known.

148 Alcoholics tend to be assholes.

156 I can hardly concentrate on bodice shredding and passionate lovemaking in a corporate boardroom. But I try.

159 I am tipsy as hell when I sputter, "I heard lots of those girls are lesbians."

Some are, though many are bi. Being with other women is easy. Fewer demands.

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Better orgasms. At my doubtful look, she says, What?

Don't tell me you've never...really? She rocks up onto her knees. Want to?

I know nothing about being with a woman. I rely on her- and instinct.

160 She is bold, kissing me without clear invitation, or maybe I did invite her somehow. No matter. I can't help but kiss her back. Her pout is yielding, her tongue, the gentle flick of a serpent, testing. And she tastes of berries. "Lie back," she says. She lifts my top, licks me from my navel upward, her hair a soft trickle over my belly.

It smells of summer- hyssop and rose, a hint of grass. I close my eyes, give myself up to the carousel whirl- slick gloss lips and practiced tongue, circling. Circling. Lifting me close and closer to the horizon. And when she goes down on me, there is an eloquence no man could match, and I understand why she said being with women is easy. Naïve about how to give back, all I do is try. I reach into my psyche, tap some ancient well of instinct. In the same way that she carries me skyward, I sample her sat, bring her to climax, find immense satisfaction in reciprocal flight.

161 You can have sex for hours, with multiple partners, orgy-style, get off until you're downright sore. But rest up for a day or two, restore bodily fluids, rebuild desire, you'll want some more.

162 I had pretty much given up on sex, after such a large span of time with zero

interest from my husband. Then, one transcendent evening brought it all back to me- the power in a kiss; the coax of skin; the brilliant bolt of love in crescendo.

...Guess I could look at it as a one-night stand, something I've never done. Does every one-night stand make you feel so used the next day?

168 When the car draws parallel, slowing to assess Shelby and me, the smell of marijuana is overpowering. Five teens are inside.

...Hey, do aliens dig weed? He takes a big drag, exhales out the window and the driver punches it.

202 He smokes (tobacco hourly and pot when he can afford it). He drinks (way more than the two per day that are supposed to be kind of okay for you).

210 Missy and I, silent, outside the window as Mom and Dad loudly "discussed" the emotional toll of communal sex and possible outcomes.

212 Hangovers and jogging do not mix well. Can't believe I got so toasted last night. Can't believe I did half the things I did last night.

...He hugged me close, put his mouth against my ear. Thanks for coming. His voice a low growl, and my body responded with animal interest.

I tried to ignore the hollow longing, but by the time our first round was drained and another on its way, it had swollen into something I couldn't ignore.

215 Have you and your husband ever tried swinging?

...No. You know. Sex, with another couple. Or maybe a three-way? Another woman, another man, whatever.

216 His emerald eyes traveled over me with panther like zeal. The hungry cat in them only amplified the desire, pulsing like a heartbeat just in front of my pubic bone.

..."If Jace even suspected I've considered having sex with someone else, he'd insist on marriage counseling."

Page Content

Bryan smiled with feline intensity. So you have contemplated sex outside your marriage? With multiple partners?

217 He could take me, right there in that bar, with everyone watching. At least, I think

I would have let him.

218 He chose Truth, and I asked, "Have you ever cheated on your wife?"

Lies come easily to men, so I was surprised when he admitted, Many times. But I've never had an affair. Third mojito polished off, I sort of sputtered, "What's the difference?"

Emotional attachment. My turn. Have you cheated on your husband?

"Once." I would say it was a fib, but Grant will never count. I did add, "With a woman," omitting the part about her being a mutual acquaintance.

221 For instance: No sneaking out, particularly if said activity is meant to accommodate unsupervised parties, and most especially if said partying will be enhanced by the illicit use of drugs and alcohol, which invariably lead to unsavory outcomes, perhaps the very worst being unprotected sex.

231 And, you, know, homosexuals not really being "men," cannot be judged equivalent to their stiffer-wristed brethren. On religion, well, some Christians are willing to make room for a Jew or two in their inner circles. But Mecca-facing prayer must be met with flaming cross.

240 How come their pants are still on? I'm looking for G-strings. She slurps her mojito and signals to a cocktail waitress, who makes her way over.

...Eventually, the pants do come off. And they do, with the very next number, a solo by a guy with not much hair anywhere and piercings that look like they hurt. I turn to Holly to ask if she would ever wear a ring through her nipple, despite knowing the obvious answer- of course she would.

