



Montgomery County Library Board

March 8, 2023

ATTENDEES: Christman, Fiery, Levine, Lighter, Manubay, Montgomery, Schiff, Spencer

STAFF: Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary; Adrienne Miles Holderbaum, Regional Manager, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Kate Sweeney, Regional Manager, Montgomery County Public Libraries

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lighter at 7:02 PM

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Roll call of Board members and introduction of guests.

MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:

- The minutes from the February 8, 2023, meeting were approved.
- The following LAC and Accessibility Advisory applications were approved:
 - Accessibility Advisory - Hovendick
 - Aspen Hill – Reading
 - Kensington Park – Roach
 - Long Branch – Al Salmi
 - Little Falls – Mandelbaum, Ostrove, Zento
 - Wheaton – Friedman, Musonda

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- **Personnel:** The following staff changes took place during the month of February:
 - New Hires:
 - Wai Man “ Isaac” Chan, IT Technician III, Central
 - Rayeesi Mahmood, Assistant Branch Supervisor, Twinbrook
 - Transfers:
 - Hsing-Jung Lin, Library Assistant I, Little Falls to Quince Orchard
 - Mai-Trang Khuu, Library Assistant I, Damascus to Library Tech, Collection Management
 - Cindy Gil, Librarian II, Marilyn Praisner to White Oak
 - Erin Fishman, Librarian II, Long Branch to Potomac
 - Sumi Lee, Library Assistant I, Gaithersburg to Quince Orchard
 - Nasrin Ghaemi, Library Desk Assistant, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee to Potomac
 - Separated from County Service:
 - Sherley Lee, Library Assistant I, Gaithersburg

- Robert Thompson, Librarian I, Wheaton
 - Thanh-Yen Dang, Library Assistant I, Rockville Memorial
 - Other Changes:
 - Carleton Salley, Librarian I P/T to Librarian I F/T, Quince Orchard
- **Renovation/Construction Updates**
 - Damascus – Waiting for purchase order to issue Notice to Proceed to Sheladia Associates to begin the design.
 - Brigadier General Charles E. McGee – NOA reviewing the facility assessment task order for signature.
 - Potomac – [Reopening ceremony](#) scheduled for April 15, 2023, 10 AM.
 - Noyes – No closing date yet.
- The **Contemporary Conversations with Sheree Renée Thomas** was a great success. This was MCPL’s first in-person Contemporary Conversation after three years. This is also the first program combining in person and livestreaming attendance. Total in in-person attendees was 60 not including 15 staff (MCPL, FOLMC and LCMC). The link for livestreaming was requested and sent to 249 people. Prior to the event, Ms. Thomas visited Northwood High School in Silver Spring and talked to a packed audience of students and teachers about the writing process.
- Regional Manager Dianne Whitaker was featured as a **local hero** in Congressman Jamie Raskin’s [weekly video series](#) which recognizes Marylanders in the 8th District who are acting creatively and bravely to make our community extraordinary.
- MCPL began participating in “[Hatchlings: Ready to Hatch](#),” a Maryland State Library-sponsored program developed by Betsy Diamant-Cohen, the creator of *Mother Goose on the Loose*. The Hatchlings program helps expectant and new parents build the skills to be their child’s first teachers.
- MCPL partnered with the Jewish Council for the Aging Heyman Interages Center (JCA) to celebrate “Read Across America Week” by providing a reading program at Gaithersburg and Wheaton libraries on March 4 and March 5. County Executive Elrich participated in the reading event at Wheaton.
- Maryland Legislative Day – Met with a number of senators, delegates and/or team members. Met with Senator King and Kagan. It was a very nice day.
- Almost at the end of the budget season. Meeting at the end of March with the Education & Culture Committee.
- Six sets of the Welcoming Library were generously funded by FOLMC. These are sets of picture books specifically about immigrant communities – life now and life before. They come with questions, create connections within the entire community. They come with their own set of shelving. They will be rotated within their region. These materials do not circulate. Supports programming. Very good to use in Conversation Clubs. They are recent books, but not written expressly for this purpose. There is one set on the 3rd floor – Central Offices – if anyone wants to review them.

