

Little Falls Library Advisory Committee (LFLAC) - Zoom and in person Meeting

Minutes February 7, 2023 Meeting

1. Chair, Kathy Davies, called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Other LAC members present: Hannah November, Secretary, Rehana Gubin, (had to leave early), Mark Mitchell, and Robert November. Also present: Katrin (Kate) Sweeney, Regional Manager, and Grace Manubay, Montgomery County Library Board (MCLB) liaison. Absent: Irem DeMirkan and John Stodola: No Guests or observers.
2. The minutes of the October 6, 2022, LFLAC meeting were approved. Kathy Davis requested approval of the agenda - moved by Robert November seconded by Mark Mitchell. Adopted unanimously by show of hands.
3. Regional Manager report – Katrin (Kate) Sweeney:
 - Tim Hendricks, who had been detailed to LF Library while his library is having a “refresh” (January – March) has asked to be transferred to Little Falls Library permanently.
 - Little Falls (LF) Library continues to have two – part time information desk – Library Associate positions open.
 - LF Library has three open circulation desk positions that are currently being filled by substitutes and assistants from other MCPL libraries able to fill the Library Assistant position soon.
 - MCPL new hires are a new data team analyst, Woihua Zhao for the library administration office and Tyler Chadwell-English who will be devoted to administering teen services for the county and supporting teen services librarians at the branches.
 - Story-Times for young children, the teen book club, The Lunar New Year crafts program and “I Am Legend” movie for the Washington Rebels Jubilee were well attended.
 - LF Library continues recruiting for FOL volunteers interested in running the book sale.
 - The LFLAC asked about counting attendance at programs and library usage. “People counters” at the doors of the library can record how many times people go in or out of the door. This indicates what hours the library is most heavily used but provides no data on what age group is using the library. Librarians may take attendance at library programs indicating what age groups are present, e.g., babies, young children, teens, young adults, seniors... The library is required to report program data to the State, about when the program was held, how many people attended, etc. These data are helpful in determining why programs do or do not work and what time of day is best for different types of programs.
4. Montgomery County Library Board (MCLB) Report – Grace Manubay:
 - Grace attended the MCLB meeting in December and the joint FOLMC – MCLB meeting in January
 - The County Executive’s budget proposal should match well with the priorities set by the MCPL for needs of their programs, for example early literacy program. A representative from the County Executive’s office provided information on the county budget. About 80% of the MCL budget is used to pay for staff and about 20% for programing, books, etc. A separate budget covers the costs of the library facilities.

- Montgomery County holds Budget Forum Meetings (in person and remote). People can ask the County Executive questions, e.g., regarding support for early childhood programs, etc. The next meeting in Bethesda will be held on 04/19/23 from 7:00 to 8:30 PM <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/budget-forums.html>
- Grace Manubay can provide additional information about the meetings. The County Budget FY 2024 meetings that are open to the public continue in the new year. They provide an opportunity to advocate for the library and raise any concerns about funding for the library.
Grace told us that the MCLB periodically reviews MCPL policies, posted on the MCPL website. The LACs are asked to look at the posted policies (include borrowing, computer use, facilities use), see if they appear to be clear, sensible, need to be updated and provide input. This is to be discussed at the April LFLAC meeting. She will send links and a reminder to the LFLAC members to review and comment on this material.
<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/library/policies/index.htm>

5. LAC Chair report – Katherine (Kathy) Davies

- Update on recruiting people to run FOLMC book sales at LF Library: In addition to a sign in the library asking for volunteers Kathy posted notices in neighborhood chat boards, the Summer newsletter, etc. Three people responded. She tried multiple times, without success, to contact FOLMC by phone and email to learn if there were enough eligible volunteers for the project. Kate Sweeny learned that we were getting close.

6. Old Business:

- Landscape Project: Kathy Davies invited Jane Padelford a local registered landscape architect that she knows and Walter Howell a certified arborist and master gardener (they work at Dunbarton Oaks) to visit LF Library and provide advice about what might be done to improve the grounds so that they could be used for outdoor programs (especially children's programs). (Kathy Davis, Hannah November, Robert November, and the LF Children's Librarian) met with them on 02/07/23 walked around the grounds and discussed what improvements are desired and how that might be accomplished. Previously, land next to the children's room near the Massachusetts Ave. entrance was being considered. Safety concerns and traffic noise have been raised about this location as issues - proximity to a high traffic road. The group looked at the unshaded area of the parking lot currently blocked off and used for programs. It gets very hot and uncomfortable in the summer. The group discussed the wooded area just above the parking lot. This looks like a much better location if a safe path can be created between it and the library and if it can be made ADA compliant and stroller accessible. Still to be resolved is whether this land is within the property line of the library and if it can be used for this purpose. Ms. Padelford does not do this type of work, but volunteered to help draft a proposal to acquire a qualified landscape architect who could provide plans for the LF library landscape project.
- The LFLAC had asked the MCLB to comment on whether the Branch Manager should be a regular attendee at the LAC meetings. They had no comments. Kate Sweeney reiterated that as part of the reorganization of MCPL the Regional Manager is the library representative at all LAC meetings in the region. The Library Manager may be invited to

attend if available, but the purpose of the new MCPL policy is to reduce the Branch Manager's workload.

7. New Business:

- Grace Manubay told the LF LAC that at the MCLB she would be asking for comments and discussion of the MCPL policies posted on the MCPL website at the April meeting. See item 4. <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/library/policies/index.htm>
- The LAC began a discussion of computer use in the library. Searches on the computers located in the children's room of LF Library are filtered. The computers located in the adult section are in an open area of the library and are not filtered. A concern was raised about the possibility that patrons passing by (including children) might see what is on these screens. It was asked if these computers should also be filtered, for example to prevent pornographic content. The library cannot do this because it interferes with intellectual freedom. The adult room computers are provided with privacy screen covers that prevent people other than the user from viewing the screen. A question was raised about whether computers in the adult section should be located in out of the way areas of the library.
- Questions were raised about what kinds of jobs library volunteers can do in the library and what teen volunteers are allowed to do. The minimum age for volunteers is 13. If under 18 a parent must sign a consent. Examples of tasks include putting books in alphabetical order on the carts, helping set up for programs, signing people up for Story Time, picking up toys and books from the floor. No volunteers can shelve books on the library shelves, but they can straighten books on these shelves and put donated books on the Book Sale shelves.

8. Comments from Observers: No observers.

9. Adjournment: 7:32 PM

- Date for next LFLAC Zoom meeting Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at 6:30 PM. Other scheduled LFLAC meetings: Tuesday, June 6, 2023, and Tuesday, August 1, 2023

10. Action Items:

- Determine if the land proposed for the LF landscape project belongs to the library and if it could be used for the landscape renovation project.
- Review the policies posted on the MCPL webpage and provide feedback to Grace Manubay before or at the April 4, 2023, meeting.

Submitted by Hannah P. November, Secretary