

Wheaton Library Advisory Committee
June 26, 2023
Minutes

Attendees: Dianne Whitaker (ex-officio, Wheaton Library Manager), Yesvy Gustasp (chair), Diana Dubrawsky, Grace Manubay (board representative), Carol Bender, Barbara Friedman, Thelda McMillian, Melanie Newbrough, Hoa Nguyen, Carolyn Teich.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.

Minutes from May 22 meeting: No changes or comments requested. Motion to approve by Carolyn.

Membership Report: There are no new members.

Dianne gave the Manager's Report:

- Facilities:
 - There is continued discussion of what to do about the meeting room door. A complete re-manufacture is needed; however, due to supply chain issues this will not happen until FY24. A special order is required and the frame may need to be replaced.
 - Broken plexiglass in children's area also requires special procurement process; no date yet.
 - Parking garage lift gate was damaged by a car over Memorial Day weekend. It will be repaired July 6; the garage will be closed that day. Dianne is checking with the Chief of the fire station across the street to ask whether library patrons will be able to use the Fire Station parking lot that day. Police will need to be available to address Hermitage Parking, as no signs have been posted yet. The library staff will try to get word out in advance re: parking issues that day. FlexBus is available near the library; it serves Veirs Mill corridor up to Randolph Road and down to Wheaton Metro station.
 - There are continuing sewer overflow and plumbing issues; likely due to people flushing things that should not be flushed.
- Programming:
 - Regular monthly programs continued in June. In addition to the regular meeting, the Fiber Arts Group did a yarn bombing and put up a presentation advertising the upcoming Wheaton Arts Parade.
 - Special programs: Summer reading kicked off June 17; theme is All Together Now: creating a better world through acts of kindness and service. Pride month contemporary conversations was held June 9. There have also been art programs: animation for the whole family; create a graphic novel.
 - July special programs – Wheaton will host the Across Generations Reading program weekly starting in July. Other July Programs will be Baby Story time and bilingual Spanish-English story time. In July and August there will be special programs for teens and seniors.
- Collections:
 - Adult services staff finished weeding the dvd collection.

- Children’s librarians have reviewed picture books and world language collection.
- Staffing: One staffing assistant was promoted to Library Assistant II; he will supervise pages and shelving assistants. Three positions remain open.

Library Board Liaison Report:

The director shared a number of types of programming taking place county-wide: a number of Juneteenth events; summer reading (no prizes are being given but a young person receives a book when signing up) includes a community service component. There are some changes to best practices relating to the open meetings act; Grace will send details to members after the meeting. Not using the “Chat” function is a best practice; also ensuring that final copies of approved minutes are sent to library administrative staff to post on the website. The Board will meet on July 12 but not in August. Grace did ask about social media as mentioned in last LAC meeting; reply not yet received so she will mention it again at the next meeting.

Unfinished Business

Grace asked about inquiries from an earlier meeting about Read to a Dog and Discovery Room programs at Wheaton. Dianne said there has been a system-wide decision to have no new discovery rooms due to concerns with equity in the booking progress. The two existing discovery rooms may not be maintained. The Wheaton Children’s librarian does plan to start Read to a Dog in the fall. There are also discussions on how to change the format of the children’s program room; it has become chaotic and there is not enough staff to supervise it. Maybe passive play time will be available at certain times of the day. Hoa reinforced that parents appreciate the Read to a Dog and Discovery Room programs so she appreciates the follow-up.

New Business

Yesvy asked whether the LAC meeting in September will be Zoom or hybrid. Dianne said Microsoft Teams is the county standard and may offer better connectivity than Zoom. Download may be required but is similar in function to Zoom. This may also depend on County recommendations for in person vs hybrid meetings. Dianne reminded the committee that there is no closed door to the meeting room until door is repaired so others will be able to hear what is going on. A vote of the members in attendance for support of hybrid vs all virtual meeting was split 50/50. Dianne may poll the entire membership to obtain input from members who are not present at tonight’s meeting. The plan is for Sept 18th to be hybrid with 7:00pm start time. Dianne will notify the LAC members earlier in September to confirm the plan for that meeting.

Helen asked if there is any particular reason for library 6:00pm closing on Fridays. Dianne said the libraries are allocated a certain number of hours that they must be staffed. The library director decided two years ago that all county branches would have identical hours. In order to staff weekends, half of staff works Friday and half works Saturday. To be open later on Fridays additional staff would be needed.

Discussion with Agency Manager

Hoa asked about training re: ChatGPT and AI. Dianne said the library staff may not yet have proper training to handle this yet but she can mention it with the adult services staff. What kind of things would people like to learn? Hoa said she thinks many people don’t realize how broad the applications are and the various uses of AI. Dianne said it has arisen so quickly that library

staff are learning along with the rest of the public. It might be possible to bring in a speaker to give a one-time talk about ChatGPT/AI but probably not hands-on practice.

Yesvy said the recreation center has one-on-one tech support. Dianne said that is part of the senior center and is for rec center members 55 and older. Dianne said the library is trying to get back on track coordinating programs with the rec center. The Parks Dept has started a storytime program in local parks and there are multiple programs for the same age group at the same time. Dianne is trying to get coordination of programming across organizations to cover broader time periods.

Hoa asked whether the library has any influence on the rec center programming. Dianne said no, in spite of co-location they are run by separate agencies. Pre-covid there were regular meetings to discuss and coordinate programs but that has not happened recently. Recreation Dept holds functions to make money (renting the social hall and other spaces) to support their budget so sometimes reserving space for the library programs can be difficult; must be planned far in advance and generally must be late afternoon/early evening. The senior center was a later addition to the library/rec center shared space at the request of the local community, after completion of the new library building.

Miscellaneous

Dianne will invite a representative of the Digital Strategies group to attend the September meeting (Sept 18).

Hoa asked about LGBTQ planning – does Wheaton have a drag queen story hour? Dianne said Wheaton had a pride event (mentioned above). The drag story hour but it is rotating through the branches – Wheaton will host one in January 2024.

The Committee does not meet in July or August so meetings will resume Sept. 18.

At 8:38 pm Yesvy moved to adjourn. Hoa seconded.