



Montgomery County Library Board

February 9, 2022

ATTENDEES: Ahmed Wilder, Briskin-Limehouse, Christman, Duval, Levine, Lighter, Manubay, Pant, Roberts, Spencer, Fiery, Miller, Montgomery, Schiff

STAFF: Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Althea Grey-McKenzie, Chair, Aspen Hill LAC

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

INTRODUCTIONS:

- New Board members were introduced.
- Roll call of Board members; guests were introduced.

MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:

- The minutes from the December 8, 2021, meeting were approved.
- The following LAC applications were approved:
 - Connie Morella – Deane, Repetti
 - Potomac – Libes
 - Silver Spring – Brantley
 - Wheaton – Gustasp
 - White Oak – Bloom, Melle
- The LAC application for Twinbrook was tabled.

PRESENTATION: 2022-2025 Strategic Plan - Kate Frades, Office of Innovation

- A strategic plan will help MCPL meet the future with clarity about its purpose and goals, and serve as a roadmap to achieve them.
- There are a few drivers of the strategic plan. One of them is the previous strategic plan for the library has expired. The other is that there is a facilities plan that Libraries needs to submit to the State in May and that needs to go hand in hand with the strategic plan.
- It is a four-month process which is quick, as far as developing a strategic plan goes.
- The project goes through the end of April. Current stage is identifying and engaging diverse groups of stakeholders and identifying what the core principles are that should drive the library. Then come back to the Library's mission, vision and organizational values and see if those still hold up or if there is a need to adjust them given where we are today and where we imagine the world will be in three years from now.
- What's the Library's role? What's the impact that it wants to have in the community? What are the key activities that it needs to pursue in order to meet those goals?
- From there we will identify what the capacity challenges are. We know there are many, especially relating to staffing, and then understand what needs to change about the library,

either internally as an organization or externally – how it engages with the community, with the broader organization of Montgomery County government.

- Question: Why the three-year range?
Answer: A couple of things driving the decision to have this be a shorter time than most strategic plans is if libraries had designed a five-year plan two years ago it would already be out of date – the world has changed so much as well as libraries. The further out you plan the more dated the plan becomes. It needs to be used as a roadmap with specific and measurable goals. At the end of the three years, it can be adapted – a living document.
- Questions that will guide the research include:
 - What is MCPL’s “superpower”? What makes it great?
 - What does MCPL want to be and what impact does it wish to have?
 - What are the key goals and priorities for MCPL for the next three years?
 - How does MCPL need to evolve, both internally and externally, for the organization to be able to grow into its goals?
 - Where is it starting? What is the finish line?
 - What is MCPL’s current capacity to deliver high quality services to customers? What capacity will be needed to grow its impact?
 - What will MCPL do in the coming three years to enact its priorities?
- We have collected feedback from MCPL staff via postcards and online. Collecting feedback from customers via vision boards and community conversation focus groups.
 - Each branch was asked to put up a bulletin board that had two prompts – what does the library mean to you now and what do you want the library to be in 2025.
 - The focus groups are virtual so community members can join from anywhere.
 - Figure out who is using the library and who is not. Why people are not using libraries.
 - Want to ensure the responses mirror the demographics of our community groups.
- Board members should send feedback on how the strategic plan might serve as a model/framework. There is a link in the chat for Board members to access and share their thoughts if they have not yet done so.
- Please share the upcoming community conversations with others.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

- **Personnel** - The following staff changes took place during the months of December 2021 and January 2022:
 - New hire:
 - Michael Joseph, Librarian I (FT), Potomac
 - Promotion:
 - Thomas Palmer, Library Associate (Silver Spring) to Librarian I (Rockville Memorial)
 - Transfers:
 - Joanne Howard, Library Desk Assistant, Gaithersburg to Quince Orchard
 - Yuliya Doychinova, Library Assistant I, Quince Orchard (PT) to Rockville Memorial (FT)
 - Separated from County Service
 - Fereshteh Lankerani, Library Assistant I, Connie Morella
 - Laura Sarantis, Library Associate II, Kensington Park
 - Joan Schofer, Library Assistant I, Collection Management
 - Ruth Hallet, Administrative Specialist I, Collection Management,
 - James Stewart, Manager III, Quince Orchard
 - Chang-Yu Hsiao, Librarian II, Rockville Memorial

