



## Montgomery County Library Board

October 13, 2021

**ATTENDEES:** Briskin-Limehouse, Christman, Duval, Lighter, Manubay, Roberts, Spencer

**STAFF:** Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Andrea Castrogiovanni, Program Specialist II; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

**GUESTS:** Janice Levine, Public; Vikram Pant, Public; Linda Pottern, Chair, Davis Library Advisory Committee; Pamela Saussy, President, Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library, Montgomery County

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roberts at 7:00 PM

### **INTRODUCTIONS:**

- Roll call of Board members; guests were introduced.

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

- The minutes from the September 8, 2021, meeting were approved.
- The following LAC applications were approved:
  - Aspen Hill – George
  - Little Falls – Mitchell
  - Wheaton – Bender, French, McMillian, Rivers, Teich

### **PRESENTATION: Tales and Tails: Summer Read and Learn Highlights - Andrea Castrogiovanni**

- Program Overview and Data Methodology
  - Held June 16 through August 31
  - Three questionnaires review the program's operation and effectiveness
    - Customer survey
    - Staff overall assessment
    - Staff assessment of performers
  - Participation data gleaned from Readsquared software
- Analysis of Findings
  - On average, 66% of participants indicate behavioral and knowledge-based changes because of program involvement
  - Eighty-two percent of participants believe they will participate in the 2022 program; 16% are unsure.
  - The program completion rates were lower, as compared in proportion to last year: an average of 41% of participants completed the program this year, whereas in calendar year 2020, an average of 57% of participants completed the program.

- Findings: Participant Post-Survey ( $n=174$ )

**"Because of Summer Read & Learn..."**

Outcomes Metric	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
We are more confident readers	5%	4%	27%	41%	23%
We read more often	6%	2%	25%	33%	34%
We use library resources more often	6%	5%	23%	35%	31%
We spent more time sharing ideas or the books we read with family and friends	7%	7%	28%	32%	26%
We learned something new from what was read or experienced	6%	5%	14%	33%	42%

- Analysis of Findings (cont'd)

**2019**

Age 0-5 registrants [3,150] → 45% of registrants participate → 80% of participants complete the program  
 Age 6-12 registrants [7,410] → 43% of registrants participate → 73% of participants complete the program  
 Age 13-17 registrants [629] → 40% of registrants participate → 90% of participants complete the program

**2020**

Age 0-5 registrants [1,023] → 39% of registrants participate → 56% of participants complete the program  
 Age 6-12 registrants [2,914] → 38% of registrants participate → 52% of participants complete the program  
 Age 13-17 registrants [415] → 52% of registrants participate → 63% of participants complete the program

**2021**

Age 0-5 registrants [1,923] → 54% of registrants participate → 45% of participants complete the program  
 Age 6-12 registrants [4,170] → 56% of registrants participate → 43% of participants complete the program  
 Age 13-17 registrants [500] → 42% of registrants participate → 34% of participants complete the program

- Findings: Staff Feedback

- Ninety-two percent of staff attended/received program training.
- Staff indicate high confidence level in explaining and promoting the program, and assisting customers with registration (average score: 91%)
- FOLMC-sponsored events:
  - Twelve programs were scheduled.
  - Smallest attendance for a single event was 14; the largest, 158. The average number of attendees per event was 85.
  - Staff describe 100% of attendees as “very interested” or “extremely interested” in the programs.

- Customer Feedback: Making a Difference (*Comments are unedited*)

- Keeps us motivated to continue our reading, learning, and brings us together to talk and ask questions about books we have read.
- My kids loved the feeling of accomplishment for each mission finished. I/we loved being more involved in our local library!
- The kids really looked forward to the new missions and prizes. It was a great way to keep them interested in the library. Prior to Covid we would go about every two weeks so the summer program got them back in the rhythm quickly.
- Thank you so much. We've enjoyed the summer read and learn!
- Again thank you. We are so, so grateful for our public libraries.
- Great job, keep it up.
- All librarians for helping as thank you.
- We love our libraries. Thank you for all you do.
- What did I like best? Encouraging librarians!

