

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES**  
**Olney Library Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Virtual via Zoom – Feb. 20, 2024**

**Attending:** Ursula Gorham (Chair), Audrey Partington (Secretary), Jean Galleher, Max Handelsman, Walter Lee, Madeline Lyon, Harry Needleman, Nina Uzick, Eric Carzon (Regional Manager), Tim Lighter (MCPL Board Liaison)

**Absent:** Maria Caswell

**Special Guests:** Montgomery County Councilmember Dawn Luedtke (7th District), Caroline Davenport, staff assistant

**Call to Order, Introductions:** The meeting began at 7:05 p.m., with introductions from and to Councilmember Luedtke.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**Councilmember Luedtke** made a brief slide show presentation about “Advocacy Training 101,” her workshop to help attendees understand how county and state government work and intersect, especially regarding legal matters. She is willing to provide the training in libraries within her district.

**The Olney Library Advisory Committee** offered a slide show presentation, which was preceded by a brief overview about the LAC by Ursula Gorham, and the MCPL Board by Tim Lighter. The presentation highlighted the activities of the branch library, emphasizing the high number of programs offered to all ages (babies to seniors), and those for whom English is a second language. This was followed by a Question and Answer period. LAC member Nina Uzick asked Councilmember Luedtke about the potential for increased funding for libraries in the county’s budget. Ms. Luedtke noted that the county’s operating budget has yet to be adopted and there are “tough decisions to be made.” She acknowledged that libraries today are dealing with societal challenges that threaten the safety of library patrons. She also pointed out that each school in the county has a “Blueprint Coordinator” (under the Department of Education’s “Blueprint for Maryland’s Future”). Known as the “Kerwin Bill,” this legislation was passed in 2021. Its priorities overlap those of MCPL’s Strategic Plan. Therefore, the schools and libraries should coordinate their efforts.

**BUSINESS MEETING:** The LAC held a brief business meeting following its presentation.

**1. Regional Manager’s Report:** Eric reported that the FT circulation position has been filled, leaving one PT vacancy. The Olney Library will be closed on Feb. 27 to assess rotting rafters. On March 10 a drone will be deployed to assess the condition of the roof.

**3. MCPL Board Liaison Report:** Tim Lighter reported that the Friends of the Library held its Library Lovers Month kick-off meeting on Feb 3 at the Praisner branch library to discuss plans for the celebration. So far, the Olney LAC is the only LAC planning to participate in the celebration by staffing a table offering patrons the opportunity to fill out cards about why they love their library. Children can color their cards. Eric will consult the staff about supplies and to identify ideal time slots for LAC members to staff the table. Tim reported that there are 3 vacancies on the Library

Board, which will soon be posted. LACs have the opportunity to provide a list of the 3 most important traits for a new MCPL Director to possess. After some discussion, the Olney LAC cited:

- 1) Be respectful of staff;
- 2) Show a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility; and
- 3) Understand the diverse community needs that exist throughout the county.

**4. New Business:** Nina noted that 10 years after the Olney Library reopened there are signs of wear to the roof and plumbing, mold in the front meeting room, dirty floors in some areas, and insufficient lighting (which has continued to be a problem since reopening). Eric suggested that the LAC draft a letter to Anita, with attached photos of the problem areas. Nina can point out these areas to someone willing to take photos. Audrey is willing to draft the letter if Nina provides details about the problem areas.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The next virtual LAC meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 19.