



## Montgomery County Library Board

July 8, 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; Suzette Spencer, Director of Library and Information Services, Montgomery College; James Montgomery, Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roberts at 7:03 PM

### **INTRODUCTIONS:**

- Roll call of Board members; public members self-introduced.

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

- The minutes from the June 10, 2020, meeting were approved.
- The following LAC applications were approved:
  - Davis - Sau
  - Noyes – Dickerson, Gaylin, Gillespie, Glick, Gupta-Pateriya, Ribas, Stanton

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

- Personnel - The following staff changes took place during the month of June:
  - New Hires:
    - Camille Robinson, Library Desk Assistant, Silver Spring
    - Suzanne Womble, Library Desk Assistant, Olney
    - Lesya Brannman, Library Desk Assistant, Germantown
  - Separated from County service:
    - Avis Matthews, Library Associate, Silver Spring
- Recovery Plan
  - Bookdrops were opened and branch telephones reactivated on June 29.
    - The books returned on the first day filled hundreds of tubs. This prompted a social media post to let customers know that they do not have to return all items immediately.
    - Extra tubs were ordered for all branches, but the returned materials are quarantined for 72 which means there are a number of tubs being used just to hold those materials.

- **Holds to Go**, our contactless pickup service, began on July 6. Holds to Go will be offered at all MCPL branches except Noyes and Long Branch libraries. Customers can reserve items online or over the telephone. Requests are limited to 100 items per customer. When the items are available, customers are notified by email, text, or phone, based on their account preference. Customers will then schedule an appointment by telephone or online to pick up their materials. At their scheduled appointment times, customers pick up their bagged materials from tables inside the branch vestibules or just outside the front doors. On the first day, 572 customers took advantage of this service.
- Virtual programming continues to be very successful. Tom Friedman was a recent guest. We will do a war series with Montgomery History.
  - Vinyl Day, including Make Music Montgomery, will be held virtually on July 25. Lance Salins, FOLMC, will present on how to value your vinyl record collection.
- Customers are happy that some services are beginning to resume.
- **Budget Update**
  - The pandemic has financially impacted the County.
  - The County's major focus is providing funds for residents who need food, shelter/rental assistance, and/or childcare.
  - The County hopes the majority of this money will be recovered from FEMA.
  - All county departments have been tasked with submitting a revised FY21 operating budget with a 6% reduction. This amounts to \$2.6M for Libraries. The instructions included no reduction in force.
  - A meeting will be held Thursday, July 9 to go over the budget with MCPL managers.
  - MCPL's budget submission will be before the Council's Education and Culture Committee on July 13.
  - Lapse - money that accrues from the time a position/job becomes vacant until it is filled. Every department is required to maintain a certain lapse amount.
    - Every MCPL job that is currently vacant will be held in hopes that they can be filled at some point.
  - Zeroing out the budget for Sunday substitutes.
  - The budget for weekday and Saturday substitutes will be cut (\$466K). The remaining \$40K will be held for substitute drivers.
    - There are currently only four drivers for all routes including the State run.
  - Transferring the personnel cost (\$156K) of the Deaf Culture Digital Library coordinator from county payroll to the State grant.
  - Decreased funding by \$173K for furniture, supplies, and in-person programming.
  - The training budget was decreased by \$15K.
  - The contract with Community Services for Autistic Adults and Children (CSAAC) to sort books at Collection Management will not be renewed.
    - Proper social distancing in the book sort area is not possible with the CSAAC workers and their job coaches.
    - MCPL merit staff will now do this work.
  - Reduced the Page budget (shelvers) by \$1M.
    - The task of shelving is in the job description of merit staff.
    - The County Executive instructed libraries to hold \$500K of the \$1M in anticipation of another cut.
  - Committed to not reducing the collection budget. However, if there is another cut of \$1M or more, it will have to come from the collection.

- Follow-up questions and comments on Director’s Report:
  - How will the budget cut affect library customers?
    - There will be no visible impact while in the current stage. The service hours for the branches have been reduced for the early stages, once MCPL is charged to increase hours, then there will an issue. In order to cover the hours and services, more personal would need to be hired.
    - More self-serve options have been put in place such as more self checkout machines, self-checkin and self-checkout by phone via an app through cloudLibrary. Also meeting with the Department of Finance to determine if PayPal for remote printing can be put into place.
  - How will the budget cut affect digital resources?
    - Digital resources are part of the Collection budget and will not be affected.

