



LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

March 14, 2012

BOARD PRESENT: Amir, Brodsky, Bryant (via phone), Christman, Dickerson, Jewell (via phone), J. Lewis, O. Lewis, Neuman, Ram, Watts

STAFF PRESENT: B. Parker Hamilton, Director; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Aurora Sanchez (CRC LAC Co-Chair), Jean Dunnington (DRC LAC Chair); Linda Pottern (Co-Chair Davis LAC)

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Lewis at 7:05 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Chair Lewis welcomed Library Advisory Committee Chairs and thanked them for coming. The Board Members, Library Advisory Committee Chairs and Library Staff self-introduced.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Minutes from the February 8, 2012 meeting were approved.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Legislative and Public Affairs Committee [O. Lewis]
 - The County Executive will be announcing his FY13 Recommended Operating Budget tomorrow.
 - The talking points have been finalized.
 - Council library tours:
 - On February 29, Councilmember Nancy Floreen toured the Bethesda Library.
 - Two members of the Bethesda FOL chapter also joined the Board and LAC members for the tour.
 - Library services were highlighted.
 - The tour of Damascus Library with Councilmember Craig Rice was March 2.
 - Florence Jewell, Board liaison to the Damascus LAC, was there and afterwards provided notes regarding the tour to the full Board.
 - It was Dr. Seuss' birthday, and Councilmember Rice participated in the activities.
 - Paulette Dickerson, Jeanette Cotter and Otto Lewis attended the tour of Chevy

- Chase Library with Council President Roger Berliner.
 - The Chevy Chase Historical Society has an office in the Chevy Chase Library. Members of the Society participated in the discussion and presented Mr. Berliner with a book on the history of Chevy Chase.
 - When asked about restoring funds to libraries, Mr. Berliner spoke about the issue of not having state funding for the County. He praised the campaign from last year and recommended that this type of campaign be taken to the state legislature.
 - On March 26 at 2:30 p.m., Councilmember Andrews is scheduled to tour the Rockville Memorial Library.
 - Tours with Councilmembers Elrich, Ervin and Navarro still need to be scheduled.
- LAC and Board Activities Committee [Neuman]
 - LAC Awards
 - The awards ceremony will be held during the June Board meeting.
 - The Board Bulletin will include information and photographs from the awards ceremony, therefore, the Bulletin will not go out until July.
 - LAC award nominations are due from Board members by April 15.
 - One of the awards is the Member of the Year Award. It is being recommended that the Member of the Year Award be named in honor of David Chiles.
 - A precedent was set with the Eleanor Ablard Award.
 - Paulette Dickerson moved that the Member of the Year Award be named in honor of David Chiles. The motion was seconded by Art Brodsky and carried.
 - Addendum – This will be effective immediately.
 - It will be announced at the award ceremony.
 - Mr. Chiles’ wife will be invited to attend the ceremony and present the award.
 - The Germantown LAC has a new member who has met with the Chair of the Quince Orchard LAC. The GT LAC member will attend the next QO LAC meeting on May 7.
 - The pairing of the LACs does not mean that the two groups will become one; it is similar a buddy system.
 - The duration of the pairing will be determined by the paired LACs.
 - This is a pilot. If it works well, it will be advertised to other LACs.

DISCUSSION:

- Board Responsibilities
 - This is a really critical time in the work of the Board.
 - Members have done an excellent job in attending the budget forums and hearings, providing testimonies and being active with the LACs.
 - Director Hamilton, Art Brodsky and Chair Lewis met with County Executive Leggett last week.
 - Mr. Leggett had nothing but good things to say about Libraries.
 - He has stated over and over in public forums that he will not cut Libraries’ budget.

- It is critical that all members are:
 - speaking with one voice;
 - carrying the same message;
 - supporting the Library Director;
 - and representing the system as a whole.
- Discussion was held, as a refresher, regarding the mission and role of the Library Board and its relationship to the LACs.
 - Key points from the discussion:
 - Support and advise the Library Director.
 - Help make decisions that protect employees and library services.
 - Ensure that LAC members understand their roles. Stress that LACs are subcommittees of the Library Board.
 - Board members are volunteers (will be added to the Board Bulletin).
 - The Board members serve as liaisons to the public, bringing back critical information to the Director.
 - The Board’s primary role is to speak up for Libraries – preserving, protecting and defending Libraries.
 - The Library Board plays a dual role. They are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.
 - Ensure that everyone knows that the Library Board speaks for MCPL in regards to advocacy.
- Discussion was held concerning “Stop the Shift” and the Library Board’s role.
- Discussion regarding having a way for the Board to be represented if last minute occasions/events arise included:
 - There is no official communication liaison for the Board.
 - The succession based on past practices: Chair, Vice Chair, Immediate Past Chair, Past Chair(s).
 - Art Brodsky (Immediate Past Chair) has been a very effective spokesperson for the Board. Due to work schedules, it is very difficult to have only one person.
 - After discussion, it was moved, seconded, and carried that: If an issue arises that needs a Board representative, the Board Chair will attend or will appoint a designee. The designee must talk with the Director of the Department of Public Libraries and make the Board aware of what he/she intends to say while representing the Board. There should be talking points. The designee will communicate with the Board afterwards.
- Talking points were written differently this year to be more concise. Talking points with a primary focus stated are important.
- The tours have been great. The Council members listen to the residents.
 - Councilmember Leventhal visited Davis Library and saw the mold; now he has ensured that the Department of General Services has a plan in place to correct this.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