242 Being called up onstage by men with ripped torsos, who jerk off their pants two inches from your face, encourage you to touch the bulge in their Speedos before returning you to your up-close seat.

243 "Is it true these guys are gay?"

245 The older lady seems much more in her element, totally getting into the whole simulated oral sex thing.

248 Big voice: Check out this spread!

Deep voice: You talking food or pussy?

Squeaky voice: Make me a drink, baby.

Taunting voice: You can drink this, darlin'.

255 Then he opens a high cupboard, reaches for a large bottle that turns out to be Irish whiskey. I glance at the clock. Not even ten.

256 Do you screw your boyfriend at school?

...What is it about "gay" that upsets you?

...I'm sure it doesn't concern you in the least, but homosexuality is a sin.

300 I reach for his zipper. Mouth. Tongue. Skin. Serious skin. Red champagne haze.

Over me. Under me. G-spot deep inside me.

301 THE G-SPOT

Arguably a woman's favorite trigger, yet few have any idea what the G stands for.

Page Content

...Back in the forties when no medical professional worth his new sulfa drugs believed women had orgasms, good ol' Doc G begged to disagree. Such an argument (not to mention eyebrows) he raised when he said a girl could ejaculate!

304 But when I call, she launches her own story- Aussie Robin and champagne brunch and sex on the beach.

308 The room isn't the fanciest, but it's clean and the bed is decent, something we barely discern before we're kissing again. Kissing longer. Deeper. With intent.

Passion. So much passion.

...He stops kissing me. Take off your clothes.

He stands back away from the bed, watching me shed my dress. When I am down to lingerie and stockings, he says, Come over here. He sits in the overstuffed chair.

I want a lap dance. I have no idea how to do a lap dance, but what the hell? I

stand in front of him, moving my body to imagined music. Blues. Billie Holiday. He

reaches for me, tugs me so I'm straddling his legs That's it. Beautiful. He gentles

his hands behind my shoulder blades, coaxes me forward and unhooks my bra.

Lets it fall. Slips a hand under each breast, lifting them gently and framing my nipples with the Vs of his fingers. The motion unexpectedly ingenuous, as if he's touching a woman for the first time. And now his tongue teases into the folds, circling the marble tips. I bit the bottom lip against the moan trying to escape- too much a cliché for this moment. And the thing that shifted, whatever it was, slithers sideways again, reveals an emotion closer to love than lust. His hands fall away, to my thighs. They push me down, into his lap, only his jeans and my panties between the thing I want most right now, stiff and pulsing. He kisses me again, and my body screams to have him inside me, but he says...

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TIED UP?

It is the most intense experience of my life, and when I get home I'm glad the house is fast asleep, so it can go into my journal.

Oil of cloves

To offer up ever slender thread of control is frightening. Exhilarating. I am naked when he lays me, trembling, on the bed. "I won't hurt you. Not if you're very good." He uses my stockings. One for my hands, which he crosses at the wrists, stretching them over my head. The other he wraps around my eyes. I'm swimming in a dark sea where something unseen waits for me. "Don't move." It's hard to comply when his teeth rake my neck in a vampire style kiss, lower to my nipples. His bite is half brilliant hurt, half surreal pleasure. The scent, lifting from his hair, is spice. Cloves, I think. It's sharp, sexy as hell. "Open your legs." His face dives between them, and his mouth claims what he finds there. And when he says, "You can come now," I am beyond ready. "Now that you're wet, I'm going to do something I've always wanted to." He slips one finger inside me. Two. Three. At four, the pressure becomes terrific. But when I squirm, he gives my arms a warning tug. "No. Hold still." I do and he works his entire hand into that narrow place. And over the flashing silver pain, I shudder orgasm. "That's my girl." I wish I

Page Content

could see his rigid cock, fevered, and poised to push inside me. One wicked thrust

and I come again. And again. And now, so does he.

### 311 ORGASM

Few things represent so well the inequality of the sexes. Picture Adam, running around the garden with a nice breeze-induced stiffy, meaningless until that lecherous serpent got involved. Before it became about intent, erection felt good, and that was all. Then his companion found some off-the-wall forbidden fruit. One little nibble and Eve became the object of Adam's-no-longer-innocent stiffy's desire. And here's the rub (so to speak). He-man- got off pretty much by whim.

