



## Montgomery County Library Board

June 10, 2020

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

**STAFF:** Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

**GUESTS:** Linda Pottern, Chair, Davis Library Advisory Committee; Elliot Chabot, Chair, Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee; Suzette Spencer, Director of Library and Information Services, Montgomery College

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roberts at 7:09 PM

### **INTRODUCTIONS:**

- Suzette Spencer was formally welcomed to the Library Board representing Montgomery College (MC). Ms. Spencer is the Director of Library and Information Services for Montgomery College. She oversees all three MC library campuses – Rockville, Germantown, and Takoma Park. Ms. Spencer comes to Montgomery College from south Florida.
- Board members and public members self-introduced.

### **MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:**

- The minutes from the May 13, 2020, meeting were approved with one addition.
- The following LAC application was approved:
  - Quince Orchard –Wei

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- **Personnel** - The following staff changes took place during the month of May:
  - New Hires:
    - Lee Shapiro, Librarian I, Silver Spring
    - Renee Good-Fisher, Librarian I, Marilyn Praisner
    - Janice Rosenberg, Librarian I, Olney
  - Separated from County Service:
    - Mary (Chris) O'Brien, Librarian I, Quince Orchard
    - Nelson Lee, Librarian Technician, Collection Management
    - Yueh-Hwa (Diana) Tong, Library Associate II, Chevy Chase

- **Hiring Report**

- In March, the County implemented a hiring freeze. If a Department had already selected a candidate, hiring could continue. Since MCPL was actively filling positions, we had several new hires that met the exception. These are the positions filled since the last report in March:

- Branch Manager at Germantown
- Librarian I part time at Silver Spring, Marilyn Praisner, Cataloging, Wheaton, Little Falls, and Olney
- Library Desk Assistant at Germantown (2), Silver Spring, Olney

These positions were filled by promotion:

- Branch Manager at Kensington Park
- Librarian II, Children's Services at Aspen Hill, Germantown, Little Falls, Quince Orchard, Olney.

This position was filled by transfer:

- Librarian I- full time- Potomac

During this period, four individuals left County service.

- **Contemporary Conversations @ MCPL, June 24, 7 PM** – For Pride Month, MCPL in partnership with the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, and Councilmember Evan Glass, will host an panel discussion with author Claire Rudy Foster, Gay Activist L. Page “Deacon” Maccubbin, Councilmember Glass, and Beth Chandler, MCPL Selector.

- **Refresh Projects Updates**

- State grant submitted for Potomac Library refresh.
- Germantown – Due to budget issues, the refresh for Germantown will be a mini one. The Department of General Services (DTS) plans to re-carpet the library, and we are in the process of trying to order furniture to replace some of the well-loved pieces. Duron is coming out to replace glides on the chairs this month.
- Long Branch - Outside ADA work/ramp work is almost complete and demolition of the inside was completed. Contractors are addressing water and electrical issues. Working with DTS to facilitate connections for a new monument sign.
- Scope for Maggie Nightingale was submitted to the Division of Building Design and Construction architect.

- **Playbook for Recovery**

- Some community members have expressed their displeasure with the decision to close Libraries. MCPL, as a county department, follows the direction of the County government.
- Planning has begun on the reconstitution of our services.
- MCPL, as the County as a whole, is working with MCGEO (Union) to make sure all of our plans to recall staff have been vetted by the Union. They, as well as the department and County, are ensuring the safety of employees.
- Week one: staff will be called back to the branches/units. They will work on reorganizing work spaces, moving and reorganizing furniture, checking in materials that were left when our buildings were so quickly closed in March, and completing projects.
- Week two: the book drops will be opened for returns and telephones will be reactivated.
  - Our returned materials will be quarantined for 72 hours. A study, scheduled to conclude mid-June, is being conducted on how long the virus remains on materials common to libraries. If new information comes from this study, we will reevaluate the quarantine period.

- Week 3: Contactless pick up of materials will begin.
  - This is not curbside. Staff will not be placing items in customers' cars.
  - Customer will place holds for materials via phone or online.
  - When materials are ready, customers will receive notification via email.
  - The customers will then schedule an appointment.
  - Staff will check out materials, bag them and place them in the vestibules of the branches for pick up by the customer.
  - Staff will have no direct contact with customers.
- There is no firm date to begin the plan.
- Once the buildings reopen to customers, we will use the current guidance of one person for every 200 square feet.
- Determine how we control how many people are in a branch at one time.
  - It may be by appointment. Customers could schedule one hour in the branch to browse or use public computers.
- If the crisis gets better, we expand; if it gets worse, we can pull back.
- There are many library systems going through same thing, a number of them are sharing their reopening plans. Some are also being shared by the Urban Libraries Council.
- The Playbook will be sent to the Board, once it has been shared with staff.
- Comments on Director's Report:
  - It is important the Board notes that the Library has responded to the crisis in a superlative manner. The community needs to know what the Library has done. Buildings were closed, but not the Library itself. Determine how the Board can let this story be told more broadly than what it has been. There are amazing digital resources. Members are encouraged to look at the website. Use statistics to show the number of people who have used these resources. Some people are going to depend on the digital resources for a while.
    - Director Vassallo will send a spreadsheet of usage statistics.
- Self-check and a mobile app for checkout will be instituted for contactless checking in and out.
- How many items are currently checked out and waiting to be returned?
  - This number can be obtained from reports.
- It was reported during an LAC meeting that the library is hot. The AC is not running which may cause damage to books and electrical equipment.
  - The Department of General Services is monitoring the situation in all buildings.
  - Not running the AC is saving money.
- When will the interlibrary loan service resume?
  - That depends on the State. They have asked all State library systems to give them their opening dates. Some systems do not have opening dates, yet. The State probably will not reinstitute it until all systems are open.
- What is the communication rollout plan for letting people know the tentative dates for each stage?
  - There will be heavy messaging on the website and social media. The Public Information Office will send out press releases and push the messages on the County's social media sites, and the information can be communicated to customers during calls to Ask-a-Librarian and the Customer Accounts Coordinator.
  - We plan to do a video about the materials pickup procedure.

