



Montgomery County Library Board

April 10, 2024

ATTENDEES: Brier, Ezeadam, Levine, Lighter, Manubay, Montgomery, Schiff, Spencer, Van Puymbroeck, Will

STAFF: Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Eric Carzon, Regional Manager; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

GUEST(S): Tahlia Williams, Rockville LAC Chair; Cristina Farfan, Library Associate, Damascus Library

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

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Roll call of Board members
- Welcoming of guests

MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:

- The minutes from the March 13, 2024, meeting were approved. [Motion to approve made by Candice Will seconded by Marilyn Schiff. [Unanimous vote to approve.]
- The following LAC applications were approved. [Motion to approve made by Candice Will seconded by Grace Manubay. [Unanimous vote to approve.]
 - Connie Morella – Bausenbach
 - Marilyn Praisner - Guha

PRESENTATION: Eric Carzon, Regional Manager

- What is a Regional Manager?
 - The system has 6 regions (Gaithersburg, Bethesda, Silver Spring, Wheaton, Germantown, and Rockville)
 - Regional Managers are a part of administration and they manage 3 – 4 branches each, coordinating systemwide efforts with their individual branches
 - Regional Managers work closely with each other, administration, and branches to communicate, deliberate, and implement the many aspects of branch operations, policy, programming, facility management, and collection with Assistant Directors and other senior managers
- A Day in the Life of a Regional Manager
 - Leadership – working on the system or their region’s strategic development (LACs, committees, work groups, decision memos, policy discussions, meetings, business processes)

- Management and Supervision – Directing the work of supervisors, managing personnel situations, meeting with branch staffs
- Public Service – Filling in for key roles for vacant or absent supervisors, responding to public inquiries, participating in a program, outreach, ensuring branches stay open through callouts or other issues
- Special Projects – Implementing initiatives, creating or updating policy
- Some Specific Examples of our Work
 - Recommending an allocation per branch for Friends of the Library Montgomery County programming funds, creating a monitoring/reporting infrastructure, making follow-up recommendations
 - Revamping the Operations section of MCPL Policies and Procedures
 - Assessing the feasibility of scheduling software products
 - Collaborating with the Central Programming Team on systemwide program planning
 - Coordinating the tempo and content of system leadership meetings
 - “Sculpting” branch complements to better meet needs, improve recruitment outcomes
 - Updating Inclement Weather Procedures
- How RMs work together
 - Have built a pretty strong Esprit de Corps
 - Meet weekly • Consult and collaborate daily
 - Take on portfolio items by consensus
 - Assist each other regularly
 - Usually pick a point person to coordinate a response to any given question, issue, project
 - Do some longer format meetings monthly
 - Share documents
- Challenges
 - Balancing many needs, with the available resources in the moment
 - Unexpected developments
 - Complexities of a large organization
 - Turnover, Recruitment
- The Gaithersburg Region – Gaithersburg, Quince Orchard, Olney, Potomac
 - Trends
 - Almost fully staffed (1 vacancy, offer pending, for whole region)
 - Strong Programmers – both quantity and quality
 - Strong experience in both Circulation and Information services
 - Diverse audiences served, differing needs
 - All branches either rebuilt or refreshed in recent years
 - In terms of traditional usage/activity measures:
 - Gaithersburg is in the “top six”
 - Quince Orchard, Olney, Potomac in the “middle ten” with high points in programming, visits, or checkouts

○ Numbers

Gaithersburg Region - Key Indicators (Raw, unprocessed data)				
FY24 to-date (Jul. '23 - Mar. '24)	GB	QO	OL	PT
Checkouts (not renewals)	254,948	164,377	145,707	126,804
Foot Traffic	467,504	573,878	207,753	242,699
Active Users	13,637	8,382	8,748	6,738
Number of Programs	788	362	556	411
Attendance	19,644	6,499	11,146	9,827

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- Update on new hires, transfers, separation from County services.
- Update on search for library director.
 - Advertisement for job was released Monday. It is on the County and Bradbury Miller websites for six weeks. Top 6-8 candidates will be interviewed virtually.
- Construction/Renovation Updates:
 - FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program for Library Refurbishment was prepared in accordance with discussions between lead staff for MCPL and the Department of General Services Division of Building Design and Construction (DBDC) regarding the schedule. It was approved by the Division and awaits review and approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
 - Damascus Library – The design development submission was made on March 11 and is under review.
 - Brigadier General Charles E. McGee Library – DBDC requested OMB to sign the Program of Requirements on March 25. DBDC is waiting on task order proposal from Little Architectural Consultants.
 - Proposed Clarksburg Library - Library presentation held on March 21 at Rocky Hill Middle School.
 - The next library to be refurbished will be in accordance with the FY25-30 CIP Library Refurbishment approved by OMB.
- FY25 Recommended Operating Budget Update
 - The recommended FY25 operating budget for Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) is \$53.3 million with 384.61 FTEs.
 - The section of the operating budget for Public Libraries can be accessed at this link - <https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/BASISOPERATING/Common/Department.aspx?ID=71D>
- MCPL's 2024 Washington Wizard Winter Reading Challenge ran from January 3 to March 20. This year, MCPL registered 802 participants with only 281 logged that they fully completed the program.
- [Teen Mental Health Week](#) is a week dedicated to addressing the pressing mental health challenges facing teenagers in our community as they navigate the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Teen Mental Health Week kicked off on Saturday, April 6 at the Wheaton Community Recreation Center and Library with a performance from Grammy nominated performer Queen Sheba, author of *From Foster to Fame*. Teens enjoyed a workshop with the artist, followed by a Teen Poetry Open Mike session with poet Simply Sherri. There was also a mental health resource fair for parents and teens.
- HHS NDA Early Literacy Grant update.
- Contemporary Conversations @ MCPL- Libraries celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month with [a visit from Vietnamese-American children's author Bao Phi](#) scheduled for May 20, 6 PM at the Gaithersburg Library.
- Upcoming [Virtual Authors Talks](#).

