



LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

July 9, 2014

BOARD PRESENT: Amir, Brooks, Christman, Lewis, Ram, Rao, Reedy, Watts

STAFF PRESENT: Regina Holyfield, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Steve Schmal, Chair, Chevy Chase Library Advisory Committee

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Lewis at 7:05 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Board Members, staff and guest were introduced.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

The minutes from the May 14, 2014 Board meeting were approved.

APPROVAL OF LAC APPLICATION(S):

LAC applications were approved with two exceptions; two applications will be sent back due to lack of information.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Steve Schmal (Chevy Chase LAC) addressed the issue of simplifying the approval of LAC applications, especially on renewals. If the person is willing to serve another term and the branch manager approves, why does the application have to go before the Board?

Board discussion:

- The LAC application process is not very cumbersome, it is a quick process.
- This is the Board's only means of pruning "rogue" members.
- The Board is in favor of streamlining the renewal application process.
- Have a form that says "Renewal" and include a section for accomplishments.
- According to the guidelines it is permissible for a person to be on two LACs.
- Turn the LAC application process over to the LAC and Board Activities work group.

Motion: The Board will revise the form to include the terms “new” and “renewal.” The renewal form will include a section for activities/accomplishments. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

BOARD ELECTIONS:

- Nomination(s)
 - Chair:
 - Robyn Watts
 - Vice Chair:
 - Syed Amir (submitted by Paulette Dickerson via email: *He has given us nuanced and interesting insights in Board discussions; his LAC reports are stellar; he has come to meetings with the County Council; he has been on the Board long enough to have a good sense of how the relationship between the Director, Library Board and County government works.*)
 - Deborah Brooks
- Syed Amir declined the nomination due to time investment.
- Question: What are the duties of the Vice Chair?
Response: The duties of the Vice Chair include presiding over meetings in the Chair’s absence; drafting the meeting agendas with the Chair; attending meetings in the Chair’s stead, etc.
- The Board unanimously elected Robin Watts as Chair and Deborah Brooks as Vice Chair.

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (DRC) LAC DISCUSSION:

- This discussion regarding the DRC LAC is a continuation from the May 2014 Board meeting.
 - Jeanie Dunnington submitted a proposal to reorganize the DRC LAC (See Attachment).
 - Since the submission, Ms. Dunnington has passed, and the DRC LAC is floundering. They have suspended all programs for the summer.
- Determine:
 - Membership:
 - New membership or combined (new with existing) membership.
 - All current members are welcome to remain or reapply.
 - The DRC LAC should have members representing the disability organizations in the County.
 - The current membership is not representative of the entire County.
 - Should the Chair of the DRC LAC be a member of the Board?
 - The process of nominating someone to the Board has to come through the County Executive with Council confirmation.
 - Recruiting persons for the DRC LAC would be a joint effort.
 - Have an ex-officio member on the Board to represent the disabled community.
 - The disabled community is very diverse; one voice could not speak for all.
 - Frequency of meetings.

- Mission
- Guidance
 - The DRC LAC would report to the Library Board and the MCPL Director.
- There would be no advantage for the LACs to have a disability line on their agendas.
- Standing committee versus a subcommittee, could be determined by an exploration group.
- It was moved, seconded and voted that the Board move forward with the proposal to restructure the DRC LAC to include community and organization members focused on the disabled communities. This LAC would report directly to the Library Board. An exploratory committee will be formed to examine structure, makeup, mission and membership.
 - The vote was 6 to 1.
- Jill Lewis will work with Director Hamilton regarding the makeup of the exploratory committee and the timeframe to convene the first meeting.

PURPLE LINE REPORT:

- The last meeting regarding the Purple Line dealt with aesthetics.
 - There is concern about the potential noise and vibrations.
- The July 2 meeting focused on the impact of the Purple Line on the Capital Crescent Trail.
- The next meeting will be a discussion regarding traffic; pedestrian and bike safety; and parking.
- These discussions will lead to recommendations that will be included in the RFP specifications.
- There has been no discussion regarding the library branches along the Purple Line.
 - The Purple Line will impact the parking at the Chevy Chase branch.
 - It is important for a Library Board representative to be at the next meeting.

