

SILVER SPRING: BRIGADIER GENERAL CHARLES E. MCGEE LIBRARY
LAC MINUTES

October 21, 2024, 2024 VIA ZOOM @ 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM

Present: *Dana Anderson, Paulette Dickerson, Chauna Higgins (Chair), Regina Germain, Martha Kyrrillidou (Secretary), Scott Shoreman*

Present (non-voting):

- Katrin Sweeney, Regional Manager, MCPL ([Brigadier General Charles E. McGee Library](#), [Kensington Park Library](#), and [Noyes Library for Young Children](#))
- Wilma Brier, MCPL Board Liaison.
- Jennifer Diamond, Visitor.

The meeting started with a roll call to ensure we have enough people attending to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved a few minutes into the meeting after the agency manager's report was done ensuring we had enough attendance for approval of the minutes.

The motion to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2024, meeting was done by Dana Anderson and seconded by Paulette Dickerson. The minutes were approved unanimously.

The motion to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2024, meeting was done by Paulette and Martha seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Kate Sweeney offered the agency manager's report and highlighted that we may get some of the part-time vacancies filled. Lots of active programming is taking place in the Branch including the popular technology training workshops. Circulation was about 22+K. The Library is answering questions about voters' rights activity and any process oriented aspect citizens are inquiring about through an organization called Free State Justice.

In general the large meeting room can hold up to 65 people attending a program as the max attendance; bigger numbers than that presents an issue. In general there is registration in place if attendance is expected to be high (for example, the tech classes have registration in place).

The Board Liaison, Wilma Brier, also reported on the October 9 Board meeting which was a joint meeting with the Friends of the Library group. Martha and Chauna (remotely) had also attended - there was interactive engagement soliciting input about improvements in the library system. For example, one of the groups suggested that the library should have its own foundation in addition to the Friends of the Library group for ensuring some of the large capital projects are happening. The compilation of all the ideas offered will be shared with the LACs.

The new director, Darcell Gram, starts on November 4; she is an experienced library administrator who worked at the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore for many years.

The discussion focused on the budget season and the County Executive discussions and particularly the meeting held at the Silver Spring. Kate Sweeney, Chauna Wiggins, and Martha Kyrrillidou attended that meeting. There were a number of people at the meeting, and community members expressed concerns about housing insecurity, the African-American cemetery in Bethesda, and the war in Gaza/Israel.

Kate noted that there are referral services to the Progress Place that provides services for housing insecure citizens; Kate is also attending their monthly meeting. Progress Place houses Shepherd's Table (3 meals a day) and Interfaith Works (offer a number of different services; contract with the county; get connected with other services). Sometimes the Mobile Crisis Center is helpful as well. There is definitely an increased need for social services in the downtown Silver Spring area. Wilma indicated that they will discuss the issues with the New Director.

Under unfinished business related to the Purple Line, Paulette indicated that there are community action teams that meet every six months. They are starting brickwork in the tunnel under the Library and once the brickwork is done, they will open the tunnel again most likely in January. Wayne Avenue will most likely have lane changes. They already have five trains and they are testing them (the trains can hold 430 passengers, 8 ADA seats, and 8 bike racks) and they will run 50 miles per hour through a controlled network. The Sligo Creek road will also have some closings on and off through November 18. All this information and more is available on the Purple Line website. The next meeting will take place next year.

Under new business we discussed an article about libraries and their issues "*Who Uses Public Libraries the Most? There's a Divide by Religion, and Politics.*" The article noted differences by education level and income and offered insights on ways to reach out to communities. It was noted that those who need the library the most may not have the time or afford the free time to use the library.

There was discussion about how to bring new users into the Library.

- Kate noted that the library allows you to just be yourself - to just be there and be part of the community.
- It was noted that making sure that people know the library is there is important; the signage issue was also raised as a way to better locate the library.
- Dana also mentioned concern on the accessibility ramps of the Library on the structure on Fenton past the lion.

Last we discussed the upcoming Thanksgiving Day Parade scheduled to take place on November 16, 2024. The group has a registration link that Wilma will distribute to the other LACs through the MCPL Board. We encourage everyone in the LACs to participate as well as the Friends of the Library group. It is a wonderful experience that helps the Library be recognized at an event that is heavily attended by thousands of people. There was the possibility that we could have the Outreach Van at the parade.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Next Meeting: Monday, November 18, 2024 at 7:30pm

- [Upcoming meetings listed on the community calendar](#)