

Connie Morella LAC Meeting Minutes - 12/12/2023

Barbara Levine (LAC Chair), Patrick Fromm (Regional Manager), Colin Repetti (LAC Secretary), Claudia Deane (LAC member), Alison O'Brien (LAC member), Jim Montgomery (Library Board Member), Pavani Reddy (LAC member), Chris Sinsheimer (LAC member) present

Getting input about the library

- Alison got lots of positive feedback about the library (mostly older people who don't have young children in the area)
 - Especially the quality of the staff
 - Not enough copies of newer e-books
 - No complaints about parking (the people live nearby)
 - Big fan of the section where you can get a newer book and can only keep it for three weeks
 - Alison has personally never been able to get useful feedback or information for children's books
 - Staffing is critical
 - One piece of feedback that we should keep an eye on what the people in the most need want
 - Large demand for Mandarin bilingual events, should be having those on top of Spanish bilingual events
- Chris' feedback
 - Some older people would like help with technology
 - Programs for older people and kids
- Colin's feedback is mostly from young people (and his mom)
 - Not quite as much breadth, sometimes there are books you'd expect to be available but aren't (sci-fi, fantasy, graphic novels mainly)
 - Colin's mom likes audiobooks and thinks the library is good
- Claudia's feedback was from people who use the library in Virginia
 - They like printing at the library
 - Didn't know about a bunch of the things available from the library
 - Working age people like e-books, maybe don't have quite as much time to use the library
- Pavani's feedback, mainly asked people about programming from people of all ages (feedback may not be from the widest cross section socioeconomically)
 - Younger people like the coloring that's available
 - Younger people also liked the children's events
 - Liked bilingual events
 - Teens like creative writing programming
 - Adults like book clubs
- Barbara's feedback

- Not serving all children's populations with children's programming on the weekend
 - Some age groups are not being covered by the programming that's happening
 - Need more outreach to underserved populations
 - There is a time between when people get a ticket for programs and when the program starts when people are mulling around, it would be good if library staff approached them and asked them if they needed help finding books or anything

Regional Manager's Report

- Just got LAC bookmarks (they have Eric's name on it as their regional manager, whoops) to advertise the LAC
- Comparing Connie Morella with other similar branches
 - Connie Morella branch information
 - 6 Info FTE, 6.5 Circulation FTE
 - 4x Full Time Info (*Branch Supervisor, Librarian II-J, Librarian II-A, Librarian I-J*)
 - 4x Part Time Info (*Librarian I-T, Library Associate II-J, Library Associate-A, Library Associate-J*)
 - 4x Full Time Circulation (*Assistant Branch Supervisor, Library Assistant II, 2x Library Assistant I*)
 - 5x Part Time Circulation (*5x Library Assistant I*)
 - Two are vacant (Librarian II - Juvenile and Part Time Library Associate - Juvenile), one is about to be vacant (Librarian II - Adult)
 - Gaithersburg branch information
 - Busiest library in the system (as far as Patrick knows)
 - 25% more circulation than Connie Morella
 - 7.5 Info FTE, 8 Circulation FTE
 - 6x Full Time Info
 - 3x Part Time Info
 - 4x Full Time Circulation
 - 2x Part Time Circulation (30 hours)
 - 5x Part Time Circulation
 - Wheaton branch information
 - Similar circulation and usage to Connie Morella
 - 7x Info FTE, 7x Circulation FTE (this feels like an appropriate amount of staffing for this size of library, would be good for Connie Morella)
 - 6x Full Time Info
 - 2x Part Time Info
 - 4x Full Time Circulation
 - 6x Part Time Circulation
 - Potomac branch information

- Much smaller library than Connie Morella
 - Chosen as a comparison because they have phenomenal programming
 - 5.5x Info FTE, 4.5x Circulation FTE
 - 4x Full Time Info
 - 3x Part Time Info
 - 3x Full Time Circulation
 - 1x Part Time Circulation (30 hours)
 - 2x Part Time Circulation
 - Connie Morella in the middle of the pack for number of programs held (Potomac is way higher), but the number of attendees is in the top third
 - Connie Morella should be in the top 6 for programming, needs time to make this happen
 - Need to replace heads of service and get them trained
 - Need to open up that outdoor area
 - Wants to do substantial outreach, hit every nearby school for summer reading every year, etc.
 - Can't make big progress until the staffing is worked out
- Facility
 - Connie Morella memorabilia wall forthcoming
 - Weeding through the collection a bit (clearing out dead stock, things that have been sitting for 18 months)
 - After that, will be rethinking how the shelving/library is arranged
 - Could use more things on the wall, especially around the areas geared for children so it's clear where there are children's books
- Is there a map of the area each branch is expected to cover?
 - Patrick doesn't have it but he thinks it might exist
 - It would be good if this map existed and could be shown alongside individual schools with lower kindergarten readiness (like Silver Spring Elementary School, which has 8% kindergarten readiness)
- Teen Report
 - Teen Advisory Board up and running, about 15 teens per meeting so far
 - Discussed time management in October'
 - Filled out forms for the bulletin board and discussed their favorite books in November
 - Local author coming to discuss conceptualizing, writing and producing a book in December
 - RPG night next month, had one previously that was a big hit

Jim Montgomery's Report from the Board

- Talking points for Jim to raise at the board
 - What is the current staffing count for the system
 - Connie Morella has had a part time position open for over a year, now has no children's librarian and is about to lose another librarian
 - Using the outside area

- Not enough copies of newer books (especially electronic)
 - More programming (which is tied to personnel)
- No Library Board meeting since we last met, Jim will try to send out an encapsulation of what happens
 - Big focus of the upcoming meeting is preparation for the January joint meeting with the Friends of the Library for advocacy
 - Want to emphasize library's role in kindergarten readiness, the council is concerned with the 20% drop in kindergarten readiness since 2019