

## **Potomac LAC Meeting Minutes**

September 10, 2019

### Attending:

Gael Cheek, Co-chair

Sylvia Diss

Jyotsna Gupta

Rosemarie Lentini

George Liao

Don Libes, Secretary

Wei Lu, Co-chair

Fred Olowin, new LAC member

Steve Warrick, Davis Branch Manager, Acting Potomac Library Branch Manager

Jane Williams, MC Library Board Liaison

### Absent:

Carol Leahy

Meeenu Mohan

## **Chair and Intros**

Gael Cheek chaired the meeting. Members introduced themselves and described their backgrounds.

## **Refreshments**

Don Libes offered pawpaw pudding bread made from pawpaw grown locally.

## **Minutes from Previous Meeting**

June 18, 2019 minutes were approved with corrections to upcoming presentations and the addition of page numbers. Corrected and approved minutes can be found here:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fkvN8ulv\\_U6YXYTV5B6SYchSjiFJW-6qF5xww5MYws/e/dit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fkvN8ulv_U6YXYTV5B6SYchSjiFJW-6qF5xww5MYws/e/dit?usp=sharing)

Gael noted difficulty printing the minutes as a google doc and we considered storing them as a pdf. (Google should allow printing a document even without a Google account. On Windows, press Control-P. On MacOS, press Command-P.)

Don asked if it was necessary to print copies of minutes with attachments for everyone. We agreed attachments are not necessary. Since most members were comfortable viewing minutes on their electronic devices and/or printing their own copies, Don offered to bring 3 printed copies as a backup rather than unnecessarily printing a dozen copies for each meeting.

### **MC Library Board Liaison, Jane Williams**

Jane Williams reviewed expectations for the LAC and the Library Board, describing the latter as interested in hearing LAC concerns either by way of Jane or during joint meetings.

Jane expects Anita to become the next MCPL director. Currently Anita is the deputy director.

The MCLB (Library Board) has 4 new members. (In followup email, Jane said MCLB will meet Sept 11 with 5 new members.)

Jane was interrupted by other items and her report continues below mixed in with these other items.

### **Upcoming Programs**

Gael noted 3 upcoming programs. She warned that Lynne Olsen's program would likely have a huge turnout. ("Come early to get a seat!")

Sept 21: Author Lynne Olson will visit the branch to discuss her new book Madame Fourcade's Secret War: The Daring Young Woman Who Led France's Largest Spy Network Against Hitler.

Oct 15: Montgomery Parks' historian Jamie Kuhns will visit the branch to discuss her new book Sharp Flashes of Lightning Come from Black Clouds, a biography of Josiah Henson.

Nov 16: Local author Julie Langsdorf will visit the branch to discuss her new novel White Elephant. Her first novel, it is a satire about a behemoth of a new house in a DC suburb like Montgomery County.

### **Acting Manager, Steve Warrick**

Steve Warrick introduced himself as a new acting branch manager for Potomac. New to the branch as of a week earlier. He will be at the branch on Thursdays. His regular position is Davis branch manager.

Interviews for full-time manager have been concluded. Steve expects a new branch manager to be appointed within a month.

Potomac will get a new Librarian 2 (to replace Sharon) as of Sept 29 and a new Librarian 1 (Briana) to start soon. Two library associate positions are open.

Steve described the position descriptions of Librarian 1 and 2. Both require a Library Science degree but 1 is entry level while 2 is higher level and is a team leader and responsible for collections. Potomac has 2 Librarian 1s. One is for children. One is for everything else. Staff at the circulation desk do not necessarily have Library degrees and should not be referred to as librarians. Library "associates" is suitable.

## Refresh

Potomac is due for a “refresh” meaning that it will update features, with new paint, carpeting, furniture, lighting, and rearrangement of space (furniture and walls).

