Montgomery County Library Board

May 13, 2020

ATTENDEES: Angerman, Briskin-Limehouse, Chiu, Christman, Duval, Melnick, Negro, Rippeon, Roberts, Villar, Wallace, Williams

STAFF: Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary; Barbara McClayton, Human Resources Manager

GUESTS: Suzette Spencer, Director of Library and Information Services, Montgomery College; David Shumaker, Chair, Little Falls LAC

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roberts at 7:04 PM

Board members and staff self-introduced.

The minutes from the March 11, 2020, meeting were approved.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

- **Personnel** - The following staff changes took place during the months of March and April:
  - New Hires:
    - Laura Sanchez-Bustamante, Library Desk Assistant, Germantown
    - Cedric Clark, Branch Manager (MIII), Germantown
    - Mary Spiro, Librarian I, Collection Management
    - Milea Pickett, Librarian I, Wheaton
    - Shawna Leonard, Librarian I, Little Falls
  - Transfer:
    - Michelle Izuka, Librarian I, Potomac to Aspen Hill
    - Jeffrey Coster, Librarian I, Quince Orchard to Potomac
  - Promotions:
    - Briana Brockett-Richmond, Librarian I (Potomac) to Librarian II (Aspen Hill)
    - Judith Ehrenstein, Librarian I (White Oak) to Librarian II (Little Falls)
    - Erin Pike, Librarian I (Gaithersburg) to Librarian II (Quince Orchard)
    - Michelle Izuka, Librarian I (Aspen Hill) to Librarian II (Olney)
    - Maranda Schoppert, Librarian I to Librarian II (Germantown)
    - Katrin Sweeney, Senior Librarian (Silver Spring) to Manager III/Branch Manager, Kensington Park
  - Separated from County Service
    - Susan Modak, Librarian I, Kensington Park
Accomplishments:

- MCPL has put a great deal of virtual programming in place very quickly. There are many programs of all types listed on the Calendar of Events. These programs are available to all residents across the county. Unfortunately, these services are only available to people who have internet access. Felicity Brown (Chevy Chase branch manager), who is the Virtual Programming Coordinator, has been working with Digital Strategies Manager Maddie Hines to ensure these programs run smoothly. There has been a lot of training to get other staff on board. A grant was received from the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, to purchase Zoom licenses.

- Digital Resources
  - Implemented the Digital Library Card – Individuals who do not currently have a library card can sign up online for the digital library card. This gives cardholders immediate access to most online services and resources. The digital library card does not expire, which is a change from MCPL’s previously existing temporary card, which was valid for 30 days. A digital library card can be obtained online and can be exchanged at any MCPL branch for a full-service library card once branches reopen.
  - Enhanced digital resources – Funds were shifted from physical materials to enhance existing digital resources and purchase more, including Hoopla which provides cardholders with immediate access to digital movies, music, e-books, audiobooks and television. Hoopla has newer, high demand materials. The number of copies is unlimited, however, there is a monthly limit of 10 books per customer. It is a pay for use platform.
    - Udemy was also added. It is an online learning platform geared towards students and professional adults that focuses on workforce development, finance, and personal development.
    - Currently working to add The New York Times, which would give customers electronic access to the full online version including the Learning Network, Lens (photography blog), and guides.
  - MCPL is pushing out a lot of information about the digital resources on social media; Board members are encouraged to retweet and share.

- Staff
  - Staff are teleworking, on administrative leave or a combination of both. There are many circulation staff on administrative leave due to the nature of their jobs.
  - Staff are also working all over the county as they have been detailed to assist other county departments. Currently there are staff translating documents, working with the county’s communication team, Alcohol Beverage Services, County Executive’s Office (grants program), Health and Human Services (contact tracing).
    - The County reached out for volunteers to assist in these areas, and I am really proud of staff for stepping up.

Recovery Plan

- The Executive Committee and Core Leadership Team have been working on the recovery plan.
  - It will be a phased opening.
  - Staff will return to the building two weeks prior to resuming services to customers.
    - Relocating public computers, adding directional signage, ensuring personal protection equipment is in place, etc.
One week after staff return to the buildings, the book drops will be reopened.

Initial outward service will be contactless.

Operate all buildings with a one-shift model.

Will be using the guidelines of one person for every 200 square feet.

Stage/phase two will be reopening the branches with limited access.

- Determine whether it will be a timed entry – customers cannot come and linger.
- Have access to public computers by appointment only.

Stage/phase three – Allowing more people into the buildings. Very little programming will be scheduled.

There are many challenges moving forward to provide services to customers while keeping them and staff safe.

The important aspect of the phase/stage approach is if there is another outbreak or spike, we can roll back to another phase.

