



Montgomery County Library Board

November 13, 2024

ATTENDEES: Bouie, Brier, Johnson, Manubay, Mohan, Montgomery, Schiff, Solomon, Spencer, Will

STAFF: Darcell Graham, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Steve Warrick, Regional Manager; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Staff Liaison; Felicity Brown, Manager, Collection Management

GUESTS: Logan Anbinder, Legislative Analyst, Office of Montgomery County Council; Richard Bell-Irving, Co-Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee; Francie Gilman, Co-Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee; Nadia Abouraya, Accessibility Advisory Committee; Justin Carlson, Committee Evaluation Review Board; Frankie Santos Fritz, Legislative Senior Aide; Ari Brooks, Executive Director, Friends of the Library Montgomery County; Yesvy Gustasp, Chair, Wheaton Library Advisory Committee

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Manubay at 7:00 PM.

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Roll call of Board members
- Introduction of guests

MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:

- The minutes from the September 11, 2024, meeting were approved. [Motion to approve made, seconded, and unanimous vote to approve.]
- The following LAC applications was approved. [Motion to approve made, seconded, unanimous vote to approve.]
 - Brigadier General Charles E. McGee – Nyabingi
 - Davis – Sau
 - Germantown – Adams, Kreger
 - Kensington Park – Schroeder
 - Long Branch – Alvarez
 - Marilyn Praisner – Dahl
 - Noyes – Leahy
 - Olney – Milla
 - Potomac – Seitchek, Jennings
 - Rockville Memorial – Bachlott
 - Wheaton – Bender, McMillan

PRESENTATION: Steve Warrick, Regional Manager, Damascus, Gaithersburg, Germantown, Maggie Nightingale (Poolesville), and Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF)

- Germantown Library
 - Located in Germantown Town Center
 - Transit station in walking distance; MARC train in walking distance
 - BlackRock next door
 - UpCounty Regional Services Center in walking distance
 - Germantown Town Center Urban Park
 - 22 staff members (new staff member beginning on 11/18)
 - 29 public computers - computer lab that can be used for formal instruction
 - 7 computers for children
 - 3 AWE stations for children
 - 2 Discovery rooms
 - 5 Study Rooms
 - Beginner Computer classes
 - English, French and Spanish Conversation Clubs
 - African American Authors Book Discussion
 - Teen Time
 - Teen Advisory Board
 - Little Dragon Story Hour
 - Storytimes
 - Family Book Club
- Damascus Library
 - 16 staff members – two positions to fill
 - Senior Center is connected
 - Large Quiet Study Room
 - Two Meeting Rooms
 - Refresh Project 2025
 - Storytimes
 - Construction Crew
 - Bluegrass Jam
 - One on One Computer Help
 - Daytime and Evening Book Discussion Groups
 - Miniaturists Club
 - Movie Matinee – Teens and Tweens
- Maggie Nightingale
 - Located in Poolesville
 - Second smallest library in Montgomery County
 - Originally in Poolesville High School
 - Western County Library
 - 6 staff members (1 vacancy)
 - Play Date (children 0-5 and their caregivers)
 - Storytimes
 - Science Saturdays (monthly program funded by the FOLMC)
 - Homework Help
 - Maggie Nightingale Library Book Discussion Group
 - English and Spanish Conversation Clubs
 - Special Events/Programs

