

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES
Olney Library Advisory Committee Meeting
Virtual via Zoom - September 23, 2020

Attending: Maria Caswell (Co-Chair), Jan Baird-Adams (Olney Branch Manager), Jensen Chiu (MCPL Board Liaison), Mary Allman, Max Handelsman, Walter Lee, Madeline Lyon

Absent: Nina Uzick (Co-Chair), Audrey Partington (Secretary), Elfrida O'Reilly-Campbell

Maria asked Mary to announce her news. Mary said with mixed emotion that she has submitted her letter of resignation from the LAC because of medical/physical difficulties. All present thanked and wished Mary the best, for which Mary was grateful.

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes: The meeting began at 7:05 p.m. The minutes from July 15, 2020 were approved.

1. Library Manager's Report: Jan Baird-Adams gave the following report:

a. Staffing: On Sept. 22, the Gaithersburg Library sent Sophia to join the Olney circulation staff on a temporary basis. Seven staff members chose not to work inside the library at this time. Of those, three are teleworking. One half-time staff member and one full-time staff member have cut back on their work time at the library. The remainder of the staff has formed a strong working team, getting everything accomplished at the library, including re-shelving the books, as the Pages are not coming into the library to work. The Pages can apply for unemployment benefits.

b. Facilities: No general opening date has been announced for the MCPL system. Some staff trainings on how to communicate with customers during the covid-19 pandemic has been done. Trees around the library have been trimmed for security purposes.

c. Services: James Donaldson, library administrator, has data indicating the libraries are 91 percent active in this pandemic time of virtual services. Olney library has been the third most active library, filling more requests than some larger libraries. Patrons have expressed many thanks to library staff for these cherished services. "Holds to Go" has been a great success. To avoid lines at the Olney library, only 4 pickups every 15 minutes are scheduled. Books are held for 5 or 6 days before recirculation to minimize infectious exposure.

d. Budget: Jan encouraged LAC members to attend the County Executive's Virtual Budget Forum on September 30 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. and advocate for MCPL budget funding.

2. MCPL Board Liaison Report: Jensen Chiu gave the following report:

a. Anita Vassallo, MCPL Director, has visited and found good morale and organization at all the MCPL branches. Only the Noyes library branch is totally closed because of social distancing factors. Because of driver shortages to Baltimore and Hagerstown, some interlibrary loans are lacking. The MCPL Board has gotten very positive feedback on “Hold to Go” services.

b. The MCPL Board knows there will be limits on the coming County budget but a priority will be made to protect future collection cuts.

c. After a pilot study was done 2 years ago, MCPL eliminated all fines on juvenile accounts. At this pandemic time, MCPL has eliminated fines on all accounts, but a final decision on other than juvenile accounts is not standard yet, and will be made in the future. Many believe this decision should be made on equity, rather than financial reasons.

d. Jensen has completed his 3-year service on the MCPL Board. He would now like to rejoin the Olney LAC

3. Unfinished Business: Walter reminded us that he is keeping the large LEGO collection and wants the library to save space for it when the Olney library reopens.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. Everyone was encouraged to stay well and safe. The next LAC meeting is scheduled for a Zoom meeting at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 21. (November 18, 2020 will be the JOINT meeting of MCPL Board & LACs, a virtual Zoom meeting, therefore no Olney LAC meeting will be scheduled for November.)