

Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes - June 26, 2023

Meeting started at 7:30pm; Chair, Althea Grey-McKenzie welcomed everyone with Zoom meeting protocols in place.

Attendees: Althea Grey-McKenzie, Chair, Delores McKoy, Secretary, Moya Stephenson-Fairweather, Barbara Reading, Carl Jeanty, Babs Margolies, Eileen Smith; For MCPL: Patrick Fromm, Regional Manager; For MCLB: Jess Bravin, Liaison; Absent and sent regrets: Betty Bell, Elliot Chabot and Chris Swan.

Secretary: Delores McKoy reported that approval of March and May Minutes were tabled at the last meeting and will be reviewed for approval today. February Meeting Minutes were approved and submitted.

March 2023 Meeting Minutes: There was discussion and clarification on report about possible display cases or areas at the AHLIB and in the community to exhibit, as well as other ways to engage youth volunteers. Other clarifications were made on the circulation report and Knitting and Crocheting program at AHLIB.

- Babs Margolies moved to accept the March Minutes; Barbara Reading seconded. All voted unanimously to accept the March Minutes with changes. March Meeting Minutes approved.

May 2023 Meeting Minutes: Clarifications were submitted by the Landscape Committee regarding their May report.

- Barbara Reading moved to accept the May Minutes; Althea Grey-McKenzie seconded. All voted unanimously to accept the May Minutes with changes. May Meeting Minutes approved.

Elections: Chair Althea Grey-McKenzie reminded everyone about the terms for membership and for Officers. She reported that according to the LAC Handbook, LACs are required to conduct Elections at their June meeting each year. Due to the many familial challenges shared by members this year, she considered moving June elections to the September meeting. At the June Board meeting, Chair asked for a postponement to conduct elections in September, which was granted. A nominating committee was also considered rather than submitting nominations at this meeting. All members agreed to the following: 1) have a nominating committee with ballot for the elections in September and 2) remind all members of the AHLAC (adults and youth members) to participate in September elections.

Chair Grey-McKenzie asked Jess Bravin, MCLB Liaison to AHLAC, to share information with the AHLAC Officers about any guidance on forming a nominating committee. Mr. Bravin thought that Board members would be happy to share any procedures or suggestions. He also shared information about the next Board meeting and the Joint Meeting in October.

AHLAC Chair Report: (Report attached)

Chair Althea Grey-McKenzie reported that the roster has 19 members and thanked everyone for continuing to participate. She attended the June Library Board meeting and encouraged everyone to attend at least one library Board meeting. She was very happy to hear there is a positive plan being

considered for more communication between LAC Chairs. There was talk of the LAC Awards which have been tabled by the Board; Chair Grey-McKenzie shared that the awards should be re-established. Chair reached out to Jess Bravin, Liaison and Delores McKoy, Secretary, to update him on outreach plans, communication with individuals about joining the LAC and sharing AHLAC gmail password info, etc. One concern shared with the Board is that the Chair is not receiving LAC applications for AHLAC membership before the applicant is approved, which seems outside of the application process. January or February 2023 was the last time she received the application notices. Concerns for youth volunteers were also raised. Jess Bravin is interested in speaking with Ariana McKenzie, Youth Volunteer Coordinator, about the Youth Volunteer activities as well.

Volunteers' Appreciation Day on May 20, 2023 went well and the AHLAC Members present met many members of the Aspen Hill Garden Club. Everyone received a certificate and a bookmark. Kudos to Christine Freeman, Branch Manager, for providing certificates to all members and refreshments. Chair Grey-McKenzie also gave awards to LAC members for going above and beyond in their service to the AHLAC and library community, namely, Eileen Smith, Delores McKoy and Ariana McKenzie.

Email from MCPL: Patrick Fromm, Regional Manager sent an email to the Chair for distribution to the membership regarding the Open Meetings Act. The email was from the Library Department and reiterated that the LACs are subject to the Open Meetings Act and some changes to the use of virtual chats, submission and publishing of minutes, and to continue no engagement of Federal and State officials and activities as representatives of the AHLAC. There was discussion and several members asked for understanding of certain approvals at the level outlined in the handbook. Mr. Fromm said the general idea is any advocacy must be approved in advance.

Chair Grey-McKenzie asked for questions and comments: Mr. Bravin thought that the agenda could be a way to increase interest when published early. Chair read responses she received from LAC members and the public concerning the email statement and highlighted the conflicts in the email statement compared to what is in the LAC Handbook. Mr. Fromm asked Mr. Bravin to seek clarity on processes in the LAC Handbook related to elected officials and LAC limits to advocacy. Mr. Bravin will raise this with the Board. Chair asked if anyone had more questions to send them to her and cc: Mr. Fromm. Chair asked Mr. Bravin to share more about the policy and what is motivating the email statement (who is requiring this), as well as where the points raised were specifically addressed in the Open Meetings Act.