### 314 NOT THAT I BELIEVE IN GOD

Growing up, Andrea and I were given no clear understanding of a possible Creator.

317 Wander over to his desk.

Lighters.

Rolling papers.

Marijuana crumbs.

323 I dare take a chance on believing there might be a future for Robin and me, totally on the strength of three days of great synergy, most of it involving food, wine, and sex?

324 ...but apparently American women are more into male strippers than Aussie women are.

...But, hey, Tahoe was just a date. One that turned into delectable sex.

332 It was supposed to be fun. Innocent flirtation. A little sex on the side, maybe. It was never supposed to turn into this all-encompassing need to be with him. To hear his voice. Return his kiss. Feel the heat of him on me. Around me. Over me. Inside me, where I absorb him.

345 A half-full tumbler of scotch in one hand, he marched straight to Shane's room.

346 AIDS is God's way of saying "gay" is a very bad choice.

358 How he left for work. Phoned to divert her from his booze-soaked clothes.

364 Maybe it's just because I've turned into a regular pervert.



366 He takes one look, whistles through his teeth. I think I just changed my mind about sharing you. He kisses me with such intensity I want to climb into his lap, urge him inside me right here on the front seat, like a couple of kids. Instead, I move his hand to my exposed thigh. It begins a slow upward crawl, explores the edges of my stockings. Garter belt? He exhales. Oh, you are my kind of girl. What else are you hiding?

367 My scooped-neck blouse is stretchy lace. One quick tug and the tits of a stranger spill out. (Someone who calls her breasts "tits"!)

368 He pulls off my blouse with a practiced hand, and before I can think about what might come next, he has lifted my breasts from the confines of my bra. "Lovely," he says. "Don't you think so?" he asks Lorraine. In answer, her lips, cool and silksmooth, wrap around my nipple. Oh, God. This girl is not like the other. She is not

gentle, her actions almost like a man's. Lorraine licks and pinches, right, left, and Micah moves into director mode. "Sit up on the table, facing me," he says. Then,

Page Content

to Lorraine, "I want you in panties only." The two of us comply. Micah eases a hand up under my skirt, slides the thong of my own panties to one side, and as his thumb begins a slow, slippery ride, Lorraine stands over him, facing me. And now I kiss a girl for the second time. She tastes of orange peel-bitter, sharp. I bury my head between the plentiful rounds of her breasts: Inhale. Her skin is warm and softly scented with ginger.

And now, as if I've done this a hundred times before, I move my mouth to taste her nipples. They are larger than mine. Luscious. My partner's hands pull me backward to lie across the table. He kisses Lorraine as Micah's tongue finds the sweet spot between my legs. It all becomes a heady mix of men. Tongues. Hands. Fingers. The unique brine of woman. The heat of cock. Condoms. Don't forget those. And, God, orgasm. Mine. Hers. Theis. I think other people are watching. Touching themselves because this foursome is amazing. Beautiful people doing incredibly sensual things. Segue to dirty, nasty things. And...

And for a second- but only a second- I flash on Jace, at home with the kids. The disquieting thought makes me ask myself: what kind of wife and mother has group sex with strangers in public?

#### PUBLIC SEX

Is a curious thing. Many who participate aren't exactly porn-star quality. Not every swinger is one of the beautiful people, and yet, not only do they bare it all for strangers, they do it with panache. Imagine you and a fifty-something beer belly, doing the dirty, live, in front of an audience while the one you love performs with someone who bears a faint resemblance to your great-aunt Jo.

394 One very big problem now is having sex with Jace.

...Better get in and see your doctor before I have to whack off so hard my pecker gets blisters. He smiled, but I don't think he was being funny.

#### 395 WONDER WHAT HE'D THINK

About the Holly who flashed her boobs for a free drink before offering herself up like a sacrificial piece of ass at a club called the Topaz.

400 shit

400 Dylan says he'll pay for an abortion.

..."Mikayla, I know the idea of an abortion is distasteful. But you're only seventeen. Having a baby would...impact your life."

424 She doesn't have much time left if she chooses to terminate. I don't think she will, despite my best advice.

431 In those hours when need unfolds you from deep creases of sleep, leaves you shivering beneath sheets of darkness, body and brain merged into a river of primal rage, rushing headlong toward cataract, a torrent that only an all-night, sweat-slicked fuck can assuage, would a kiss satisfy?