CHAIR'S REPORT:

- Thanks to Jim Montgomery, Marilyn Schiff and Grace Manubay for their work and their testimonies.

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Manubay, Will)
 - Candice Will is the new chair for this workgroup.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Ezeadum, Montgomery, Schiff)
 - High marks to Grace Manubay on presentation and content of her testimony.
 - Brief overview of other testimonies.
 - Next steps, meet with members of the County Council.
- LAC and Board Activities (Levine, Will, Brier)
 - After a discussion regarding the LAC Awards, a motion was made to not reinstate the awards. The motion was moved, [Candice Will], seconded [Janice Levine] and passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

- None

OLD BUSINESS:

- None

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Rockville Memorial – Rockville Memorial - Met on April 2. Has a new teen librarian. The LAC would like to meet with the new MCPL Marketing Manager as soon as that person is hired.
- Little Falls – Met on April 2. Regional Manager Patrick Fromm highlighted vacancies.
- Maggie Nightingale – Met for the first time in a long time on April 8. Has a new branch supervisor. They will set up a regular meeting schedule.
- Montgomery College – The College opened the East County Education Center which is located seven minutes from White Oak Library and eleven minutes from Marilyn Praisner Library. A community grand opening is planned for April 20. There is a shared library learning center space which will be open to the community. Eventually textbooks will be offered as well as virtual assistance from a librarian, and public computers. There is not a collection yet; waiting for the fall semester when there is a better sense of foot traffic and the permanent programs out of the center. The library side will officially open on May 28. Takoma Park Library is about 85% complete. Will soon be starting the design planning for Rockville Library, which is the largest of the three campus libraries. The management team are about halfway through finalizing the strategic plan, which will be effective in the fall of this year. Themes of the plan include educating ourselves and others, information literacy, program expansion and instructional assessment, welcoming and belonging, exploring innovative technology practices and partnerships to meet future needs.
- Davis – Did not meet this month.
- Chevy Chase – Did not meet this month.
- Accessibility Advisory Committee – At least one member submitted written testimony. Conducting a site visit to Brigadier General on May 7 with Elizabeth Lang.
- Damascus – Met on April 9. Going to Frederick County to visit a library. Want to know more about the refresh.
- Olney – Had some facility concerns a few meetings ago. Some of the issues have been fixed.
- Potomac – Has not meet since the last Board meeting.
- Connie Morella – Met on April 9. Asked why they do not get as many programs as other branches.

- Quince Orchard – Meets on April 17.
- Germantown – Super successful MoComCon was held there. Had questions regarding: which branch has the largest, most active LAC; volunteers assisting with storytime; if there is reciprocity with Montgomery College; accessibility of popular books.
- Marilyn Praisner – Met on March 20. It was a hybrid meeting. There are three members now. Talked about recruiting new members, displays, programs and yoga classes once a month that do not conflict with the ones at the neighboring rec center.
- Long Branch – Met on March 14; it was a hybrid meeting. There is a new head of adult services and branch supervisor. Talked about the shade structure, staffing, and parking shortage for the staff due to construction.
- Brigadier General Charles E. McGee – First meeting with them on April 15.
- Wheaton – Discussed parking issue concerned when voting begins; would like staff parking at the fire station across the street. Meeting room doors fixed. Back to back storytimes conducted twice a week and story times in the evening. Discussing outdoor storytimes which can accommodate more children. Participated in Read Across America which County Executive Elrich attended. Interested in Read to a Dog program.
- Kensington Park - Talked about programming in April for Earth Day; having a painting program in the garden; and the good feedback on Irish programming.
Montgomery County Public Schools – Receiving boxes of school books that were mistakenly returned to MCPL. MCPS has launched a new site off the website, a YouTube channel, called MCPS en Español. There are two communication staff dedicated to the site who are very interested in connecting with MCPL. They were connected with MCPL’s Central Programming Team. Promoting MCPL’s Summer Reading Challenge with emphasis on reaching the Spanish language students. Queen Sheba came to Wheaton High School and conducted two assemblies during Teen Mental Health Week. Trying to find a high school for the May Contemporary Conversation author and poet to visit– looking at Watkins Mill. Promoted the eclipse programming that was held at the MCPL branches.
- Gaithersburg – Will finally have a meeting on April 23.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- It is really fun to listen into and get a feel for the Library Board. Happy to be here. Thank you. [Rockville Memorial LAC Chair Tahlia Williams]

ADJOURNMENT:

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.