Branch Report: (Report attached)

Patrick Fromm, Branch Manager, reported that Summer Reading started, foot traffic picked up, and programs continue to be going well. Only a few people came out to the Juneteenth program and commented on ways to attract people to their newer programs. He and Mrs. Christine Freeman, Library Manager, hope to get a part-time position now that they are open 7 days a week. The Elevator was out-of-service and Mr. Fromm will update later. Chair Grey-McKenzie asked about Summer Reading info. They have two central programs coming to support the summer programs through Friends of the Library Montgomery County. They have craft programs and great programs with performers, that everyone can access. Chair also asked for foot traffic, other statistics and where to display at the library. Mr. Fromm will also share about how we can display information in the library, perhaps at the circulation area, etc. Foot traffic was 52,600 in May 2023.

MCPL Liaison Report: (Report attached)

Jess Bravin, MCPL Liaison, reported that the Library Board have not met as yet on policy actions; they have been focused on the budget. He shared that the Summer Reading would be different this year with awards and items that are environmentally friendly rather than toys as prizes. MCLB Leadership is engaging and received good feedback and highlighted their LACs' activities. He reported that Staff training and meetings are going well. The next Board meeting is [in July] and they will resume meetings again in September. The meetings may be hybrid in the future. They are mainly receiving status reports and some discussions about LACs. There will be the formation of a youth Advisory council or committee. He will share more updates on that initiative.

Landscape Committee Report: (Report attached)

Babs Margolies reported that the gardens are in bloom with some very vibrant flowers. Weekly weeding and watering are continuing; this week they got good rain and did not have to water. The Aspen Hill Garden Club members added compost and other nutrients and planted the seedlings, including, marigolds and sunflowers. They also appreciated the recognition of their members at the Library Volunteer Appreciation Day event.

Old business: No old business.

New business: Mr. Bravin confirmed the date for the next Joint Meeting: October 12, 2023.

General comments: Ms. Smith announced that Aleen Chabot, a member and huge supporter of the library, is celebrating her 90th birthday in June. She is responding well to treatment and her family visits her daily. Our thoughts and prayers are with Aleen and the Chabots.

Adjournment: Chair asked for a motion to close the meeting. Ms. Margolies moved for the meeting to be adjourned at 9:30pm.

Next meeting: September 18, 2023 at 7:30pm. We will continue to communicate in the interim. Chair Grey-McKenzie will send out the new calendar.



Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee (AHLAC)

Chair Report

June 26, 2023

- A. Roster: 19 members. All of our member with terms ending in 2022 have renewed their membership. Roster is updated with renewed and new member information. New members are joining through our tabling/outreach efforts and through recommendations by youth volunteers.
- B. Meetings: Our June meeting will be conducted in virtual format. We are interested in having meetings that are hybrid and will follow-up with plans for our 2023-2024 calendar.
- C. Membership/Renewals: One member was unable to continue and ended their term in May 2023. Continuing members = 12; Youth members (volunteers) = 7; Youth Volunteer Coordinator = 1 (adult); Inactive = 0. Totals here are based on member status.
- D. MCLB June Meeting: I attended the meeting and learned that there are several matters of interest to the LACs that were being discussed.
 - a. LAC to LAC communication was suggested by myself and several other LAC Chairs. I am hopeful for a way that LAC officers may communicate formally. The Board seemed positive about this request.
 - b. Vikram Pant, our former Liaison shared news about our AHLAC gmail account and that the AHLAC Chairs utilize the email as a way to communicate internally and with volunteers. I clarified that username and password was shared with Mr. Pant so that he can monitor the activities.
 - c. I inquired about LAC Awards and asked for the Board to reintroduce the activity.
 - d. Lastly, I informed the Board that as Chair, I am not receiving the applications for new memberships, nor applications for renewing members. I was receiving the information last year and beginning of this year. I expressed concern that without having the applications, information is missed and onboarding becomes difficult. Recent issue included an application by a minor that was approved by the board, but I was not aware that the new member was a minor until I inquired further.
- E. AHLAC Goals: (This area will continue to be updated as goals are met or exceeded – please see updates in **bold print**)
 - 1) Increasing Communication:

- Trying to increase communication re: membership applications and the process which includes application announcements to Chair. **Informing Jess Bravin, AHLAC Liaison on our processes for communication (external).**
- Between Officers of each LAC (LAC to LAC communication). **June Board meeting seemed promising surrounding this request;** waiting revision of the AHLAC Handbook; received status from MCPL.
- Regarding Achievements (Subcommittee on LAC Activities and Awards) – **Hopeful that subcommittee / workgroup will reconsider including LAC Awards soon. Officers met with Liaison and Branch Managers regarding topic; former Liaison reported that he is waiting on subcommittee response once the MCLB has filled its membership.**

