

Damascus Branch Library Advisory Committee

Meeting of November 13, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Pam Hosimer, chair, at 7:00 in the small meeting room of the library. Present were new member Jennifer Marcano, Renée Minnick, Bill Rogers, Jean Smedira, Susan Wells, Sonja Roberts, Board liaison, Donna Bangor, secretary, and Ann Stillman, agency manager. A special welcome goes to Sonja Roberts, a Damascus resident, who is our new liaison to the MCLB. The minutes of the October meeting were sent electronically and approved as written.

The Friends of the Library receives donated items which it sells in the lobby of the library. The funds are used for the enhancement of the Damascus library programs and activities. Some suggestions were made to increase the FOL's income. Erin will send a notice to Everything Damascus to encourage new members. Jennifer will contact PTAs in the area.

Ann mentioned that the Sensory Storytime, held once a month on a Saturday afternoon at 2:30, has not been well attended. Jennifer and Sonja made some suggestions for increasing participation, especially reaching the families of children who have sensory processing disorders. Bill will spread the word at TLC in Gaithersburg.

New hours begin on January 5. Wednesday morning service has (finally) been restored, and later hours added during the week. The problem of adequate lighting of parking lots still has not been resolved by the county. Ann will communicate our concerns to the responsible parties.

Pam mentioned that the Girl Scouts in the area make valentines explaining their love of libraries, to be displayed in the library then delivered to County Council members.

Sonja reported that the 2020 National Library Legislative Day is meeting in D. C. at the Georgetown University Conference Center in May. She also attended the Joint Meeting last week and, along with Ann, heard new permanent Director Anita Vassallo present current facts about MCPL. Ann will show us the video when the large meeting room becomes available. An important message is that the department must always put customers first. A guest speaker spoke of the importance of reading and learning for children from the time of their birth.

At the Budget Forum last week, Pam and Jennifer spoke on behalf of libraries. The message is that libraries serve ALL county residents and deserve full funding. Most comments at the forum were positive, with some contentious. Traffic, speed limits, crosswalks, MCPS shortage of nurses, the need for more language services were all problems raised during the meeting.

The holiday party/volunteer appreciation luncheon will be held on December 11, time TBA.

The next meeting will be held on January 7 or 8, depending on the date of the second Joint Meeting and county forums.

All meetings are held in the large meeting room of the Damascus Library from 7:00 – 8:00pm, unless otherwise announced.

Our proposed schedule for the remainder of the 2019-20 year:

January 7 or 8; February 11 (optional pre-meeting dinner); March 10; April 14; May – no formal meeting – optional outreach to another library; June 9