- Montgomery County Correctional Facility
 - In-person services began in May 2024
 - Rotation schedule is in place for incarcerated population
 - Legal resources in print
 - Librarian researches statutes and case laws by request
 - 659 legal and information requests in October
 - Approximately 15,000 books in the collection
 - 2 librarians on staff including the library supervisor
- Gaithersburg Library
 - Located in Montgomery Village
 - 21 staff members – 2 vacancies
 - 45 public computers
 - 2 public computers for children
 - 1 Discovery Room
 - 7 Study Rooms
 - Storytimes including one at Bohrer Park
 - My First Book Club and Magic Tree House Book Club
 - Clay Sculpting with ScribbleArtz
 - Anime Club for Teens
 - Teen DYI programs and Teen Advisory Board
 - Computers, Phones, and Internet Basics/Tech Reference Thursdays
 - Pro Bono Legal Clinic
 - English Conversation Club
 - Tai Chi and Yoga
- Regional Program Attendance: 7/1-10/31
 - Gaithersburg - 203 programs; 7,149 attendees
 - Germantown - 219 programs; 5,360 attendees
 - Damascus - 122 programs; 2,147 attendees
 - Maggie Nightingale - 52 programs; 1,073 attendees

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

- Director Darcell Graham officially introduced herself to the Library Board, giving a brief background of her 26 years with the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland State Library Resource Center in Baltimore and her credentials.
- Her first week as the director of MCPL was shared, as well as her plans for the next 90 days.

CHAIR’S REPORT:

- Kudos on the October 11 Joint Meeting. Thirty-three people registered; attendees were both virtual and in person. There was a lot of robust conversation.
- The Board submitted a letter on November 1 to County Executive Elrich regarding the world languages – Russian, Bengali, Farsi, Amharic. A request was also submitted for a meeting with him.
- Board members were asked to remember to submit their volunteer hours timesheets.
- The next meeting is December 11. The Joint Meeting II is January 15.

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Will, Clouse-Radigan)
 - No updates

- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Bouie, Montgomery, Schiff, Solomon)
 - County Executive’s Community Conversations (budget forums) are complete. The funding for public schools seems to dominate all other funding. The County budget may be affected by decisions made by the incoming federal administration regarding the federal workforce. A press briefing mentioned that it might be necessary to consider tax increases. A brief history of tax increase consideration in the past was given. Workplan includes a joint letter with FOLMC to the County Executive regarding funding libraries.
- LAC and Board Activities (Manubay, Brier, Mohan)
 - Draft workplan was sent to the full Board. The plan includes 1) support in recruiting and retention of LAC members; 2) expectations of LAC roles; 3) increase civic engagement of the LAC members. A tentative timeline has been created.

OLD BUSINESS:

- The data request has been streamlined to the 5 most circulated materials (print and electronic); the 5 most popular programs (in person and virtual) with attendance numbers; most popular times to visit the branches; the number of users by demographics. Request made for data by branch and system-wide.
 - A motion was made by Vice Chair Manubay to approve the request. The motion was approved, seconded and voted unanimously.
- Two of the three workgroups’ workplans have been submitted. The workplans can be reviewed and comments submitted to the entire Board via email.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Election of Officers – Chair and Vice
 - Call for nominations
 - Tim Lighter nominated for chair by Jim Montgomery and seconded by Marilyn Schiff.
 - Grace Manubay nominated for vice chair by Candice Will and seconded by Jim Montgomery.
 - The vote was unanimous, re-electing Tim Lighter as chair and Grace Manubay as vice chair.
 - The Board manual calls for elections to be held in July. Elections were held late this year, but will be back on schedule in 2025.
- There is a [New York Times article](#) on stress in libraries. This may be a time to bring in speakers and understand what is happening in our branches.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Rockville Memorial – Meets every month. There is new furniture in the teen area. New signage is being created for the branch.
- Davis – Does not currently have an operating LAC. Great to see an application for a new member.
- Montgomery College – The Takoma Park/Silver Spring Library has been undergoing renovations for the last two years. The reopening is scheduled for January 2025 with a reopening celebration on February 28. The design planning was just completed for the Rockville Library. Scheduled to move out fall on 2025 into another building on the same campus. That project is expected to take a year.
- Twinbrook – Does not have an active LAC.