2) Responsible Data and Technology:

- Having comprehensive data/charts and early inclusion in planning, feedback and transferring histories. **Feb Liaison report included request for suggestions on Circulation and Computers policies and practices by March 7, 2023. Regional Manager also indicated that the online survey was announced. Awaiting response to survey.**
- Use of new modalities / technology and training early on to support all of our communities so they have a sense of belonging. **Used technology monitored by Regional Manager for Hybrid May meeting.**
- Technology usage and safety regarding storage, authorization, devices and online communications. **Requesting clarity and best approach from Liaison/MCPL. Awaiting response from Liaison.**

3) Positioning:

- LAC members desire to support efforts of the AHLIB staff to create a physical library with collections and focused programming. We are asking questions about displaying history documents and relevant to help educate the public on the AHLAC and library activities. **Requesting display cases or access to display cases.**
- Keepers of the History: The AHLAC and other LACs are extremely familiar with their communities and can serve as history and culture bearers. **As Keepers of the History, the LACs can pass on knowledge and support continuous community outreach, recommend services and initiatives surrounding demographic trends/needs.**
- Outreach: We would like to be more involved in programs/event plans early on to schedule tabling and community outreach. **Awaiting plans for activities, such as Summer Reading and October programs at AHLIB.**

F. AHLIB Administration: Informed the Branch Managers of the previous Appreciation events / programs that were conducted by the AHLIB with support and funding from FOL AH chapter in the past, to recognize volunteers, etc. **Volunteer Appreciation Day, May 20 2023, went well and AHLAC and AHGC members attended. Christine Freeman created an intimate setting with breakfast items to nosh and pleasant conversation. 3 AHLAC Members attended. Certificates of Appreciation were handed out with a lovely metal bookmark. Certificate and Bookmarks are available for those who could not attend – please see me for your items. I did a special recognition with a**

certificate to Delores McKoy, Secretary, Ariana McKenzie, Youth Volunteer Coordinator and Eileen Smith, Landscape Committee & Garden Club, for their energy and commitment to the AHLIB community and for going above and beyond to support the AHLAC.

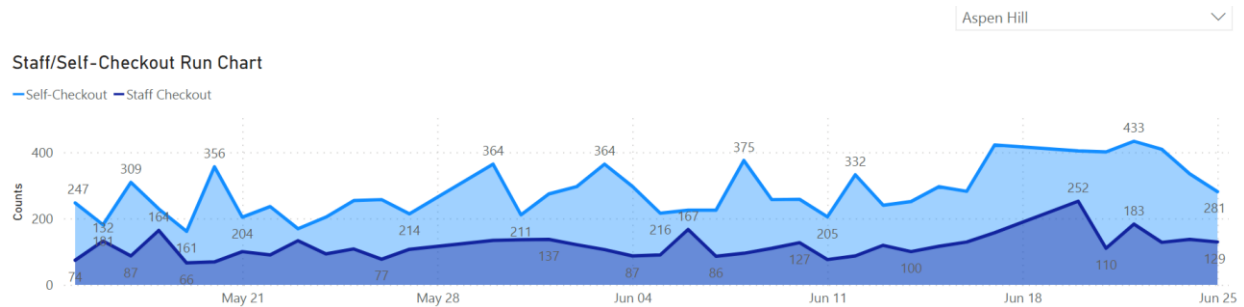
- G. Hybrid Meeting: Our May Hybrid meeting went well. We are incorporating different meeting formats for our 2023 – 2024 calendar.
- H. Ad Hoc / SubCommittees for AHLAC Activities. We are asking for AHLAC to take active roles in supporting these committees to help with bulletin boards, tabling, punch lists, etc.
- I. Community Voices: May topic: Updated from Youth Volunteer Coordinator. Ariana McKenzie did a fabulous job informing us of the volunteers' enthusiasm in seeking best approaches to digital communication in direct response to surveys and suggestion requests by MCPL.
- J. Email from the Department on MD Open Meetings Act: We will review the email sent to me by Patrick Fromm, Regional Manager.

Regional Manager Report: Aspen Hill LAC June 2023

Circulation:

Circulation warmed up at the end of the month as we enter the Summer Reading Challenge. June's circulation is 9,909 so far, surpassing May 2023's 9,524.

Renewals for the month are down to 8,529 from May's 11,658, but we'll see how much that gap narrow by the end of the month.