- **Hiring**
 - We are in recruitment for Librarian II, Adult Services and Children’s Services- recruitment closes on February 3.
 - Senior Librarian/assistant branch manager - Two candidates declined. Pool is large enough to allow replacement offers. Checking references on new selection; one additional candidate to interview.
 - Librarian I part time - References are being checked on the first group of candidates. We will get the second list around February 1 and the panel will reconvene the next week. This is open until filled, so we can get additional lists if needed.
 - Library Assistant I - part time- Interviews are being scheduled beginning February 3. There is a robust pool, and we think we will be able to fill all vacancies from this recruitment.
 - Librarian I – full time-Children’s
 - Newly promoted LI FT Children’s starts at Rockville Memorial on January 31.
 - Newly promoted LI FT Children’s starts at Silver Spring on February 13.
 - The Office of Human Resources is working on clearances for two more full-time librarians at Gaithersburg and Twinbrook. These are outside candidates, who we expect to start in February.
- **Refresh/Construction Updates:**
 - Maggie Nightingale - Construction continues with an anticipated date of substantial completion in March 2022.
 - Damascus - Damascus Library and Senior Center Facility Assessment IT Infrastructure Needs kick-off meeting was held on January 26.
 - Chevy Chase - The results on the library renovation survey for Chevy Chase have been posted on the Department of General Services’ site.
 - Potomac - The design of the Potomac Library is wrapping up. The Potomac FOL did not agree to fund the family restroom.
 - Clarksburg - DBDC submitted a Program of Requirements for new the Clarksburg library for MCPL to review.
- **Rapid COVID-19 home test kit and N95 masks distributions**
 - Test kit press release: [Montgomery County Maryland \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](https://montgomerycountymd.gov)
 - N95 press release: [Montgomery County Maryland \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](https://montgomerycountymd.gov)
 - [COVID-19 test distribution is example of government operating as it should \(bethesdamagazine.com\)](https://bethesdamagazine.com)
- **Library Lovers Month (LLM)** kicked off on February 5 with a special ocean-themed virtual STEM program for elementary school-aged children, which was presented by Maynard Okereke, the Hip Hop M.D. A proclamation in recognition of LLM is scheduled to be presented by County Council on February 15.
- **Statewide Oral History Initiative, ‘Living and Dying with COVID-19: The Maryland Stories’**

Residents are invited to tell and record their stories about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their lives. The recordings will become part of the Enoch Pratt Free Library’s Digital Maryland and Maryland State Archives collections. The collection of recordings will be available to the public. Feature stories will also be distributed with the assistance of National Public Radio flagship station, WYPR. Residents can make appointments to record their stories at the [Aspen Hill Library](#) (4407 Aspen Hill Rd., Rockville) and the [Davis Library](#) (6400 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda) from February to November 2022. Days and times for recording are: Davis Library: Tuesdays, noon to 2 p.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m.; Aspen Hill Library: Wednesdays, from 11 a.m. to noon and from 6 to 7 p.m.

- **MoComCon 2022** was a success in that customers enjoyed the programs and gave us wonderful feedback in the chat feature of Zoom and via email. Due to the short notice of being fully virtual, we had to cancel half of our programs and our attendance was down. Our total attendance was 323 customers. The test kit distribution, understandably, took precedent in our social media and website that week bumping MoComCon down "below the fold" of the homepage. Staff was flexible and worked quickly to make sure the programs went off without a hitch. The Digital Strategies team made sure the website changed quickly. Supplies will be held until next year where some canceled programming can be presented. We are hoping for an in person event for 2023.
- **MCPL Strategic Plan**
 - A focus group specifically for LAC chairs was held on Tuesday, February 8.
 - Virtual community conversations schedule:
 - Saturday, Feb.12 (10-11 a.m.): <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6131879>
 - Tuesday, Feb. 15 (12-1 p.m.): <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6131880>
 - Wednesday, Feb. 16 (7:30-8:30 p.m.): <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6131881>
 - Thursday, Feb. 17 (7:30-8:30 p.m.): <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6131882>
 - Saturday, Feb. 19 (10-11 a.m.): <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6131883>
- The Montgomery County Lynching Memorial Project (MoCoLMP) “It Happened in Rockville: Remembering Two Lynching” exhibit is on display at the Rockville Memorial Library. The exhibit will run from Feb. 1 – Feb. 28 during library hours. This is the first time the exhibit has been openly available to the public. Its initial viewing was at the Red Brick Courthouse by appointment only.
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - Maryland Library Legislative Week -February 14 – 20, 2022
 - Black History Month programs
 - Contemporary Conversation with Elizabeth Kolbert - Our Impact On Climate Change

CHAIR’ S REPORT:

- Open to hybrid meetings – in-person or virtual – May/June
 - In-person meetings are held at the Central Office (Rockville Memorial Library)
 - Any in-person meetings – masks and social distance
 - Key to explore our options in offering hybrid meetings
 - Members voted on their preference via chat.

	Virtual Only	Hybrid Virtual/In-person	Notes
Ahmed Wilder		X	use the conference line to participate in the in-person meetings
Briskin-Limehouse		X	Okay with in-person with call in options
Christman, Andrea		X	In favor of summer meeting in-person
Duval, Bill		X	Good with in-person especially with call in option
Fiery, Holly		X	
Levine, Janice		X	Good with May and June in-person
Lighter, Timothy		X	With call in option for in-person
Manubay, Grace		X	Okay with in person – would like to call in
Miller, Kathryn		X	Good with May and June in-person with call in option
Montgomery, Jim		X	In favor of as many in-person meetings as feasible
Pant, Vikram	X	X	Either
Roberts, Sonja			
Schiff, Marilyn		X	
Spencer, Suzette			