- It really got us out of the house and into the library and I had forgotten how we haven't been in a while.
- The virtual programs that taught me about different musical instruments from other countries.
- **Questions:**
  - Is the parent/guardian of the young person completing the customer satisfaction survey, or is it the child who is completing the form?
    - It was a mix of parents/guardians and children.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- **Personnel** - The following staff changes took place during the months of September:
  - Transfers:
    - Erin Pike, Librarian II, Quince Orchard to Aspen Hill
    - Robbin Kemp, Library Assistant I, Rockville Memorial to Germantown
    - Rachel Rappaport, Senior Librarian, Connie Morella to Rockville Memorial
    - Abdulai Koroma, Library Associate (PT) to Library Associate (FT), Silver Spring
    - Eleanor Williams, Librarian I (PT) to Librarian I (FT), White Oak
    - Lee Shapiro, Librarian I (PT) to Librarian I (FT), Silver Spring
    - Jamie Kim, Librarian I (PT), Germantown to Librarian I (FT), Gaithersburg
    - Renee Goods-Fisher, Librarian I (PT), Marilyn Praisner to Librarian I (FT) Long Branch
  - Separated from County Service
    - Milea Pickett, Librarian I, Wheaton
  - Ramping up hiring. There will be many jobs posted soon.
- **Refresh/Construction Updates:**
  - Germantown Library – Division of Facility Maintenance continues ADA and repaving work at the lower lot. Staff returned to the branch on October 11. Ribbon cutting ceremony and reopening are scheduled for October 16.
  - Potomac Library - Design continues. Trying to address ADA and bathroom/possible family restroom issues. Hughes presented renderings and possible palettes.
  - Maggie Nightingale - ADA front sidewalk and back entrance sidewalk completed. Kane Construction was selected and received the P.O. on October 1. DGS is in the process of obtaining the Notice to Proceed.
  - Damascus – Facilities assessment complete.
  - Chevy Chase – DGS holding Office Hours at Chevy Chase on October 16 and October 20.
  - Noyes – Met with the Noyes Foundation in September with DGS and OMB.
- **Koha Aspen Discovery ILS** was launched on October 4, for the most part it has gone very smoothly. There were some glitches with the holds. Hope to have things resolved very shortly. Ask customers to be patient and understanding.
- Senior Librarian Linda Curvey-Brown applied for and has been accepted as a participant in **Hampton University – Harvey Library's *Leading the Charge* grant** project. The focus of this project, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, is advancing the recruitment and retention of people of color within the library information science field. Ms. Curvey-Brown is one of the team leaders for MCPL's Racial Equity and Social Justice Team. In that role, she is helping the organization examine the longstanding effects of racial inequity on all aspects of our work. One of these is our ability to recruit, hire and retain people of color in our organization. The inclusion of Ms. Curvey-Brown in *Leading the*

*Charge* grant project will be of great benefit to MCPL, and with the strengths, experience, and knowledge she brings from her many years in public library work, will help to achieve the project's overall goal of creating a set of actionable initiatives that can be shared across library systems nationwide.

- **The Council Education and Culture Oversight Session** was held on Monday, October 4, providing an opportunity to receive updates on key programs on initiatives and review any relevant spending or performance data. The Department provided the *MCPL: From COVID to Recovery* presentation; *MCPL Goes Open Source*; *MCPL is Switching to Koha* presentation; MCPL's Racial Equity and Social Justice Report; and data on circulation by branch, use of resources (databases), uses of ebook and eaudiobooks, total unique active users.
- **Upcoming Events:**
  - Remaining County Executive Hybrid Forums on FY23 Operating Budget
    - Wednesday, Oct. 13, 7-8:30 p.m. White Oak Community Recreation Center, 1700 April Lane, Silver Spring. To join this forum virtually, go to [Budget Forum – East County 10/13 7-8:30 PM Viewer Link](#).
    - Monday, Oct. 18, 7-8:30 p.m. BlackRock Center for the Arts, 12901 Town Commons Drive, Germantown. To join this forum virtually, go to [Budget Forum – Up County 10/18 7-8:30 PM Viewer Link](#).
    - Tuesday, Oct. 19. 7-8:30 p.m. Mid-County Regional Services Center, 2424 Reddie Drive, Park and Planning Board Room, Wheaton. To join this forum virtually, go to [Budget Forum – Mid-County 10/19 7-8:30 PM Viewer Link](#).
  - Citizens for Maryland Libraries, 2021 Annual Conference for Friends, Trustees and Library Supporters, October 16, 10 AM – 12:30 PM.
  - Reopening of Germantown Library – Ribbon Cutting, October 16, 10 AM.
- Questions/Comments
  - How to report an issue with the new catalog?
    - Use the Contact Us link on the website.
  - What is happening with Bookmyne?
    - Bookmyne was an app from our former ILS provider.
    - There is an Aspen app that can be downloaded and used, called "Aspen LiDA" in the Apple store and Google Play store.

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

- We need more members for the Library Board. The application process is closing on October 25.
- Encouraged the Board to try out the audiobooks on Hoopla. Everything in Hoopla is immediately available. The integration of all our resources in Aspen is great.

