

Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee Minutes

Meeting of May 10, 2021

Zoom Meeting Platform

Call to Order: LAC Chair Josephine Rios-Davis called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

Present: LAC Members--- Betty Bell, Aleen Chabot, Elliot Chabot, Althea Grey-McKenzie, Babs Margolies, Eileen Smith, Chris Swan, Judy Tankersley. Also attending: Christine Freeman, Agency Manager, Carrie Villar, MCLBoard Liaison, Sonja Roberts, MCLBoard Chair, Philip Sussler, FOL/Community Member, Kathleen Richmond, FOL/Community Member and Maria Rackas Szokolai, Community Member..

Chair Rios-Davis welcomed the attendees, who each introduced themselves, and announced that Ms. Roberts, who was not yet in attendance, had communicated that difficulties with her internet and phone connections had caused her to leave the April meeting before its conclusion..

Minutes of the April 12, 2021 LAC Meeting were approved, upon the motion of Chris Swan.

Branch Manager Freeman's Report

Ms. Freeman referenced the press release she had distributed to LAC members this afternoon naming six Libraries to open on an appointment basis starting Tuesday, June 1. Holds to Go will continue in closed branches, and the Holds to Go distribution for re-opened branches may be transferred to nearby sites: Aspen Hill may handle Olney's, for example. The Prints to Go service was postponed to align with the re-opening of some buildings on June 1.

No problems reported with facilities/physical plant. Furniture has yet to be moved to the Community Room. Plexiglass barriers are in place. Lots of tables for Holds to Go in the central space, along with incoming delivery of books.

Ms. Freeman provided a circulation/program participation report. Inventory has been completed. New computers are being installed this week, and three additional self checkout sites have been installed. The new Integrated Library System is at its beginning stages. Ms. Freeman will check with James Donaldson about his availability to make a presentation to the LAC about it, similar to one presented to the Library Board itself.

Summer Reading will again be all virtual, system wide. AH is hosting Drag Queen Story Time on June 12. The Library system is down 75 positions overall. Aspen Hill is down 1 FT Librarian 1, and one Library Assistant, with 1 staffer at another Library, and 1 assigned outside the Library.

Discussion of the Social Justice topic in a Library setting provided information that a Systemwide Committee is discussing the topic. Ms. Freeman and two others at AH completed

a nine month project on the topic through Maryland State Library auspices. The Social Justice Book Club had been discussed previously, and is waiting for an in-person setting to resume. Caller participant Kathleen Richmond suggested checking the Washington Post's 20 year retrospective on the 1968 Washington DC riots for a program perspective..

Possibility of setting up a museum pass connection to Library programs might be an option for encouraging participation. Althea Grey-McKenzie suggested that the Sandy Spring Slave Museum could be a resource for connected programming. Ms. Freeman directed the group to the AH Library web site, with its program proposal access tab. Mark Santoro would be a good staff contact on such issues.

The group discussed two additional program proposals. One would be a program directed to school kids showing how to utilize the electronic resources of the Library, similar to the adult program done with the Aspen Hill Civic Association. Another idea would be a stuffed animal sleepover/tour at the Library, with video and mementos to the kids sending their toys.

Library Board Liaison Report

Carri Villar reported that the Operating Budget still indicates a continuity of services funding for next fiscal year. The Library Board is in the process of reorganizing its committee assignments and planning for the future. Ms. Villar announced that she herself would no longer be able to serve as Liaison as she looks forward to the birth of a child, so that the June meeting would be her last with AHLAC. Sonja Roberts will likely be the board Liaison going forward.

Ms. Roberts added that the federal Recovery Act will result in some funding to Montgomery County Libraries. Opening branches finds staffing issues due to union negotiations, retirements and movement to other locations/library systems.

Aspen Hill LAC Reports

Chair's Report

Ms. Rios-Davis reported no change in membership, but invited guest attendees to consider joining. The Chair invited guest Maria Rakas Szokolai to report her concerns about the paper used in the check out receipts and Hold slips. Ms. Szokolai indicated that the paper is a thermal paper that contains BPS, that is absorbed in handling and that cannot be recycled. Mr. Donaldson, MCPL, indicated that non-thermal paper would cost 30% more. Patrons can reduce current use by not getting a printed receipt. Ms. Szokolai indicated she would follow up with the Department of Environmental Protection. This issue was unknown to the Committee members and to the Branch Manager prior to these comments.

Since the normal term for Chair and Secretary ends in May, the Chair opened the floor for nominations for those offices. Judy Tankersley reported that Ms. Villar had asked the Library

Board to clarify the election process for this year, given the different election processes used during the Covid-19 year. The Library Board adopted Ms. Villar's suggestion that allows elections to be undertaken in the normal timeframe, or postponed, in cases where desired, as long as any new terms end with elections again in May, 2022. In the absence of nominations Ms. Tankersley suggested that the Committee bring nominations to the June meeting, when voting can take place. Ms. Villar pointed out that the Handbook allows for the Committee to function temporarily without a Chair, when necessary.

The Chair asked the group to confirm a meeting schedule for the period after June through December. The Committee voted to meet in July and August to be able to monitor branch opening changes. Ms. Rios-Davis will send out an email to seek consensus on a meeting night for the schedule: keep 2nd Monday or change to a different night. Keeping the meeting prior to the Library Board meeting on the second Wednesday of the month in order to provide input or questions to the Board was deemed of value.

Secretary's Report

Judy Tankersley reported that the LAC Roster appears to be current. The only membership that expires in 2021 is her own, though the exact termination is in question: December, 2021, or May/June 2021. Ms. Villar suggested checking with Regina Holyfield-Jewett, MCPL, about that question. Ms. Tankersley asked Christine Freeman if she had been able to check to see if the necessary volunteer/insurance forms were in place for all the Committee. Ms. Freeman indicated she would check further with Ms. Holyfield-Jewett about where those records are stored.

Landscape Committee Report

Garden Club Co-President Babs Margoliles announced that the Garden Club meets Tuesday afternoon, May 11, and features a virtual tour of Dumbarton Oaks. Some weeding has been done at the Library. A work session to plant annuals is scheduled with the Four H Lucky Clovers group for Saturday, May 15. Christine Freeman reported that she has not had a response on the questions about the spigot repair or plaque installation. She also indicated that the group can ask Fred to open the spigot, using a wrench, whenever he is on site. He will be there on the 15th, and works alternate Saturdays. Co-President Eileen Smith asked if there was any reply regarding netting the sapling crepe myrtle trees to protect them from cicada damage, but no information has been received at the Branch.

AH Friends of the Library Liaison Report

Liaison and President Chris Swan announced the Annual General Membership Meeting of the group will be on Zoom on Thursday, May 27, at 7:00 pm. The group's Budget Committee will meet in June. The Budget for fiscal year 2022, starting July 1, will be adopted at the June AH FOL Board meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

Next AH LAC meeting, on Zoom, will be Monday, June 14, 7:30 pm

Aspen Hill Civic Association General Membership Meeting will be Wednesday, May 19.

Adjournment - Seeing no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:45 pm.

Judy Tankersley

Recording Secretary