- White Oak – Met on November 12. There are six current members and one perspective member. They discussed how to get more members - younger members. White Oak Library is right next to the Enclave Apartments which has hundreds of Afghan families living there, many of whom do not speak English. They have partnered with Burnt Mills Elementary School for English classes and daycare. Reaching out to libraries to get involved.
- Chevy Chase – No working LAC.
- Little Falls – Next meeting is in December.
- Potomac – Has not met since the last board meeting. They meet every three months.
- Connie Morella – Met on November 12. They are continuing to work on their outdoor space, which is next to a rejuvenated park.
- Noyes – Meets on November 14.
- Long Branch – Met in October. Held elections. Need to improve landscaping – every other month schedule. Would like a discovery room. Work is still being done on the shade canopy.
- Brigadier General – Met in October. There are elevator problems. Programs are well attended. They discussed the purple line construction. There is a LAC member who attends the purple line meetings. The LAC will participate in the Thanksgiving parade. Talked about getting more social services in the library.
- Marilyn Praisner – Met on October 16. They are scheduled to meet again on November 20. There is concern with the cleaning of the facility. A lot of new programs including English Conversation. There was a lot of outreach during the recent Burtonsville Day. They talked about the recently deaccessioned Farsi collection.
- Aspen Hill – Meet November 11; did not meet in September. Very focused on data. Big programming plans for this year. Elections postponed. The outside bench needs to be replaced.
- Gaithersburg – Regional Manager Eric Carzon has left MCPL. There are 3-4 members.
- Germantown – There are usually only 1-2 people at each meeting – not a quorum.
- Wheaton – Meets online. They are a very robust group. Concern regarding the children’s area door that has not been replaced. Because of this, storytime has to take place in a smaller space. Adult programming praise – computer and community workforce programs.
- Kensington Park – There is a lot of really good programming. Interested in meeting with other LACs to discuss recruitment and get concrete examples of what a successful LAC looks like.
- Maggie Nightingale – Met in October. Did not have a quorum so they just had a branch update.
- Quince Orchard - Social issue related to the open lunch campus for the high school students right across the street. Interested in a passport program; visiting other branches; and a café in the branch. Concerns about the garden and garden maintenance. More lucky day books at the branch books with Jewish content.
- Accessibility Advisory Committee – Did not meet.
- Olney – Facility issues that are being addressed. Concerns about the world language collection. Looking into bringing services to senior residents.
- MCPS – On Thursday, the MCPL Contemporary Conversations featured author Mwalim “DaPhunkee Professor,” will be speaking at Springbrook High School, in the school library. This is a result of ongoing collaboration between MCPL and MCPS, specifically Clotilde Puertolas, the contact who arranges a school visit in conjunction with the public library program. Second, Tyler Chadwell-English from MCPL has been working with MCPS General Counsel to try to get traction with MCPS students being able to use their student ID to gain access to MCPL resources. We have been thwarted in these efforts for years but Tyler seems to be making good progress. There is a meeting to discuss recent developments on Friday.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Francie Gilman, Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee: It would be good to add a badge for any staff persons who sign that reads “I can sign.”
- Ari Brooks, Executive Director, Friends of the Library, Montgomery County
 - It is codified in the FOLMC articles of incorporation to cooperate with the Library Board, and I take the purpose very seriously.
 - Regarding the programs happening at libraries, I am very proud to say that last fiscal year FOLMC funded over 750 unique programs for MCPL through a variety of fundraising efforts.
 - I serve on the United for Libraries Board which is one of the seven divisions of the American Library Association. I serve as their outgoing programs chair. One of the programs that I produced and moderated several years ago was how can Friends foundations and library boards can support the crisis situation for librarians. I would be very happy to recommend some speakers who are serving on library boards across the county to assist with those efforts.
 - Regarding the gardening at the Quince Orchard branch. Those wishing to assist with the upkeep of the garden should register as library volunteers in order to be covered by the County’s liability insurance or connect with a garden club that carries its own insurance. Then branch could then reach out to FOLMC to fund the materials needed for the upkeep of the garden.

ADJOURNMENT:

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.