438 Not that I ever believed five years together could have been only about sex.

439 He isn't worth a second glance, but she sizzles in a skirt that barely curtains her pubic region.

#### 440 AND WILL I EVER WANT HIM

To touch me again, in the way every husband should touch his wife, and every

Page Content

wife should long for? Part of me wants to try. To see if I can have sex with Christian without thinking about his hands, traveling collarbone to hips down Skye's (narrower, longer) torso, pausing to caress her (larger, higher) breasts. Lowering his mouth to her (tauter? pinker?) nipples, circling them with the tip of his tongue before moving on. And lick her (flatter, browner) belly as she arches her (straighter) back, opens her (sleeker) legs inviting his face to plunge between them, inhale her peculiar pheromone perfume. To sample her unique favor, savor its taste it he wet of her orgasm without first seeking his own And when at last he lunges into her, hearing her moan, no scream, until she comes and he comes and they come together. Can Christian and I ever have sex without doing a threesome with her?

THREESOMES

Are often awkward- the indelicate weave of body parts tangles in too many ways. ...three mouths, uncertain of what needs to be kissed; three tongues with a plethora of places to lick and spaces to explore.

447 I didn't really want to leave, wanted to see him naked. Realized how smashed I was.

...I closed the door behind me. Left his nakedness to my imagination.

452 First feel-up.

First fuck.

456 Recalled the faces of good friends and boyfriends and sneaking off campus for a smoke and making out in a backseat or two.

458 She lives just outside of Vegas. Has been married twice but not to my birth father, who is, in fact, Paul Driscoll, who did, in fact, have sex with someone other than his wife, several times, according to Sarah, and one of those times resulted in me.

463 Jeez, Mom, do you think I'm a total stoner?

480 Finish the pizza. Drink more beer.

...What I need now is comfort sex.

#### 481 COMFORT SEX

Sometimes you just want a loud, long, licentious fuck. Anything goes. No sound allowed but the soft-speak of sheets and unbidden vocalizations. But that kind of sex is often best enjoyed with not expectation of repeat performance. A five-star dessert, compared to sugar-free Jell-O- the everyday low-cal, low-carb treat that, with rare exception, will not rank near the top of anyone's "most desired" list. Segue to "most requested," you might find the daily lay, no real effort required except the post-activity cleanup. But every now and then, sex becomes about remembering you're wanted. Knowing your alive. Folding yourself into someone's skin and suckling their life force to rekindle your own. Resurrection within the fusion of orgasm.

#### 486 I STILL WANT A DRINK

Liquid courage, I've heard it called, and I'm in dire need of a shot- or two- of nerve.

510 And yes, I fell in love with a couple of women along the way, but that kind of love the kind rooted in sex- burns out fairly quickly.

#### Page Content

528 We've been to dinner a couple of times. No sex (yet), no strings, no promises.

#### Profanity Count

Ass 8

Bitch 6

Cock 3

Fuck 18

Piss 3

Prick 2

Pussy 1

Shit 10

**TRIANGLES** by Ellen Hopkins  
Atria Books, 2011

**PUBLISHER'S SUMMARY**

In this emotionally powerful novel, three women face the age-old midlife question: If I'm halfway to death, is this all I've got to show for it? Holly, filled with regret for being a stay-at-home mom, sheds sixty pounds and loses herself in the world of extramarital sex. Andrea, a single mom and avowed celibate, watches her friend Holly's meltdown with a mixture of concern and contempt. Holly is throwing away what Andrea has spent her whole life searching for--a committed relationship with a decent guy. So what if Andrea picks up Holly's castaway husband? Then there's Marissa. She has more than her fair share of challenges--a gay teenage son, a terminally ill daughter, and a husband who buries himself in his work rather than face the facts. As one woman's marriage unravels, another one's rekindles. As one woman's family comes apart at the seams, another's is reconfigured into something bigger and better. In this story of connections and disconnections, one woman's up is another one's down, and all three of them will learn the meaning of friendship, betrayal, and forgiveness before it is through.

**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT HEADINGS**

Self-realization in women  
Female friendship  
Novels in verse

**PUBLISHER RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP:** Adult

**HOLDINGS AND CIRCULATION**

- 2 print copies at Causeway, and Covington/ Shelves in Adult Fiction/Call number Fic Hopk

Purchased in May 2011. Available on shelf October 2011.