LAC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD PRESENTATION:

- In a brief closed session, it was moved, seconded and voted that the Gaithersburg LAC receive the Eleanor Ablard Award and Steven Schmal receive the David Chiles Member of the Year Award.
- Recognition of the award winners will be held during a small reception at the September Board meeting.
- Invite the winners, their respective LAC members and branch managers.

DISCUSSION ON WORK GROUPS:

- To continue with the same work groups or change them.
- Last year, the Legislative Committee changed to the Legislative Liaison. Should it remain as is for this fiscal year?
 - The new System-wide Work Plan will be presented at the September meeting by Director Hamilton. The Board will wait to determine if there is a need for a Legislative Committee after hearing the objectives of the plan.
- Have more Board/Committee documents reviewed for possible revisions.

- General discussion about the work groups and what other work groups may be needed.
 - Involve more LAC members in the advocacy aspect. There is a good advocacy model, now it is time to stretch out to include more LAC members. There has been very successful advocacy work with the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc. (FOLMC).
- Outreach
 - More LAC information is needed for inclusion in the e-newsletter – more photos, more publicity.
 - What can the liaisons do to make the LACs more attractive; get the current members excited?
 - Have a LACs chairs’ meeting – maybe forfeit a Library Board meeting or a significant portion of a Board meeting.
 - Wearing orange is for the system; it connects everyone.
 - The Legislative Committee scheduled meetings with Council members; scheduled tours of the branches by Council members; assisted with the annual potluck dinner; and drafted talking points.
 - The Board wants to continue the strong relationship with the FOLMC Board.
 - A strong person from the Board is needed to work with the Friends’ Board if the relationship continues as last year.
 - Get more involved with state lobbying. Explore if there is more that can be done with the State.

It was suggested that the Board meetings begin earlier. This was addressed last fiscal year. There are many working people on the Board who would find it difficult making it on time for meetings that were earlier.

The Joint Meeting is in November.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

B. Parker Hamilton

ATTACHMENT

Proposal to reorganize the Disability Resource Center LAC

From Jeanie Dunnington, DRC LAC

- MCPL wants and needs a long-term reliable source of support and advocacy for people with disabilities.
- Restructuring of the DRC LAC can meet this need better than the current DRC LAC, and can give additional benefits for the MCPL system and for people with disabilities.
- Problems with the current structure:
 - People associate with the physical branch of MCPL that is "theirs" and simply aren't interested in a County-wide LAC.
 - Lots of people equated Special Needs with Talking Books.
 - None of us current members has the personality to recruit new members.
- Proposal:
 - The DRC LAC would be composed of liaisons from disability and senior organizations. The DRC LAC would meet quarterly, and would work with the Senior and Disability Committee of MCPL instead of a single librarian.
 - With the increasing number of resources that MCPL makes available electronically, organizations may be able to help with volunteers or partnering to help MCPL bring access.
 - Meetings could include discussion of specific branches in terms of different needs, information on the collection, etc.
 - This reorganization should (would have to be) initiated by the Library Board. It might need a vote by the current LAC as well.
 - This proposal would need the Library Board to take more responsibility. E.g., in recruiting these new organizational members, the Library Board could take initiative, while current LAC members might be able to help identify and talk to organizations. We know the organizations that relate to our disabilities. We could also talk to other organizations about why they would want to get involved. But it will definitely need more involvement by the Library Board.
- Benefits of the proposal:
 - Groups and organizations will provide a more sustainable and more varied source of long-term support and advocacy for people with disabilities, compared to trying to recruit individual DRC LAC members.
 - Organizations will provide the experiences and points of view of many individuals about what library services they use and need and want.

- Organizations can provide perspectives related to different ages – adults, young adults, children, seniors.
- Involving groups will educate influential organizations about what library services are available for them. Groups can then spread the word, because people turn to them for information. Many people don't think of going to the library for information about disabilities; they rely on their own groups or doctors. By connecting groups to the library, people can become aware that MCPL provides many useful free services and programs for them.
- Partnerships with groups can have additional values for the library system as a whole.
- Organizations benefit because they will learn about the workings of the library and this gives them special knowledge that can be of value to their operations and their members. They would gain insight about how the library system functions, how the collection is put together, etc.
- Groups have more advocacy power that can support libraries -- through their own membership and contacts as well as the power of a group rather than an individual in getting publicity.
- REQUESTED ACTION: Commitment by the MCPL director and by the Library Board to implement this proposal.