

Silver Spring Library Advisory Committee

MINUTES

September 20, 2021, 7:50 p.m.

Meeting online via Zoom began at 7:55 p.m.

Present: Scott Shoreman (Chair), Dana M. Anderson, Rodney Ellin, Rebecca Calcagno, Paulette Dickerson, Melvyn Greberman, Chauna Wiggins, Martha Kyrillidou, Wendy Gales

Absent: Regina Germain (Secretary), Sara Fillie, Ella Hu, Mary Ann Nyamweya

Others Present: Uzoma Onyemaechi, Silver Spring Library Manager; Laura Briskin-Limehouse, Library Board Liaison; Gary Witherspoon (Deputy Project Director for Public Outreach and Communications, Purple Line); Vernon Hartsock (Project Director, MTA, Purple Line); Kevin Oberheim (Construction Manager, Purple Line)

1. Introduction of Zoom Participants

2. Purple Line Presentation (PowerPoint Slide deck Attached)

- Purple Line Project Update
- Construction Progress Overview
 - Work Completed
 - Progress Photos
 - 6 Month Progress Report
 - 6-Month Look Ahead
 - Approval of new contractor expected by the end of 2021.
 - Utility work around the library will begin this fall. Pedestrian walkways will be established.
- Bonifant Street Impact
- Wayne Avenue & Fenton Street Access to Library Impact
 - Purple Line team is to take the lead in informing the public that alternative routes to the library (e.g., Library Lane for the book drop) in advance and during construction
 - Purple Line team will give attention to the need for MCPL trucks to have daily access to the library without impediment.
 - Silver Spring Library (SSL) agreed to help spread the word, but the onus is on the Purple Line team.
 - Because the Purple Line team relies on persons to sign up for updates and notifications, G. Witherspoon offered to provide flyers to SSL to encourage people to sign up for alerts.
 - It was noted by Uzoma Onyemaechi that returning the Purple Line model to SSL will garner positive publicity for the Purple Line project. Flyers can be left on the table surrounding the model.
 - The SSLAC would like to invite the new contractor to an upcoming meeting

3. Approval of June 2021 Minutes

Paulette Dickerson moved for approval of the June 21, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted. Melvyn Greberman seconded her motion. Rodney Ellin abstained. There were no objections. The June 21, 2021 minutes were approved.

4. Announcements by Chair – Scott Shoreman

- a. Jill Bradley was notified during the summer that her term expired in the Spring.
- b. Because the Board is not imposing term limits on LAC members, persons can reapply when their term expires, even if they are finishing a second consecutive term.
- c. Post on <https://nextdoor.com/> gave accolades on the extensive online services of MCPL. 625 people reacted to the post and there were many comments offered expressions of appreciation for the library. Scott posted information regarding the 5 mobile hot spots available by SSL and encouraged LAC members to engage when appropriate (as a community member, not representing the LAC) to help promote the library.
- d. Uzo replied that the library is working on Wendy Gales's suggestion to post colorful posters that will enhance children's insight and awareness while in the study rooms.
- e. In response to an experience relayed to Rodney, Uzo explained that MCSSL's reciprocity with DCPL is in relationship with library cards, not book return. If librarians come across a DCPL book that is inadvertently left with them, it is sent to DCPL. Customers should be warned, however, that they should call DCPL to inform them of the error to avoid paying late return fees. Additionally, be forewarned that the transfer may take some time. Lastly, books left at SSPL with the intention of being transferred to DCPL are not accepted.
- f. Factors taken into consideration when determining whether to terminate late book return fees resulted in the assessment that is an equity and access issue:
 - a. A system that penalizes for not being able to return a book creates a barrier of entry. This not in alliance with the library's goals and mission;
 - b. The revenue from book finds was declining over time because of the move towards electronic borrowing and renewals;
 - c. The cost of enforcing fines, measured by manpower hours and the social cost of having librarians experience points of friction with patrons rather providing value added services, such as helping patrons, overshadowed the benefits.

5. Reports

a. Library Branch Manager –Uzoma Onyemaechi (Report Attached)

- I. New Staff/Staffing - 2 part time employees became full time. They begin September 27, 2021.
- II. Our foot traffic is increasing. Since we reopened, more people are returning to the library.
- III. SSL was the only branch visited by the County Executive during reopenings.
- IV. ASPEN – New integrated (Open Source) library software, should be easier to use.
- V. While there may be exceptions, MCPL is still under a hiring freeze.
- VI. Library and Montgomery County Agency Collaborations - Occurring on a limited scale. The library is not hosting in person events and the agencies are teleworking. When changes are made county-wide, they look forward revisiting that partnership.
- VII. Rodney praised materials being automatically renewed and the elimination of fines.

- VIII. The Montgomery County government has made announcements regarding the elimination of fines and automatic renewal via emails, Facebook, and Twitter. A request will be made of the Board to expand the outreach.
- IX. Currently the MCPL system is understaffed and under-resourced. It is unlikely that the SSL will extend hours of operations to Sundays and resume pre-COVID circulation offerings until vital “front-line” positions are filled and managed.
- X. Laura Briskin-Limehouse announced that there are openings on the Library Board and asked members to share that information and encourage anyone who may be interested, to apply. The Board meets once a month on a Wednesday evening, and members are asked to serve on one subcommittee.

b. Library Board Liaison Report – Laura Briskin-Limehouse

- I. The Board’s last meeting included a presentation addressing From COVID to Recovery, the upshot of which concluded that the library made a fast pivot to electronic resources and electronic programming. The data reported was remarkable.
- II. Telephone renewal services were more than likely overcome by events (auto renewals)
- III. Collaboration with other county agencies, in particular the Department of Health and Human Services was not discussed at the last meeting.

c. Friends of the Library Silver Spring

There was no report from the Friends of the Library.

6. New Business

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.