

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES
Olney Library Advisory Committee Meeting
Virtual via Zoom – February 18, 2025

Attending: Audrey Partington (Secretary), Max Handelsman, Walter Lee, Madeline Lyon, Joe Napolitano, Harry Needleman, Nina Uzick, Dianne Whitaker (Regional Manager), Tim Lighter (Library Board liaison)

Absent: Ursula Gorham (Chair), Maria Caswell

Call to Order, Approval of Minutes: The meeting came to order at 7:00. The January minutes were approved.

1. Regional Manager's Report:

a. Facilities: The back door alarm has been fixed. A work order has been submitted to repair the staff door, which sticks and doesn't close completely. Nina brought up the issues of dirty floors at the front of the library and ongoing problems with lighting since the building re-opened a decade ago. She pointed out the unclean floors to the new MCPL Director (Darcell Graham) when she visited Olney Library during the Library Lovers Month Kick-off on Feb 1. She took pictures. Dianne explained the process of submitting requests to the Dept of General Services Complaints can be made to the County Council. It was suggested that Nina draft a letter of complaint to the Council, noting all facilities issues (with input from Dianne) to be edited by Audrey, to be presented to the LAC at its next meeting in March.

The Olney Library closed a few hours early on several occasions due to staff concerns about driving in ice and snow. The new MCPL Director plans to address issues such as proper procedures for ordering and announcing weather-related closures.

b. Programs: Programs were held in conjunction with Lunar New Year. Library Lovers Month (February) kicked off with a program at Olney Library. LAC members Madeline and Max attended, along with Library Board liaison Tim Lighter. The LAC is hosting a table throughout the month where children and adults can decorate hearts and express "Why I Love My Library." This is most effective on days when Storytime programs are held. The Olney Daytime Book Group is sponsoring a virtual program featuring author Lisa See on March 4 at 1:30 pm. Her book, "Lady Tan's Circle of Women" will be discussed in-person on March 11 at 1:30 pm.

c. Collections: Items from the collection will be on display for African American History Month in February and Women's History Month in March. Displays in the Children's section will highlight the themes of mysteries, folktales, fairytales, love, and kindness.

d. Staffing: With Damascus Library closing temporarily for renovations, Olney Library has gained two temporary employees: a Librarian I and a Library Aide.

3. MCPL Board Liaison Report: Tim Lighter reported that the Library Board didn't hold its regular meet due to inclement weather. (Virtual meetings are also cancelled when the Library is closed). He noted that a new limit has been placed on Hoopla requests (from 10 to 5 requests per month per person). The new MCPL Director plans to ask for more funding for Hoopla. The Library Board sent a letter to County Executive Marc Elrich, advocating for the county's libraries. A representative from the Board and the Friends of the Library will testify at upcoming budget hearings.

4. New Business: Harry Needleman pointed out that it is easy to bypass the Inter-Library Loan button because it is not clearly marked. He recommended there be an icon for it. Dianne will suggest this to the webmaster. Joe Napolitano suggested that the library provide job hunting support for those who have lost jobs due to massive federal budget cuts. Dianne said the library can highlight its online resources for job hunting. The MCPL marketing manager can also be doing this type of outreach to promote the libraries. Joe announced that he will be moving to Gaithersburg and thus stepping down from the Olney LAC. The group thanked him for his advocacy of seniors, and embrace of the use of new technologies, and encouraged him to do the same in Gaithersburg.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:50. The next meeting will be held (virtually) on March 18.