Programming

Since the last LAC meeting, Aspen Hill hosted 39 programs with 988 attendees. An average of 25 attendees per program. The Pokemon™ party program drew 108 people. The various story times continue to be the biggest draws. Conversely, The Real Juneteenth with Reynauld Smith, only drew 6 attendees. The program was excellent, but we believe the marketing was not extensive enough.

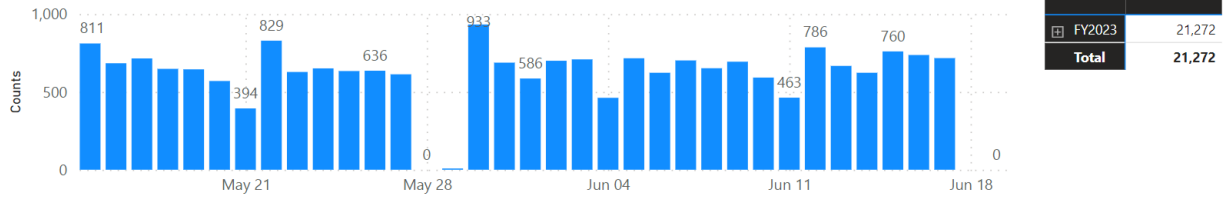
Facility

The elevator is out of order. County maintenance staff is working to address the issue and repair it.

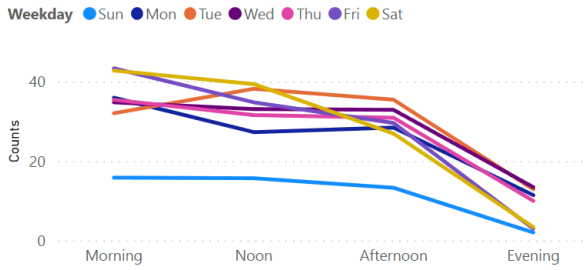
Door Count

Foot traffic remains steady. Sunday remains the least busy day at Aspen Hill with most of the other days closer together on average.

Foot Traffic Run Chart



Average Count by AM/PM



Weekday	Morning	Noon	Afternoon	Evening	Total
Sun	15.85	15.70	13.30	2.05	11.80
Mon	35.95	27.30	28.44	11.45	26.43
Tue	32.05	38.20	35.46	12.95	30.55
Wed	34.80	33.10	32.92	13.45	29.42
Thu	35.45	31.60	30.92	10.00	27.71
Fri	43.35	34.80	29.60	3.00	27.55
Sat	42.80	39.40	26.94	3.40	26.65
Total	34.32	31.44	28.23	8.04	25.73

MONTGOMERY COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

June 26, 2023

TO: Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee

FROM: Jess Bravin, Board Member
Liaison, Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: JUNE REPORT

The Montgomery County Library Board held a virtual meeting on June 14, 2023. There were no exceptional matters decided, but for information purposes the board heard matters including:

Minutes, May Meeting: The board approved minutes of its May meeting, which included a description of the book acquisition process. The minutes are appended.

Director's Report: Libraries Director Vassallo reported on staff assignments, the Summer Reading Challenge Kickoff, virtual author talks and Juneteenth observances. The report is appended.

Chair's Report: Board Chair Lighter reported on guidance regarding Open Meetings Act requirements and related county policies and subsequently circulated a related document. I asked for clarification on the guidance that staff members may not record public meetings but that members of a board or committee may. A response to the question remains outstanding. The guidance is appended.

Library Advisory Committees: The board approved appointments to the Olney, Potomac and Quince Orchard committees. Board members provided updates on their assigned branch committees. The board heard suggestions regarding fostering interaction among advisory committees, establishment of LAC email accounts and term limit policies for advisory committee officers. No action was taken on these matters.

Calendar: The board next meets Sept. 13, 2023. There has been consideration of holding an in-person or hybrid meeting rather than continuing solely with virtual meetings.

Landscape Committee Report for June 26, 2023, LAC Meeting

Warm weather, rain, and a chill – no matter what the weather - summer has arrived. The Aspen Hill Library Gardens are in bloom with vibrant colors. Aspen Hill Garden Club's weekly watering and weeding teams continue to keep our gardens thriving. Mother Nature has recently joined the effort with much needed rain.

As mentioned in last month's report, the Landscape Committee amended the existing soil by adding compost and other nutrients and planted the following seedlings in the gardens: marigolds, zinnias, sunflowers, nasturtiums, foxgloves, Echinacea (coneflowers), butterfly weed, and mini pumpkins.

The Aspen Hill Garden Club appreciates the recognition received at the Library Volunteer Appreciation Event for our members work in the Library Gardens.

Eileen Smith
Babette Margolies