Total circulation on all print copies: 75

**OTHER LIBRARY HOLDINGS**

Held at 958 libraries  
Mobile Public Library – Adult Fiction  
Baldwin County Library – Adult Fiction  
Jackson-George Regional – Adult Fiction

**PATRON REQUEST/SUGGEST A PURCHASE:** N/A

**REVIEWS**

**Library Journal (09/01/2011):**

Having already explored drug addiction, prostitution, sexual abuse, and homosexuality, Hopkins (Crank; Glass; Fallout) has legions of young adult fans who are getting older and may be ready for new themes. In her first novel aimed at adults, the author throws in extramarital affairs, swinging, erotica, searching for one's birth parents, and a Jodi Picoult-inspired side plot about

caring for a terminally ill child, all told in her signature style: free verse. At 544 pages, it's indulgent, and some of the poems seem contrived and clunky. It can be difficult to differentiate between the three middle-aged friends who make up the titular triangle, even with their names as headings for each section. Their voices are not consistent, and it seems that their stories would be more compelling if told in a more conventional narrative. **VERDICT** While Hopkins's fans and newcomers may be drawn in by the titillating details, this does not hold up as adult literature. For popular collections, because there will be an audience. [See Prepub Alert, 4/25/11; Hopkins's next book, *Tilt*, focuses on the teen characters from *Triangles*.--Ed.]--  
**Christine Perkins, Bellingham P.L., WA**

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**Publishers Weekly (08/22/2011):**

Teenage angst is all grown up--but no less fraught with sexual misadventure and gnawing insecurity--in Hopkins's fearless first novel for adults written entirely in verse. For restless writer and mother-of-three Holly, her looming 40th birthday prompts increasingly risky sexual behavior (inspiration for her sizzling-hot erotica), even as her rebellious teenage daughter charges down her own dangerous sexual path. Meanwhile, Andrea, one divorce and one affair with a married man already under her belt, finds comfort with Holly's husband after he discovers that Holly has been doing her erotica homework with another man. And while Andrea's sister Marissa cares for her dying five-year-old daughter and her gay teenage son, her marriage crumbles under the weight of betrayal, anger, and guilt. Written in her signature poetic verse style, Hopkins (*Crank*) delivers a raw and riveting tale of love and forgiveness that will captivate readers. (Oct.)

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**Booklist (09/15/2011):**

Young-adult novelist Hopkins (*Crank*, 2004) graduates to the grown-up leagues with her latest effort. She turns her gaze on the interwoven stories of three women approaching middle age, and though the book is notable for Hopkins' verse style of writing, it's actually a conventional read. Hopkins seems most intrigued with her least sympathetic character, Holly, a stay-at-home mom who's recently dropped 60 pounds and become overly enamored of the attention her new figure receives. She takes up erotic writing and research that includes dubious extramarital sexual encounters (allowing Hopkins to stretch her R-rated powers). Rounding out the titular triangle: Andrea, Holly's best friend, and Marissa, a pair of sad-sack sisters. Andrea is a single mother navigating the dating waters with limited success. Marissa is dealing with a gay son, a young daughter dying of a rare disease, and an emotionally and physically distant husband. It's a lot of plot to juggle, and in choosing to go wide, Hopkins doesn't go as deep as she might have. Any of the women--Marissa, in particular--could have carried her own novel.(Reprinted with permission of Booklist, copyright 2011, American Library Association.)

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Ellen Hopkins is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of fourteen young adult novels, as well as the adult novels *Triangles*, *Collateral*, and *Love Lies Beneath*. She lives with her family in

Carson City, Nevada, where she has founded Ventana Sierra, a nonprofit youth housing and resource initiative. Visit her at [EllenHopkins.com](http://EllenHopkins.com) and on Facebook, and follow her on Twitter at [@EllenHopkinsLit](https://twitter.com/EllenHopkinsLit).