CHAIR’ S REPORT:

- Interviews for Library Board vacancies are scheduled for next week.

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Manubay, Fiery)
 - Finished the Library Manual – received good feedback regarding formatting.
 - If you have not engaged your LACs in the review of the library policies, please do so. Some LAC members may want to provide written feedback.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Montgomery, Schiff)
 - March 15 – County Executive’s budget announcement
 - Chairs of the Library Board and FOLMC Board of Directors normally testify during public sessions.
 - On February 23 attended a brainstorming session of the Children’s Opportunity Alliance (COA).
 - What libraries do that overlaps with their initiatives.
 - Now on the COA’s mailing list.
- LAC and Board Activities (Levine)
 - Joint Meeting will be in October this year instead of November.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Montgomery County Public Schools – Thrilled that Assistant Director Flores contacted the schools to participate with the Contemporary Conversation series. It was great at Northwood. The author, Sheree Renée Thomas, wanted to have lunch with the teachers. School Library Month is celebrated during the month of April. This year the County Executive will declare April School Library Month – there are no details yet. There will be certificates for principals to recognize school media staff. MCPS is moving into a State assessment time period. Another elementary school is opening in Clarksburg – Clarksburg Elementary #9.
- Damascus – Met on February 21. A lot of active programming. There is great interest in Teen programming.
- Quince Orchard – Meets next week.
- Noyes – Meets on March 9.
- Germantown – There was a parking issue; there are signs being printed, “Library Parking Only.” This Saturday begins the return of the FOLMC book sale. The new travel books have been very popular. The LAC is working on a new bookmark for recruitment. An LAC member will be manning the LAC recruitment display on Saturday mornings. They are interested in having Felicity Brown or someone from Collections come to discuss the selection policy and process. Adrienne Miles Holderbaum can invite Felicity Brown to attend a GT LAC meeting.
- Rockville Memorial – Discussed the frustration of trying to get digital assets to work. Suggestion to get teenagers to stay up to date and work with older adults to assist with digital assets. This would fit with the Strategic Plan in engaging teens. Two members of the former RV FOL chapter reached out the RV LAC to get ideas about how the money turned over to the Central Offices could be spent usefully for the branch. Regional Manager Patrick Fromm asked LAC members to send any suggestions to him.
- Potomac – Spent a lot of time discussing what to expect on April 15 for the reopening. Don Libes, one of the members of PT LAC, has put together two listservs – one for announcements from the branch and another a discussion group for library patrons. Gael Cheek, LAC member and former FOL chapter member, discussed how the money turned over could be used for things that may have been missed during the refresh; the Regional Manager asked for those who had ideas to submit them to him.