#### **WORKGROUP REPORTS:**

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Duval, Briskin-Limehouse, Manubay)
  - Met at the end of last month.
  - Began updating the LAC Handbook and Board Manual.
  - Discussed the issues LACs have obtaining new members.
  - Other areas for discussion include the digital divide and lessons learned from COVID.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Rippeon)
  - No report

- LAC and Board Activities (Roberts)
  - Anyone who is not on a workgroup is encouraged to join the LAC and Board Activities workgroup.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- LAC assignments
- Joint Meeting – Virtually, November 17, 6:30 PM

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Correctional Facility - Being reconstituted.
- Aspen Hill Garden
  - Correspondence from a community member was received pertaining to the garden at the Aspen Hill Library in which it was suggested that the plants in the garden are attracting stinging insects and some of the plants may actually be weeds.
  - The garden, maintained by the Aspen Hill Garden Club, has won many awards over the years.
  - Tim Lighter, Board liaison to the Aspen Hill LAC, will address this at the next LAC meeting in hopes they can formulate a response to the customer.
  - If there are wasps nests, MCPL can have them removed.
  - It was proposed that hosting a garden tour to which the community is invited would a great event to talk about the different plants and how they are beneficial to the area.

#### **LIAISON REPORTS:**

- Accessibility – Has not had a meeting in a few months.
- Aspen Hill – A cut-out on the curb that was paved over was discussed.  
 Director Vassallo: The County has an office for ADA that stated the curb cutout is where it should be. Will go back and say this is still an issue and on the mind of the LAC. Will also check to see if there is a final decision. The following is from an email message from Director Vassallo to Althea Grey-McKenzie: *I think the ADA site improvements also created a much more convenient way of accessing the library main entrance from non-ADA parking spaces without the need to negotiate any curbs and/or steps (stairs). Nevertheless, I will be happy to meet with library patrons and explain the reason for altering a non-ADA compliant portion of the existing sidewalk where the subject curb cut was located and providing for alternate no-curb, no steps routes from non-ADA designated parking spaces to the library main entrance.*
- Olney – No report. Meeting date was pushed back to October 26.
- Connie Morella – Missed the meeting due to illness.
- Damascus – Met September 15. It was a really good meeting. Complimentary of programming and all that was offered during the pandemic. Will meet again in November.
- Davis – Next meeting in October 26. Want to offer the hybrid option for LAC meetings.
  - New equipment, try with programming first. Still a little iffy but will continue to work on it.
- Germantown – Has not had a meeting since the pandemic. Got an email from the LAC chair. Will begin talking to people at reopening about joining.
- Kensington Park – Has been in touch with the branch manager. The group has not met since pandemic. On branch manager's to do list.
- Little Falls – Met on October 7. Met interim branch manager, Eric Carzon. One LAC member is stepping down. A new person has applied. Robust discussions about FOL chapter

changes. Ari Brooks, FOLMC executive director, attended the meeting as a participant and will follow up.

- Wheaton – Next meeting is on October 18. Has been in touch with branch manager.
- Marilyn Praisner – Seems to be going strong with new LAC. They are meeting regularly, and members are showing up. The branch manager is currently overseeing two branches.
- Silver Spring – Has new members. Transitioned on to a new chair. Would like to see fine free and auto renewals publicized more. Will get the group’s ideas as to where to publicize.
- Rockville Memorial – Met earlier this month. Good discussion around the Aspen transition and what to expect. Also, had a good discussion about Brainfuse, and it being available to residents.
- Twinbrook – Has been dormant since the pandemic.
- Montgomery College – The report back to work date was moved to November 8 because the college is mandating that all staff and students be vaccinated. Those who are unable to get vaccinated or have exemptions must provide documentation and then will be working adjusted schedules. Currently, enrollment is down by 15%. By having 70% of the spring classes available in person, they are hoping enrollment will pick up. Currently, 70% of the classes are virtual, so there is not a lot of foot traffic on campus. In the process of searches for library positions and filling positions. In November, the second phase of library renovations with the architect will begin. The strategic plan for the Library is complete as well as the FY22 priorities; both will be uploaded to the website. Since the hiring freeze has lifted, the focus this year is on recruitment. Work on the migration to the ILS, which is scheduled for rollout in July 22. The College presidential search is underway.
- MCPS – Schools are fully face to face every day. There are some virtual instruction, which is conducted regionally. Continuing with one to one devices; trying to work through issues. Interim superintendent is clicking right along; has cabinet in place. Working with Cassandra Malik on updating contact list.
  - Question: Are there any outdoor programs at MCPS?
  - Response: There are outdoor programs as space permits. There is not a large quantity of outdoor seating. Most of the programs are tied to resources – paper and electronic. School libraries are dominating in instruction. Schools are trying to keep outdoor spaces for eating.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.