#### **AWARDS & LISTS**

N/A

#### **RESOURCES**

Ingram Content Group, LLC

Books in Print 2.0

Worldcat

Individual library websites (for holdings info)



November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

Ms. Rosalind Murr  
[REDACTED]  
Covington, LA 70433

Dear Ms. Murr,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Triangles* by Ellen Hopkins. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

You asked that this book be removed from any children's section, that we ask for an ID to check out and that it not be allowable for a minor to download. The book was not written for minors. While Hopkins is an author noted for writing for teens, all of the reviews for this title indicate that the intended audience for the book is adults. The book was placed in Adult Fiction when it was purchased in 2011. The title does not show up in any search in the Kids Catalog. Our current card policy which was updated to match the new state law (LA RS 25:225) only allows checkout of this book to adults or to minors whose parents have given them permission to check out from the Adult Collection. The library does not own a downloadable version of this book. After reviewing the book and discussion, it was determined that, in the opinion of the committee members, the book is appropriately shelved as part of the Adult Collection.

While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for their family, that alone does not render it unlawful. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item, and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what their own children will read or hear.

The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 9th, 2024, where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes. If you are unable to attend, you may submit a written statement to be included in the record of the meeting.

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Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly LaRocca".

Kelly LaRocca, Director

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November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

Ms. Sabrina Scott

  
Youngsville, LA 70592

Dear Ms. Scott,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Triangles* by Ellen Hopkins. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

As you specifically cited La. R.S. § 14:91.11 as a reason for your concern we evaluated the book based on this statute first. Pursuant to La. R.S. § 14:91.11, it is unlawful for any St. Tammany Library to display, exhibit, disseminate, check-out, or otherwise provide any minor anything that constitutes material harmful to minors by law. However, materials are only deemed harmful to minors if all four (4) of the following apply beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. First, the material must exploit, be devoted to, or principally consist of "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality." To be "descriptions or depictions of illicit or sexual immorality," the material must convey ultimate sex acts, masturbation or excretory functions, lewd exhibition of private areas, sadomasochistic abuse, sexual intimacy via physical acts of private areas, or stimulation of human genitalia.
2. Second, the material must incite, appeal to, or be designed to incite or appeal to "the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors," i.e., a sexual response over and beyond those that would be characterized as normal for a minor.
3. Third, the material must be "offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors." These standards are not defined or limited by any specific geographic area.
4. Fourth, the material, when considered in its entirety (including both objectionable and nonobjectionable parts), must lack any "literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors."

If any of the foregoing requirements are not met, the material is not unlawful under La. R.S. §14:91.11.

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Importantly, the statute defines “minor” as “any person under the age of eighteen years.” Thus, the last three (3) elements above must be considered in that context, e.g., “The material taken as a whole [must] lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for [any person under the age of eighteen years].” Additionally, if materials that qualify as harmful to minors are not sold, distributed, advertised, or otherwise distributed to minors, it is permissible under the law to have them available for adults to do so, as long as the minors are unable to see, “as displayed,” descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality.”

Under this analysis, the staff committee determined that the material at issue in your Statement of Concern does not qualify as unlawfully harmful to minors.

1. The committee found that the material does not primarily consist of or is it primarily devoted to the sexual conduct listed in La. R.S. 14:91.11. The book is primarily about three adult women in their thirties and their day to day struggles with life. Sexuality is part of the story, but is not the primary theme. Other topics are given as much space such as divorce, raising teen children, and raising a disabled child.
2. The committee found that the text and images did not incite or appeal to the prurient interests of minors. The book is not meant to appeal to minors at all. The book was written for adults.
3. The committee did find the material to be inappropriate to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors. Again, the book was not written for minors. While Hopkins is an author noted for writing for teens, all of the reviews for this title indicate that the intended audience for the book is adults. The book was placed in Adult Fiction when it was purchased in 2011. The title does not show up in any search in the Kids Catalog.
4. The committee believes the material taken as a whole does not lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors. The book has literary value by portraying a variety of family situations and for tackling hard subjects in verse format.

You asked that this book be restricted via age verification and that Ellen Hopkins books be removed form the STPL system. Our current card policy which was updated to match the new state law (LA RS 25:225) only allows checkout of this book to adults or to minors whose parents have given them permission to check out from the Adult Collection. After reviewing the book and discussion, it was determined that, in the opinion of the committee members, the book does not

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violate either statute, and that the book being shelved as part of the Adult Collection satisfied both LA RS 25:225 and the directives of the Board.

While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for their family, that alone does not render it unlawful. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item, and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what their own children will read or hear.

The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 9th, 2024, where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes. If you are unable to attend, you may submit a written statement to be included in the record of the meeting.

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,

Kelly LaRocca, Director

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SLIDELL (985) 646-6470

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