

LAC Minutes - (Wheaton/4/21-2025)

Attendees: Yesvy Gustasp, Chair; Dianne Whitaker, ex-officio; Grace Manubay, Board Liaison, Ania Waller; Members, Farah Nageer-Kanthor, Thelda McMillian, Megan O'Brien, Eric Wallace, Barbara Freidman, Andrew Rein, Carol Bender

Absent: Diana Dubrawsky

Opening Business: Yesvy called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm the March 2025 minutes were unanimously approved and seconded by Barbara Friedman.

Membership Update:

Dianne welcomed Megan, a new member, for whom this is her first meeting. We had a second new member, Stephanie, who has not yet attended a meeting. Dianne invited Megan to introduce herself. Megan shared that she works at EveryMind and manages the mental health hotline. She's an avid reader who lives in walking distance to the library and is eager to advocate for and support the LAC.

Wheaton Library Managers Report to the LAC

Dianne shared the Agency Manager's Report for April 21, 2025.

Facilities:

- The staff bathroom faucet has been replaced.
- Window shades are being assigned to a new contractor.

Collection:

- Teen Non-Fiction is pulled out of the Adult Non-Fiction and placed next to Teen Fiction.

Displays:

- Adult Area: Earth Month; Comedy/Humor (National Humor Month); Poetry (National Poetry Month)
- Children's Area: Financial Literacy; Earth Day; Pet Day

Program Highlights:

- March 20-April 19
 - Family Story times continue to be the programs with the largest attendance overall.
 - The Women's History – Genealogy program had 19 attendees.
 - Tax Aid was by appointment only. It was especially full during the last two weeks of March and first week of April.
 - Intermediate Internet was filled with 12 seats.
 - The Earth Day programs have been a modest success with about 10-20 participants for each program.
- April 22-May 15
 - Friday, April 25, 2025 - **Fast Track Fridays: Mario Kart Battle for TEENS!**, 4:00pm - 5:00pm, Drift, Dash, and Pray You Don't End
 - Saturday, April 26, 2025 - April Flowers!- Make a Colorful Banner to Welcome Spring – in person, 1:00pm - 3:00pm; New Orchestra of Washington: "Colors of Spring"/"Colores de Primavera" - In-person, 4:30pm –5:30
 - Sunday, April 27, 2025, Celebrate Earth Day with a Movie: "The Wild Robot" - In-person, 2:00pm - 3:30pm

- Friday, May 2, 2025, **Climate Conversations About Emergency Preparedness - In-person, 2:30pm - 5:30pm**

Staffing:

- New part-time Librarian I Rachel East has joined the Wheaton J -Team and she has been a great addition.

Discussion

Teen programs are popular, conversation club ebbs and flows, and a job searching club has been having increased attendance with the focus on resume development and interview skills

Library Liaison Report shared by Grace Manubay

- The board met on April 9th and Megan and Yesvy joined this meeting online. Everyone is welcome to attend board meetings either in person or via Zoom. We had a presentation from the assistant director of facilities, who shared information about environmental features within the library system. Examples include that Wheaton is a LEED Gold certified building (certified by the US Green Building Council) and has a green roof and other stormwater features.
- I brought up the concern about the demand for print books and that an LAC feels that the emphasis is now on e-books. The director's response was that the physical book collection is not shrinking, and the library makes an effort to have resource sharing of physical books between branches. There are limits on available shelf space within the libraries plus the cost of maintaining the collection. The library has data on usage of books and materials throughout the system and will try to share that information more.
- MoComCon 2025 was great! This two-day event was held on March 22nd and 23rd at Germantown Library and BlackRock Center for the Arts.
 - Approximately 4,000 attendees participated over the weekend.
 - Over 500 buttons were made on Saturday.
 - Approximately 100 costumed customers took part in the Cosplay Parade on Sunday.
 - Over 600 people joined in playing board games.
 - Over 200 people participated in the Superhero Storytime.
 - One adult Cosplay contest participant shared she had participated in our very first cosplay contest 9 years ago as a youth!
- Impact of the News of the Institute of Museum and Library Services Funding Letter sent to Public Information Office; Library Board; Friends of the Library, Board of Trustees; and posted on MCPL's website and social media platforms.
- Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Council Sessions
 - February 27 – Education and Culture Committee session
 - Amendment to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program and Supplemental Appropriation #25-32 to the FY25 Capital Budget, Noyes Library for Young Children Rehabilitation and Renovation - \$3,000,000 (Source of Funds: GO Bonds, Contributions, Federal Aid)
- March 24 - Education and Culture Committee session
 - 21st Century Library Enhancements Level of Effort
 - Clarksburg Library

- Library Refurbishment Level of Effort
- April 1 – Full Council (To make preliminary decisions – straw vote expected)
- FY26 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program
- A Tour of Area Libraries with Unique Elements is planned for Friday, May 2nd from 8 AM – 5:30 PM. Plans are to visit Exploration Commons (Carroll), DIY Education Center (Howard), [Lunch], Storyville@Rosedale (Baltimore), Medfield Rec Center Esports Lounge (Baltimore). Members of the Board are invited to participate.
- It is National Library Week! A message was sent to MCPL staff on National Library Workers Day (April 8) from the Director and County Executive Elrich.

