

Silver Spring Library Advisory Committee (SSLAC) Minutes, Jan. 11, 2021

Meeting online via Zoom, 7:30 p.m.

SSLAC Members:

Present: Scott Shoreman (Chair), Regina Germain (Secretary), Dana Anderson, Jill Brantley, Rebecca Calcagno, Paulette Dickerson, and Melvyn Greberman

Absent: Jessica Deibert, Saa Fillie, Ella Hu, Mary Ann Nyamweya, Rodney Ellin

Others Present:

Uzoma Onyemaechi, Silver Spring Library Manager

Laura Briskin-Limehouse, Library Board Liaison

David Terrelongo

Chair Report and Announcements

1. The Chair reported that he attended the state of the library address given by Library Manager Anita Vassallo at the Library Advisory Committees and Friends of the Library Meeting in November 2020. In her address, she stated that the Montgomery County Public Libraries continue to remove barriers as it switches from physical to digital programming. To date there had been 1,100 virtual programs. Every branch was operating on a 56 hours/week schedule. From July 6 to November 18, 2020, there were 155,000 pick-ups of checked out materials with a 10 percent no-show rate. The top two libraries for pick-ups were the Germantown and Davis branches. In addition, 27,000 new library cards were issued. She stated that the MCPL is working hard to eliminate the digital divide by extending Wi-Fi to outdoor spaces, and lending hotspots with plans to increase the number from 50 to 250.
2. There is another Joint Board meeting with library advisory committees and Friends of the Library on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. A link to join the zoom call was provided in the agenda.
3. The Chair gave a Purple Line update, noting that Maryland reached an agreement with the private partnership regarding the Purple Line. One contractor dropped, and construction should start up again in the summer and fall after a new contractor is in place. The SSLAC should meet with the Purple Line contractors again to discuss the work that will be happening around the library once the new contractor is in place.

Silver Spring Library Manager Report from Uzoma Onyemaechi

1. Collection: We are serving the public with our contactless services using the Library Lane entrance. Our hold lockers are shut down until further notice.
2. Facility: There plans underway to extend our Wi-Fi services to the lobby and surrounding areas so staff can use their Vocera units (a form of walkie-talkie) when they

take materials down for the holds to go. Also, the Wi-Fi will enable members of the public to use their laptops outside the building without impeding other customers that are there to pick up their holds.

3. Programming: Weekend of January 16 is MoComCon and programming will be online. Also, we are getting ready for both our Black History Month and Library Lovers Month. All our programs will be virtual, including a plan to screen our Heritage Choral Group with a question and answer session after using Zoom.
4. Services: There will be no free tax help services this year due to COVID-19. The hotspots that are checked out are called Mi-Fi, and they are popular and are being checked out and returned. Also, we have started to check out our Go! Kits.

Library Board Liaison Report from Laura Briskin-Limehouse

1. The Library Board met in December 2020.
2. There have been a number of transfers of employees and three retirements.
3. The Rockville computer lab reopening has been put on hold because of increasing COVID cases.
4. The county is offering COVID testing to asymptomatic employees.
5. Refresh projects are continuing. The Maggie Nightingale Library (Poolesville) refresh will begin in May and finish in June.
6. There was a 4 percent increase each week in holds-to-go in December.
7. The 2022 Operating Budget was submitted.
8. The Policies and Practices Committee wants suggestions for issues it should look at regarding library policies and practices.
9. The next joint Library Board meeting on January 13, 2021 is on the topic of advocacy.

Approval of Minutes

One correction was made to the minutes November 2020. Paulette Dickerson then moved for approval of the November 2020 meeting minute as amended. Regina Germain seconded her motion. There were no objections. The November 2020 minutes were approved unanimously.

Friends of the Library Silver Spring

The Chair reported the following information received from Joe House:

At the 2020 annual meeting on December 2, the Friends of the Library Silver Spring approved a slate of officers. They are still looking for a membership chair. In the meantime, Joe House is reaching out to lapsed members to rejoin. They will be working on programming for Library Lovers Month in February.

New Business

There was an in-depth discussion of the reading habits of young people and their technology use. The discussion branched into how individuals without smart phones or other technology may be limited in the resources they can access during the pandemic. Uzoma Onyemaechi, Silver Spring Library Manager, pointed out that individuals who lack the technology to reserve library materials online can call the library for assistance.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36pm