

LAC Minutes - (Wheaton/3/17-2025)

Attendees: Yesvy Gustasp, Chair; Dianne Whitaker, ex-officio; Grace Manubay, Board Liaison, Diana Dubrawsky, Ania Waller; Members, Farah Nageer-Kanthor, Andrew Rein, Thelda McMillian

Absent: Eric Wallace, Barbara Freidman, Carol Bender [Carol tried to log-in; but, anomaly in Zoom link caused difficulty]

Opening Business: Yesvy called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm the February 2025 minutes were unanimously approved and seconded by Andrew Rein.

Membership Update:

A new Wheaton LAC member has been approved.

Wheaton Library Managers Report to the LAC

Dianne shared the Agency Manager's Report for March 2025.

Facilities:

Wheaton Heating and Cooling Concerns- The children's area becomes very warm and staff areas are too cool. A work order has been placed to adjust the building heating and cooling.

Plumbing Concerns not in the library but REC Center/Booksale area caused an early closure at 5 pm on Friday, March 13, 2025.

Collections:

Displays for Adult Area – Women's History, Irish History

Displays for Children's Area- National Reading Month, Spotlight on Non-Fiction (300s), National Music in Our Schools Month, St. Patrick's Day (books are all out)

Programs – Late March to Early April Regular Ongoing programs:

Children: Back-to-Back Family Storytimes on Wednesday and Friday mornings, Fun Fridays play time, Duplo Construction Crew,

Special Programs: Kamishibai, Sat. Mar. 22, 2025 – 10:30 am, Bilingual- Spanish English Storytime April 1, 2025

Teens: Teen Study Hall and Brain Breaks, Teen Advisory Board

Special Programs: System-wide MoCoCom – March 22-23, 2025 at the Germantown Library; Teen Video Production Class -Action Youth Media – Special Class Series, Teen Creative Writing Program Series#5

Adults: C2C Job Skills program (Zoom Skills, Resume Skills), Internet Basics, Library Streaming Apps and Downloadable E-book assistance, Saturday Conversation Club, Wednesday evening Yoga Basics, Intro to Crochet (Fabric Art), Monthly Adult Book Discussion.

Special Programs: 2 Tax Assistance Programs 1 on Sundays – VITA Tax-Aide, and AARP Tax Help on Tuesdays – Both are now by Appointment only Programs Adult – Women's History Month – Researching

Your Female Ancestors on Sat. Mar. 22, 2025; Using our Website for Film/Video/TV Resources related to Environmental Topics- Mar. 31, 2025 -2:00 pm

Tables: Identity, Montgomery College, MD Insurance Administration Info Table, Veterans Services at American Job Center/Wheaton

Staffing Update: There will be a new part-time Children's Librarian starting – March 24, 2025.

Discussion

Yesvy commended the library's Black History month program and appreciated Thelda's participation.

Ania asked about Identity's table in the library and Dianne explained the range of programs and services offered by Identity to young Latino community members in the county.

Grace asked about the 'hopes and dreams' of the new Children's staff and Dianne explained that she hopes it would allow for an expansion of children's programming over time. The new staff's experience is primarily with tweens and baby story time

Library Liaison Report

1. Recap from the last board meeting:

The library board met on March 12. Attached is the early literacy presentation, and here is the link to the Children's Opportunity Alliance annual report: <https://mocochildren.org/annual-report>

2. Montgomery County Budget

Attached is the joint letter the Library Board and Friends of the Library Montgomery County sent to County Executive Elrich (dated in February but sent in early March). On March 14, the county executive released the FY26 recommended operating budget. The recording can be found on [YouTube](#). Here is some communication we received from the library director:

I'm following up to share some important updates regarding the County Executive's FY26 Recommended Operating Budget. As you can imagine, this process involves many difficult decisions, but there are some exciting opportunities for MCPL that reflect the County Executive's ongoing support for our work.

Provided below is a link to the budget and attached (because it's too much text to add to this email), you'll find a summary document outlining the key recommendations in the budget. In short, we're looking at some great enhancements to our collections and services, as well as some necessary reductions we will need to address. I want to ensure that you have the full picture and feel informed as we continue our work together.

While the County Council will make the final decisions in late May, I'm confident that, together, we'll continue to navigate these changes and build a stronger future for our library system. What we do every day is truly at the heart of our community, and it is through our shared commitment that we can continue to provide exceptional service. These changes—both the wins and the challenges—are part of our continued growth and resilience. Your engagement and advocacy are integral to the success of our mission, and I'm excited about the opportunities ahead.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or feedback. I look forward to continuing this important work with you and building an even stronger, more inclusive, and impactful library system for our community.

[County Executive's FY'26 Recommended Operation Budget](#)

4. Also on March 14, the President issued an executive order that significantly restricts resources, staffing, and funding for several federal agencies, including the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Here is communication the library board received from the director:

The full impact of this decision on library programs and services nationwide remains uncertain. MCPL does receive some grant funding via the Maryland State Library Agency for capital projects, staff development and special programming. However, I want to assure you that I am in close communication with colleagues across the state and country to assess the executive order's broader implications for libraries, and the specific effects on Maryland and Montgomery County.

At this time, we have confirmation that IMLS funding is secure through June 2025. As the situation unfolds, reliable sources for updates include the American Library Association (ALA), the Maryland State Library Association (MLA), the Urban Libraries Council (ULC), *Library Journal*, and other organizations dedicated to supporting library infrastructure and frontline services.

This list of links and resources gives a helpful look at the response from national and local governance and nonprofit organizations. The ALA, MLA and other organizations have issued statements and resources:

- [ALA: "Show Up for Our Libraries"](#) & ["FAQ: Executive Order Targeting IMLS"](#) [Statement from ALA, March 15, 2025]
- MLA, [IMLS-funded projects](#) – [oversees and distributes IMLS funds in Maryland]
- [Chief Officers of State Library Agencies](#) (COSLA) – [Maryland State Library Agency is a member]
- [Urban Libraries Council](#) – [Statement released March 19, 2025]
- [Library Journal](#) (March 17, 2025) – ["What Happens to Libraries if IMLS Goes Away?"]

4. More info about Hatchings - the closest sessions to Wheaton appear to be in Kensington Park and Long Branch:

<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/13112944>

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

LAC Members Diane Dubrawsky and Ania Waller reiterated the need for greater amounts of printed materials due to extremely long waitlists and time periods before patrons are able to access the requested material. Dianne suggested that concerned patrons share this issue with Grace at the Library Board and also write a letter to the Collections Manager. Grace was willing to take this issue to the full

Board but she also suggested that members consider the state of the County's budget as well as the priorities identified for the county libraries in the County Executive's budget. Key points to be aware of include when LAC members act as a representative of the Wheaton LAC and when to act as a private resident of Montgomery County.

Given the mix-up with the Zoom link for tonight's meeting, Yesvy suggested that, as a matter of course, LAC members check their email should there be a similar situation in the future, PRIOR to log-in.

Adjournment

At 8:05 pm there was no further business to address and Andrew moved to adjourn the meeting. Ania seconded and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Wheaton LAC is on Monday, **April 21** at 7 pm.