We will ensure there is enough staff at each branch for safety reasons. If there is a staffing issue, we may not be able to open all branches.

- Budget

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Operating budgets were before Council. The CIP Budget was recommended in full, which includes Clarksburg and the refresh projects.

- The refresh at Long Branch is ongoing.
- The Germantown refresh will begin later this year.
- The funds are still there for Noyes.

The Operating Budget was recommended to County Council by the County Executive prior to the Covid-19 outbreak.

- Council did not approve the librarian position for outreach or the extended hours. These two enhancements will be placed on the reconciliation list.
- We will be working with a continuity of operations budget into FY21, which means it is the same budget as FY20.
- Due to the pandemic, the County has had to allocate money towards hospitals, small businesses, rental assistance, etc.
- There has been no talk about furloughs or reduction in force.
- County Council is reviewing the Union contract involving compensation adjustments.
- There are some departments, such as Health and Human Services, that may need more funds. We have to look at the big picture.

- Library Advisory Committee meetings – managers will be advised that they can begin scheduling LAC meetings again. The meetings will be conducted via Microsoft Teams.

CHAIR’S REPORT:

- Thank you to Director Vassallo and library staff. The pandemic hit pretty hard and MCPL responded very quickly to provide services in a virtual environment.
- Thank you for the budget update. These are unprecedented times. We all have to lean in a little.

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Duval) – No update
• Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Rippeon, Melnick, Negro) – Written testimony was prepared and submitted to Council. Preparation of the testimony was drafted in conjunction with FOLMC Board members who were very helpful.

• LAC and Board Activities (Williams) - In April, the revised LAC Handbook was sent to the full Board along with a summary page of changes. Thanks to Carrie Villar and Laura Briskin-Limehouse for the final edit. Please let the LAC members know where to find the handbook and share the summary page of changes.

LIAISON REPORTS:
• Due to the Covid 19 outbreak, most of the LACs have not been able to meet since early March.
• Silver Spring – Will meet on Monday
• White Oak - Discussion about election requirements. Due to the current situation, a two or three month extension seems reasonable. *Language from the LAC Handbook: Elections of officers should be conducted no later than June 1 of each year. It is the responsibility of the LAC Chair to call a meeting of the members prior to June 1, conduct the election of officers, and promptly report the results of the elections to the MCPL Director’s Office. Extensions of the June 1 deadline can be requested to the MCLB liaison, who can either approve the request or take it to the full board.*
• Chevy Chase – Reorganizing. Haven’t had any meetings. Chevy Chase FOL has scheduled a conference call to which the LAC was invited to discuss the condition of the library building. The email invitation will be forwarded to Chair Roberts.
• Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) – There are 14 recovery plan committees. The return to school in the fall will not be the usual normal; it may be a phased in return. Talking to media specialist about leveraging their budgets on digital content. Christine Freeman and Amy Alapati will attend a virtual meeting to explain MCPL’s summer reading program. Amy’s video mentions it’s for teens as well, but the video may not work for teens. Maybe consider a flyer or a tik tok video for teens. Overdrive changed its settings, MCPS students can now add a preferred library. Every MCPS family that needs a Chromebook will get one and one myspot per household. MCPS staff can only use Zoom for meetings; cannot use for students or external people. Summer schools is going to be held virtually.

NEW BUSINESS:
• Core Values of Librarianship
  o The introduction was read into the minutes by Toni Negro: *The foundation of modern librarianship rests on an essential set of core values that define, inform, and guide our professional practice. These values reflect the history and ongoing development of the profession and have been advanced, expanded, and refined by numerous policy statements of the American Library Association. Among these are: access, confidentiality/privacy, democracy, diversity, education and lifelong learning, intellectual freedom, preservation, the public good, professionalism, service, social responsibility, and sustainability.*
  o This is an update to previous policy statement
  o The Library Board adopted a similar statement in the past.
  o It was discussed, moved, seconded and passed that the Library Board adopt the Core Values of Librarianship.

OLD BUSINESS:
• Response to letter from Little Falls LAC regarding concerns about staffing
The first letter was submitted in October and another submitted at the March meeting.

Chair Roberts, Vice Chair Williams, Director Vassallo and LF LAC Liaison Mike Wallace were to work together to draft a response.

There is a draft response that will be forwarded to the full Board.

- Board members were asked to review the draft as soon as possible and submit comments/suggestions.
- If there are no comments or questions, the response will be adopted as is.

The response will be sent to the Little Falls LAC by May 18.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Appreciate the ability to call into the meeting tonight. There may be positive outcomes from this situation. The County should continue making the meetings virtually accessible to residents. [David Shumaker]

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.