- LAC Liaisons

NAME	LIAISON ASSIGNMENT
Ahmed Wilder, Sana	Gaithersburg
Briskin-Limehouse, Laura	Marilyn Praisner Silver Spring
Christman, Andrea	Montgomery County Public Schools
Duval, Bill	Rockville Memorial Twinbrook
Fiery, Holly	Maggie Nightingale Damascus
Levine, Janice	Quince Orchard
Lighter, Timothy	Accessibility Advisory Olney
Manubay, Grace	Kensington Park Little Falls Wheaton
Miller, Kathryn	Long Branch
Montgomery, Jim	Davis Potomac
Pant, Vikram	White Oak Aspen Hill
Roberts, Sonja	Germantown Noyes
Schiff, Marilyn	Chevy Chase Connie Morella
Spencer, Suzette	Montgomery College

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Duval, Briskin-Limehouse, Manubay, Fiery)
 - Starting to meet regularly.
 - The Library Board Manual was addressed at the last meeting. There are some updates that can be done. Each member of the group is working on a different part. May have something to present at the next meeting.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Montgomery, Schiff)
 - The County Executive is considering what he will propose to Council on March 15 regarding the budget. When that proposal occurs, we will want to organize advocacy work with the County Council. We will be calling on people to send letters and emails.
- LAC and Board Activities (Roberts, Levine)
 - No report

OLD BUSINESS:

- None

NEW BUSINESS:

- Orientation for new Board members – Chair Roberts will send out an email regarding dates.

IAISON REPORTS:

- Silver Spring - Continues to meet regularly. Drafting a letter in support of a refresh for the library.
- Marilyn Praisner – Meets every other month.
- Connie Morella – Two individuals submitted LAC applications.
- Quince Orchard – Branch manager retired; acting branch manager is not involved with the LAC.
- Olney – Has not met in a couple of months. They are publicizing the strategic plan community focus groups.
- Aspen Hill – The LAC chair is attendance at tonight’s Board meeting. Mark Santoro demoed the new catalog system. The group was blindsided by the new rule for Zoom meetings. They’ve been busy with the test kit and mask distributions. Those who cannot make it in, staff has been taking it to their cars.
- Accessibility – Meets very three months. FOLMC newsletters are not accessible. Communicated with FOLMC Executive Director Ari Brooks, and will meet to discuss this.
- Wheaton – Meets every Monday. Last meeting was held in late January. They are concerned about resuming Sunday service because of the staffing shortage. Curious as to why there is a shortage – COVID-related, retirement, new jobs elsewhere? They are interested in knowing if this type of data is available. The chair is sharing information about the strategic plan surveys and meetings.
- Little Falls – Met on February 1. Discussed beautification of the property. There was a fence erected around a sinkhole for safety, but the fence is unattractive. They are also thinking about ways to the expand the programming for children outside; there is a lot of space, but not a lot appropriate for programming. They are also frustrated with having to register for a Zoom account in order to participate in library programming – it caught some off guard and some felt it was an access issue. Want to do more outreach in the community. Have a neighborhood newsletter.
- Kensington Park – Not active right now. Reached out to the branch manager; things at the library are doing fine right now.
- White Oak – Meet on January 4. Expressed concern that it took a day or two to get everything salted and plowed after the snow. Secretary role will be voted on in March. Gave a shoutout for those working on the monthly newsletter.
- Twinbrook – LAC is still defunct. That there is an LAC application is a good sign.
- Rockville Memorial – Concern about Sunday hours. A lot of technical issues about signing on. Doing well. Excited about how many people virtual programming is reaching, especially the English Conversation Club.
- Montgomery County Public Schools – Not a lot happening. The Board of Education has appointed interim superintendent Dr. Monifa McKnight as the permanent superintendent. She will take the position on July 1 for three years. This is the first female superintendent for MCPS.
- Montgomery College – Just completed the three-year strategic plan; it is on the website. Developed a mission for the library. Will be focusing on developing library values and operating principles. As a part of returning to campus, operating with a hybrid model in terms of providing services. On the way to being fully staffed; there are two remaining vacancies that we hope to have filled by March. Two large projects this semester: upgrading to a new library services platform that will go live in July. Still meeting with planners and architects to begin the phases of our library renovations – Takoma Park, Silver Spring, Rockville and Germantown campus libraries. Germantown will be a new building. Recently appointed a new college president, Dr. Jermaine Williams, who will officially begin on February 28.

- Damascus – Met last evening and talked about Sunday hours. Excited about Library Lovers month. Very happy to have the masks and kits distribution at the branch, it has been well organized.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Began as the Aspen Hill LAC chair in October last year. Happy to have Tim as the liaison; thanks to him for his service. As of today, it is Vikram Pant. Thank you to the Library Board for all it is doing. Was the vice chair of the Library Board at one time. The rollout for the strategic plan was a little too quick for the LACs. It would be beneficial to have a meeting with the LAC chairs to get to know each other and discuss how they can work together. Share information regarding how LAC chairs can have designated email addresses to communicate with the public. Some members cannot get into the library, cannot get online because they have no access to computers - provide stamps to branches. When beginning in person meetings, if there is not enough staff, provide information on how to run the meeting. [Althea Grey-McKenzie, Aspen Hill LAC Chair]

ADJOURNMENT:

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