- The County Executive will announce his FY13 Recommended Operating Budget at a noon press conference tomorrow.
- Full Council will meet on Tuesday, March 20 at 2:00 p.m. to discuss the CIP budget.
- An email was sent to Board members late this afternoon regarding a focus group that the County Cable Office is hosting. They would like Library advocates and customers to come and talk about the County’s cable future communication needs. Specifically, what could happen in libraries regarding social media, programs and information video

- campaigns. The session that has been identified for Libraries is March 23, 10-12 or 2-4.
- The Operating Budget for Libraries is in front of the Council Health and Human Services Committee (HHS) on April 18 at 9:30 a.m. They are holding Friday, April 27 at 9:30 a.m. for any additional issues.
 - The CIP for Libraries mainly focused on Davis and Wheaton libraries. The last session was a joint session of the HHS Committee and the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee. Five members attended, and all five supported moving up the Wheaton project to FY13. Even though the Davis Library project will not be moved up, Council will ensure that the issues in the basement are addressed.
 - The Department requested and received permission to spend the remaining \$1M in the materials budget.
 - The proceeds from the Executive Ball are \$100k. Libraries should receive the check this week.
 - The Inspector General is conducting an audit regarding how Libraries procures materials. Interviews have been conducted with key staff. The Inspector General hopes to have the reports finalized in August; the reports will be public. Improvements will be made if indicated.
 - Projects being worked on include:
 - The Olney kiosk, which is still on target to be opened by March 31.
 - The mobile app for the Android smart phone will be implemented by the end of spring.
 - The eReaders will be in all branches by the end of next week. They are currently at Davis Library.
 - A grant was received from the state that allowed the Department to send 23 staff members to the Public Library Association (PLA) meeting in Philadelphia.
 - The Department is ready for *The Hunger Games*; the movie is coming out on March 23. There is a quiz on the website, and additional copies of all the books have been ordered.
 - In the winter, Libraries was asked to submit a budget that represented a 2% cut. Mr. Leggett has stated that he will not cut Libraries' budget. He will be announcing his FY13 Recommended Operating budget tomorrow. Board members are encouraged to attend. A memo will be sent to the Board members after the announcement, detailing Mr. Leggett's recommendation for Libraries.
 - Director Hamilton will be on leave from April 6-13 and will not be at the April 11 Board meeting.

BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS:

- Ari Brooks, FOLMC Executive Director, is in the process of arranging a date for the Potluck with the County Council. [J. Lewis]
- The sign-up to testify at the Council hearings begins tomorrow. [Dickerson]
- Otto Lewis was asked to leave an FOL chapter meeting at Bethesda Library.
 - There was some confusion because the branch manager was giving her report at the FOL meeting.
 - There should be a separate agenda for the LAC meeting which includes the branch manager's report.
 - The Bethesda FOL chapter representative offered an apology to Otto Lewis regarding the confusion.
 - Director Hamilton has been in contact with the branch manager regarding this incident.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Chair Lewis received an email sample of the new t-shirts. They are bright orange and have a picture of a book “pumping iron.” The t-shirts read, “Libraries Still Matter: Build Them Up.”
- Schedules to testify will be set up via email.
 - The hearing dates will be sent to the LACs.
 - LAC members can use the approved talking points and are encouraged to use personal stories. If they cannot testify in person, they can submit written testimonies and letters.

LAC INFORMATION/LAC UPDATES:

LAC Applications

The LAC member nominations were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The Children’s Resource Collection LAC has been without a Board liaison for over a year. Two different responses have been received regarding why this is. There needs to be more transparency of information. The CRC LAC members do not know where their support is. Maybe the Board can have an orientation process for LACs that are not quite as active. [Aurora Sanchez]

There has been some discussion about the CRC LAC merging with the Rockville Memorial LAC which currently does not have a Board liaison. A meeting will be scheduled with the Rockville Memorial Branch Manager to discuss this issue. [Director Hamilton]

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

B. Parker Hamilton