**CHAIR’S REPORT:**

- Thank you to the Adult Fine Taskforce that has begun their work. We look forward to their report in September.
- Jane Williams will be leaving her position on the Board at the end of September. Her commitment to the Board is much appreciated. The vice chair position will become vacant, please let Chair Roberts or Vice Chair Williams know if you are interested in or have questions about the position.
- Volunteers for the nominating committee – Toni Negro and Carrie Villar.
- Resolution introduced by Dan Melnick.
  - The resolution is to officially recognize the work of the Libraries’ staff and Director in this very difficult time and call attention to the need for services provided by MCPL. The County will soon have to make difficult budgetary decisions; the Board’s support and recognition of the work of MCPL is vitally important in this context.
  - It was moved and seconded that the Board adopt the resolution in principle, allowing for minor changes to correct the language. After call for questions, the vote carried unanimously.
  - It was requested that Director Vassallo share the resolution with employees.

**WORKGROUP REPORTS:**

- Library Policy and Practices – (Duval, Briskin-Limehouse, Wallace)
  - No report
- Fines Taskforce – (Duval, Briskin-Limehouse, Melnick, Negro, Wallace)
  - This is a great group. I thank them for their time and commitment.
  - Met with Director Vassallo, who provided a very solid basis for which to start to work on assignments.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup – (Rippeon, Melnick, Negro)
  - Dan Melnick and Sonja Roberts will work on a letter on behalf of the Board to Maryland Senators in support of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
    - Toni Negro will circulate the information from the American Library Association.
- LAC and Board Activities (Williams, Chiu, Roberts, Villar)
  - LACs that are operational should elect or have already elected officers for the upcoming year.
  - Annual reports are due at the end of September. The form can be found in the appendices of the LAC Handbook.

## **LIAISON REPORTS:**

- Davis – Meets the first week of August. Has not met since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Noyes – Held a virtual meeting on June 18.
- Kensington Park – Held elections.
- Noyes – Anxious for the libraries to be open again, especially Noyes. Sent information to community listservs to recruit new members. Held elections.
- Quince Orchard – Not amenable to having virtual meetings.
- Potomac – Active discussion about virtual library services; where library services can be publicized.
- Chevy Chase – Meets July 9. Update on refresh – the best hope is for a company to come forward to partner with the County to build a new facility.
- Twinbrook and Rockville Memorial – There has been no communication from the branch managers regarding holding meetings. Director Vassallo will reach out to the managers of both branches.
- Olney – Met on June 17. They were happy to hear about some of the hiring. Will next week. They are supportive of everything that is going on during this time and are happy with the manager.
- Damascus – Not interested in a virtual meeting. Will wait until they are able to meet in person.
- Germantown – Not scheduled to meet until September.
- Maggie Nightingale – Met on June 30. A great report was given by Liz Bowen. An election was held for the secretary position; the election for the new chair will be held on July 21. There is an ongoing focus on ideas to get more LAC members. The Poolesville Day celebration has been canceled.
- Gaithersburg – Met on June 30. Great report from Cindy Schweinfest (branch manager). There were questions regarding the services being offered. Cindy stated that a lot of materials are being returned. The staff are ramping up to serve the community. A meeting is scheduled for the end of July during which they hope to hold elections.
- Silver Spring – Met on June 15 and held elections. Will meet again in July.
- Marilyn Praisner – Interested individuals were not able to meet prior to the Covid outbreak.
- Long Branch – Not able to meet.
- Kensington Park – Have not been accepting returns or providing services.
- Montgomery College – Online courses for the fall. MC is supporting the approximately 500 international students who are being affected by the directive to ICE.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

- Director Vassallo will email the Data Team regarding the availability of data on the use of digital resources.
- Sending information to customers regarding library services
  - The County Attorney as determined if customers have given MCPL their email address, then they have opted in to receiving emails.
  - MCPL did use these emails to send out messages regarding holds.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- The chair and vice chair positions need to be updated on the website.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- The Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, wholeheartedly, supports the resolution passed. [James Montgomery]

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.