- How to reach those without internet:
  - Rely heavily on the messaging from the County.
  - Partner with organizations that are delivering food.
    - MCPL should be able to work with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to send out reopening flyers with food distributions.
      - MCPS is having a difficult time getting the food out; it is difficult to organize anything else.
  - MCPL is currently working with Manna right now to get books out with their Smart Sacks.
- Why are documents for the public not automatically translated into Spanish? MCPS is really interested in getting the gameboards for Summer Read and Learn, but they could not find them in Spanish.
  - There are only a few county employees who are certified to translate from English to Spanish, and they are working on high priority documents and critical communication for the County.
- The pages (shelving assistants) are integral to materials circulation. Will the hiring freeze have an impact on pages? There also may be some who don't return due to obtaining other employment or graduation.
  - That is something that needs to be assessed. We don't know how many physical materials will circulate. We have other staff who can shelve.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT:**

- LAC Meetings
  - LACs cannot physically assemble in groups. They can hold meetings via Zoom and Microsoft Teams.
  - In accordance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act, the agendas for the LAC meetings must be posted at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled meetings.
    - Board members should share this with their respective LACs.
- Voting by proxy is not allowed. The vote can be taken by email under urgent circumstances. However, the vote must be confirmed at the next in-person (virtual) meeting. Voting at the virtual meeting initially is preferred.
- The taskforce to investigate adult library fines (Angerman, Briskin-Limehouse, Duval, Melnick, Negro, Wallace)
  - Start to investigate and provide data on national and state trends.
  - Submit summary report before the September Board meeting and the recommendation by the December meeting.
  - Director Vassallo has a lot information that she can forward to the group. The information will be sent via email to the appointed chair of the taskforce.
  - Tiffany Ward, the County's equity officer, recognizes that library fines and equity is an issue in the County. She is awaiting a position by the Library Board.
  - It is more critical than ever that there is equitable access for all.
  - MCPL can provide the data on library accounts blocked due to owing \$25 or more. The data can be mapped to show that the least affluent areas are the most affected.
    - Also, include the data regarding the positive impact of eliminating fines on children's materials.
  - Other issues that affect equity may come out during this study such as access to the internet.
    - MCPL has partnered with the Department of Technology Services to submit an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant for outdoor wireless.

- Library Board vacancies
  - The deadline to apply/reapply is June 24.
  - A nominating committee will be convened.
  - Terms and term expiration dates will be sent to all Board members.

#### **WORKGROUP REPORTS:**

- Library Policy and Practices – (Duval, Angerman, Briskin-Limehouse, Wallace)
  - No report
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup – (Rippeon, Melnick, Negro)
  - Attending meetings organized by the FOLMC Advocacy Committee
    - More work is needed to make the County aware of the resources available.
      - Find ways to publicize that information.
    - Strong support is needed to ensure equitable treatment in the County budget.
    - The group wants to support and contribute to MCPL’s Marketing Plan. FOLMC really wants to support the efforts.
    - Need to publicize the resources guide. If possible, send every person who holds a library card information about the resources.
      - MCPL has had an ongoing conversation with the County Attorney’s office about sending information to cardholders. The message has always been not to send to anyone who has not specifically given permission.
      - Enoch Pratt’s privacy policy may have language that MCPL can use regarding publicizing services and promotional campaigns.  
<https://www.slrc.info/about/default.aspx?id=449>
- LAC and Board Activities (Williams, Chiu, Roberts, Villar)
  - No report

#### **LIAISON REPORTS:**

- Silver Spring – Meeting on Monday, June 15.
- Marilyn Praisner – Emails are being sent to those who expressed interest in serving on the LAC prior to the March closing of library buildings to see if they are still interested.
- Germantown – Opted not to meet in June; planning a meeting for September.
- Damascus – Will not have a meeting in June.
- Noyes – Will have a virtual meeting on June 18.
- Quince Orchard – The current chair does not feel comfortable organizing a virtual meeting. They want to wait until they can meet in person.
- Davis – No meeting scheduled. The chair will talk with the group about the next meeting date.
- Little Falls – Received the written response from the Board on May 21. They held a meeting on June 2, during which officers were elected. The chair was re-elected for a second term. They planned meetings for the rest of the year. They were happy to learn that several positions had been filled at the branch.
- Chevy Chase – The LAC is still trying to reorganize. The chair sent emails to members to organize a Zoom meeting for June.
- Olney – A meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 17.
- White Oak – Has not met. Will check in with the chair.
- Aspen Hill – Met virtually on Monday. Technology was fine. Will meet again in July.
- Maggie Nightingale – No meeting scheduled for June.
- Gaithersburg – No meeting for June.

- Twinbrook – Has not met. Membership was already declining.
- Rockville Memorial – Has not met. Was already trying to rebuild.
- Potomac – Will meet Friday, June 12.
- Accessibility Advisory Committee – Not sure what plans the committee has.
- Kensington Park - Will check in with the LAC in the next couple of weeks.
- Long Branch – Will check in with the LAC in the next couple of weeks

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.