

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES
Olney Library Advisory Committee Meeting
Virtual via Zoom – January 21, 2025

Attending: Ursula Gorham (Chair), Audrey Partington (Secretary), Walter Lee, Nina Uzick, Tim Lighter (MCPL Board Liaison), Kylie Sparks (Olney Library)

Absent: Maria Caswell, Max Handelsman, Madeline Lyon, Joe Napolitano, Harry Needleman, Dianne Whitaker (Regional Manager)

Call to Order, Approval of Minutes: The meeting began at 7:20 p.m. due to confusion about who was hosting the Zoom meeting. Kylie Sparks filled in for Dianne Whitaker, who had a scheduling conflict. There weren't enough committee members present to approve the December minutes. It will be done via email.

1. Regional Manager's Report: Kylie Sparks provided the following highlight from the Regional Manager's report.

a. Facilities: Olney Library had to be evacuated 3 times in December and January due to a smell of gas. The fire department and Facilities had to come out each time. Administration closed the building for five hours on Friday, January 3, 2025, all day Saturday, January 4, and all day Sunday, January 5, to replace piping on one of the two boilers. On Monday January 6, MCPL was closed for a snow day. Facilities hired a contractor to alarm the fire exit door, which was never wired when the building opened. MCPL has a new computer system for printing and copying. There were a lot of kinks to work out initially, but it is working well now. The security camera was fixed.

b. Programs: In addition to all of the library's ongoing programs, the Children's Department offered a "Noon Year's Eve" program--42 kids plus 25 adults came and had a great time setting off noisemakers at noon. They also created a Winter Wonderland scavenger hunt. A winter STEM snowstorm program was planned but got cancelled due to a snowstorm. Teen library staff member, Carol Reddan, has planned a new weekly Teen Time program for youth to socialize and play games. The library offered Virtual Tai Chi twice a month, in-person Yoga once a month, and a Senior Planet program on AI. The Legos program was on break in January. It has been moved from Fridays to Thursdays so that Walter Lee can continue facilitating this popular program. The library had to change the time for Senior Planet, so that both programs can continue to be held on the same day.

c. Collections: The Vox (Talking) Books were weeded. The library is looking into getting boxes to shelve them in so they will stand up better.

d. Staffing: All positions at Olney Library are filled. The freeze on hiring Pages has been lifted, allowing Olney Library to hire one page.

3. MCPL Board Liaison Report: Tim Lighter noted that the Joint Meeting was held on January 15. About 90 people attended (40-in person and 50 online). Five County Council members attended, including Council president Kate Stewart, and Kristin Mink, the Council's lead for libraries. The new MCPL Director, Darcell Graham was introduced and spoke. Per the Strategic Plan, she will focus on Kindergarten Preparation (Strategic Goal 1) and Supporting Teens (Strategic Goal 2). She also wants more collaboration with outside organizations and would like to create a new staff position for this purpose. She will also focus on organizing her leadership team. (Note: Jaime Flores and James Donaldson have left MCPL). She would like to partner with Health and Human Services to train librarians to handle services that some patrons need. Capital Projects include Clarksburg Library (to open in 2008 as part of a community center) and renovation of Damascus Library, which will close for the work to be done between Jan. 31, 2025 and fall 2026. Construction will also be done on the NOYES children's library in Kensington. Work is being done on the upcoming budget proposal. The request will include more money for Hoopla, restoration of the World Languages Collection, and a new position to facilitate outside relationships. MCPL's Business Manager, Steve Kapani, gave a Budget and Fiscal Overview at the Joint Meeting. He presented a timeline of the current and future budget years, which Tim shared with the LAC on a shared screen over Zoom. He noted that this is the last year of the current Strategic Plan but the county will wait until the appointment of the next County Executive before developing a new Strategic Plan.

4. New Business: Library Legislation Day will be held on Feb. 11.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held (virtually) on Feb. 18. Audrey will chair in Ursula's absence.