- *From Director Vassallo: Potomac FOL chapter gave \$15K for Chinese and Spanish world language collections; \$15K for the digital collections; and \$15K specifically to be used for Potomac Library.*
- Connie Morella – Meets next week. Had a discussion with the LAC chair who is still concerned about the generation of programs, particularly children’s programs.
- Little Falls – Has not met since February. Received the map of the property line, which shows the area under consideration is library property. Will loop in the Assistant Director for Facilities. They have questions about how many quotes may be needed (that is up to FOLMC who is funding this project). Two members of the LF garden club have joined the LAC.
- Wheaton – Met the end of February. Discussed outstanding work orders, which have been brought up a number of times. The LAC requested no parking along Hermitage – too many people double parking – Regional Manager Dianne Whitaker is working to have “no parking” signs installed. They were also complimentary on the lynching exhibit that was at the branch. Found it very informative, very thought provoking. One of the LAC members was curious about having a book donation or a book drive for the incarcerated. *From Director Vassallo: The correctional facility in Clarksburg has a library. Collection Management has a budget for materials for that library.*
- Kensington Park – Makes sure they have their three members; one application approved during this meeting. They like to meet in person, and decided on the first Wednesday of each month. Regional Manager Dianne Whitaker went through programs. Began a conversation about what they would like to see at their branch, and also what they should do as LAC members.
- Davis – Happy to have a teen program twice a week from 4-6 PM; it is very popular. Had questions about how the regional libraries were chosen? *From Director Vassallo: Based on the former designation. Larger libraries were designated as the home bases for the Regional Managers.* Davis LAC members are concerned that the Regional Manager does not have a designated office at that branch. They also asked why they were not given a chance to comment on the LAC Handbook. *From Chair Lighter: This was this Board’s first time reviewing and editing the Handbook. LACs will be asked to contribute next year.*
- Montgomery College - The College had a project update for our Leggett building which is near the Takoma Park campus and then also the library which is in the process of going through internal demolition, so they have already put up the fence. Finally obtained the permit and so now they're starting to do minor internal demolition. They will do abatement for asbestos on the inside of the building and then on the exterior. The exterior abatement will be done sometime over the summer. The library sits in the community; they want to make sure that they notify residents that this will be taking place.
- Gaithersburg – Met in person last month. Talked about facilities and the elevator and bringing new people onto the LAC. Presented the Strategic Plan and went over the policies project. Meets again on May 4.
- Olney – Did not meet last month. Meets next on March 21.
- Accessibility Advisory – Meets once a quarter, next meeting is next week. Assistant Director Flores will attend. The AAC might present to the Board in April.
- White Oak – Met last on March 7. Next meeting is May 5. Shared the ask for a review of the policies and the March 28 deadline for feedback. Learned that the weekly storytime in-person events are well attended; the last one on Tuesday had 25 adults and 25/30 children. A recent program on how to get a county government job was also well attended with approximately 20 people. Overall, program attendance is strong. It will be one of three branches participating in the Hatchlings program. Asked Regional Manager Carzon about

Dewey Decimal poster like other branches have displayed. Longer discussion on the landscaping efforts for the front of the library. The LAC Chair mentioned that when people renew their membership it seems we don't add-on to the existing term but set the renewal date as that month. Could there be an option for renewals to extend the original term range instead of resetting from that date?

- Aspen Hill – Met on February 27; next meeting is March 27. Could not attend, but had a call with the LAC chair to discuss programming. Gave the LAC the task of reviewing MCPL Policies and Procedures with a due date in mid-March. Any feedback from the LAC will be forwarded to the Board.
- Brigadier General Charles E. McGee – Last met on February 21; next meeting on March 20. Continued discussion on security. It sounds as if the same individuals are causing challenges/disruptive behavior. Left guidance to LAC about the review of policies. Discussion about the Wayne Ave. bridge. LAC would like to bring back the discussions with the County on a bridge. The LAC is drafting a letter to the Director to discuss what they'd like to see in a refresh. Some of the focus areas are reliable elevators and escalators, signage, deep cleaning/painting, cafe, parking, and children's area.
- Long Branch – Last meeting was February 16; meets again on March 16. Shared news that Senator Smith (District 20) will be collaborating with Delagate Charkoudian on the bond bill. Discussed the boulders, and LAC members were more concerned about the lack of communication about them. Upcoming programming includes an African drumming show on the plaza. LAC members were asking if there were documented programming guidelines. For gardening, UMD is reaching out about invasive species and having programs for gardening. For a future Board meeting: Some talk about data science/analytics came about when we talked circulation numbers. MCPL recently hired a Performance Management & Data Analyst. Once settled, it would be good to know what the vision is but also, can we slice numbers other ways than just circulation?
- Marilyn Praisner – Last met on February 2; next meeting TBD. Only one LAC member dialed in. Going to try to reschedule a meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- None

NEW BUSINESS:

- Davis LAC member is interested in the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Chair Lighter will send meeting schedule and information to Marilyn Schiff.
- There is no issue with the Library being fine free. However, the Lucky Day books can be checked out for three weeks, and then there is a six-week grace period before the customer is asked to return the book or pay for a replacement. This is causing a delay in materials getting to other customers. Is there a way to get the customer to return the materials earlier? Some incentive? Director Vassallo asked that Vice Chair Manubay send this to her via email.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

ADJOURNMENT:

- The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.