Discussion:

Barbara Friedman asked Grace if there was any data provided in response to the question she raised about the quantity and availability of print materials. Grace will ask for this data and shared that they also discussed alternative ways to request books such as via the website, Marina system, and inter-library loan (ILL) for books older than one calendar year. These are alternative ways to leverage how to access print materials that may not be readily accessible in the library.

Barbara also asked if there is a guidance, written step-by-step guide on how to request materials. Dianne responded that a write-up does exist but it is not particularly user-friendly. She explained that the Marina system is a unified list of all the libraries in Maryland but it does not include the academic libraries. For more academic books, users need to go through the OCLC system. Librarians often help patrons through this process but the online guide can be improved and this perhaps is a recommendation for the ILL and website team. Barbara offered to work with the respective library team to make the online guidance more user-friendly (chart or graph) as this would be important to have clear and accessible to patrons. Barbara also asked if this information is available in languages other than English. Dianne pulled up the MCPL webpage with the ILL information and also showed how to translate any of the library web pages into a selection of languages.

Farah asked if/how we solicit broad-based community input on needs, what's working/what's not, etc., apart from the LAC members and our spheres of influence. Dianne explained that this is typically done every 4-5 years during the strategic planning process. Community surveys were previously done but deemed not effective at reaching a broad base of the diverse community residents.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Megan raised the question of: what book club opportunities exist for people who work full-time and have programs in the evenings. Dianne shared that a few libraries have evening book clubs. She also explained that the library would need to look at staffing to determine which evening would work for this kind of program. It is easier to plan this for the Fall which is when new programs typically begin. Dianne offered to talk with her staff about this and also asked for volunteers to inform the types of books/themes for the club that can help to inform what Wheaton can offer. Megan asked if there was space for a community-led book club at the Wheaton library and Dianne answered that this would

depend on if there is physical space available given that Wheaton is the busiest library in the county system. However, we'd have to work with the staff since they would assist with the space reservation.

Barbara asked if someone in the community wanted to lead a virtual book club but wanted to advertise it through the library, would this be possible. Would the library would be able to offer a Zoom meeting room and advertise this via library outlets. Dianne explained that this would still require staff presence to ensure quality and standards of the library are upheld and they would have to be free and open to the public. Barbara shared that the library could teach interested people in how to set up a Zoom meeting and facilitate and moderate a virtual book club. Dianne offered that she has a personal Zoom account that she uses for non-work purposes and would be open to doing this as a one-time training for interested persons.

Dianne shared that the LAC is required to hold elections every May. Each member is elected for a 1-year stint and can serve up to 2-years at a time as an officer. Farah can serve another year as Secretary if desired and then another person would take on the Secretary role. Yesvy has served for a 2-year term and will need to be voted on.

Grace shared that she will be traveling and away for the May meeting but will return in June.

Yesvy raised the following items:

- Yoga class - majority in class & teacher vote to remain on the Library floor & not move to the bigger room belonging to Rec center. Class participants are not fond of "Monitors" the Rec center imposes. They prefer the teacher - to have total command. Our teacher Neha is very thoughtful - when we are very crowded, she avoids certain postures/ poses. Not all sign in: &, the sign-in sheet contains a liability waiver that some do not like to sign. It should be just a list of attendees; NOT a liability waiver sheet. Mo Co is too big to just sue. Plus, if some really tragic happens [ZERO chance] waiver does NOT apply.
- Volunteer/chair for Lib Public computers at Wheaton: There is demand to create a public computer user group and he will work with Dianne to make this a reality. Staff are more familiar with their computers, rather than Public User computers. It will take some load off them. Plus, they do not have to be worried about any retaliation from the Computer Services staff. This person {primarily me (Yesvy)} will have details knowledge of public use computers & what needs to be fixed.

Adjournment

Yesvy moved to adjourn at 8:07 pm and Andrew seconded.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Wheaton LAC is on Monday, May 19th at 7 pm.