Jane talked about the refresh process: goals, benefits, outcomes. Encouraged LAC members to visit other branches for ideas for Potomac. Each branch is different. Steve identified recent branches (further clarified by Jane in followup emails):

20?? Potomac, Chevy Chase, Germantown and Maggie Nightingale (in queue)

20?? Long Branch (in design phase)

2019 Marilyn Praisner (should be finished in several months)

2018 Connie Morella (Bethesda)

2018 White Oak

2017 Aspen Hill

2017 Little Falls

2017 Davis

2017 Quince Orchard

2016 Twinbrook

2016 Kensington Park

We discussed why Potomac has had so much turnover in management.

Gael: “Bad luck?”

Steve: “Inconvenient location?”

Someone (?) said “It’s in the nature of the job. It’s a stepping stone to better positions.”

Steve: “It’s not uncommon to get 100 applications for the position, all qualified.”

Don complained about the library card expiration policy and process. “Trying to check out a book and the process would fail with a vague message to see someone for help - which would turn out to be the card had expired, a pointless concept since the patron is not asked to sign anything, pay anything, etc.

Steve said that the expiration process had changed several times (differing lengths) but that MCPL was finally giving it up. Cards would no longer expire.

Jane talked about advocacy. Nov 13 2019 is a joint meeting with Friends of the Library and LACs to talk with Anita (see above) on the state of MCPL. Emphasized topics will be early childhood literacy and workforce development. Jane encourages LAC members to attend.

Jane encouraged Potomac LAC members to help maintain the momentum and enthusiasm of the “community conversations” Councilmember Jawandao is holding in every branch library in the county during this first term. [added from Jane’s written report submitted post-meeting]

Don recommended the use of a mail list instead of sending mail specifically addressed to other members. He described the benefits:

- No need to remember other members or hunt through older emails for the addresses. List of members is always up-to-date. (Compare to using an old email which may have out-of-date list of members.)
- An archive is kept automatically so members don't have to decide if a message is worth keeping or not.
- New members can look back in the archive to understand ongoing LAC concerns and efforts.

Members support the mail list and Don agreed to establish it. To post to the list, email: [plac@groups.io](mailto:plac@groups.io) (Groups.io is the provider.)

Jane: LAC Handbook is in draft which we all received. MCLB is accepting feedback.

Don asked for clarification of Handbook's description of Secretarial responsibilities such as posting meeting dates. Jane explained and will provide MCLB contact by email later. (In followup email, Jane provided the contact: Regina Holyfield-Jewett [Regina.Holyfield-Jewett@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Regina.Holyfield-Jewett@montgomerycountymd.gov)).

Gael said to speak to the branch manager regarding physical posts.

George & Wei: Handbook restrictions on LAC members is surprising. For example, consider the requirement to get approval before conducting surveys.

### **Thoughts on LAC Itself**

Gael suggested that the LAC could benefit from 3 or 4 additional members.

George said that the worst thing we could do is to recruit volunteers before we know what we want to accomplish.

Gael: Our most important function is feedback. Each of us should bring suggestions for the branch manager. [Reminder: At previous LAC meeting, Jane supplied draft of ways we could get feedback from the community.]

Jyotsna & Fred: Need to focus our attention on the Potomac refresh.

Wei: Refresh is far off, roughly 2022.

Rosemarie: Should we have a booth or presence at Potomac Day?

Jane observed that we were talking over one another. (This may sound counterproductive but it was an indication of interest and excitement over the role of the LAC. We agreed to let speak uninterrupted whoever was holding a pawpaw.)

### **Next LAC Meeting**

Agreed to meet in December 2019 but no consensus on date. Fred promised to set up a [doodle.com](https://doodle.com) poll with several dates. His idea was accepted.

Fred: How do we reserve our room?

Jane reminded members that MCPL administrators and staff are available to attend our meetings at our request.

Wei: Let's have the new PL branch manager attend our next meeting.

**Board Liaison Report**

Don invited Jane and Steve to submit additional items or written reports by email.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.