

Connie Morella LAC Meeting Minutes - 4/11/2023

Tim Lighter (Library Board Chair), Barbara Levine (LAC Chair), Kate Sweeney (Regional Manager), Colin Repetti (LAC Secretary), Claudia Deane (LAC member), Pavani Reddy (LAC member), Alison O'Brien (LAC member), Jim Montgomery (Library Board Member), Roz Rettman (LAC member), Chris Sinsheimer (LAC applicant), Chris Wilhelm (Chief of Staff for Councilmember Kristin Mink) present

Minutes

- Will vote to approve previous meeting minutes at the next meeting
- Previously approved minutes submitted and will be posted to website shortly

Regional Manager's Report

- Staffing
 - Branch Supervisor change
 - Linda Curvey-Brown is transferring from Connie Morella to Little Falls
 - New Branch Supervisor is Kirstra Otto, transferring from Davis Library
 - Transition happened on 4/10/2023, very recent
 - Last two circulation positions filled
 - Last position open is a children's position, in progress
 - Hiring a few more pages/shelving assistants
 - This is the only position hired at the branch level so it should be handled relatively quickly
- Closures
 - Closed on Saturday, March 25, 2023 due to maintenance by Pepco
 - Also to be closed on Saturday, April 22, 2023
- Programming
 - Program cancellations
 - One event that was scheduled for April 22, 2023 has been relocated to Chevy Chase due to the closure
 - Two previous events canceled due to staff illness
 - Upcoming programming
 - Climate change event on April 22, 2023 (virtual so unaffected by closure)
 - Children's programming
 - ***
 - Adult programming
 - Financial program geared toward retirees
 - Book club on May 27, 2023 for books related to climate change
 - Contemporary Conversations Event (can attend in person or virtually)
 - Should have more information soon, part of an ongoing series

- Previous programming
 - Children's programming
 - Make your own terrarium
 - Persian New Year event
 - Book Bingo
 - Geared toward elementary school aged kids, was well received and might do again
 - Two author events
- Miscellaneous
 - Test and mask distribution continues going strong, ebbs and flows
 - No word as to how long this will be going on
 - Donation of furniture to honor deceased Connie Morella FOL member was just received
 - Asked what areas of programming she feels are lacking or would like to see in Connie Morella
 - It seems unlikely that this can be resolved by advocacy but bilingual storytimes/children's programming
 - Pavani might know of a person/organization that could potentially come in as a presenter to do that (they will connect after the meeting)
- Statistics
 - February (20 programs with 720 attendees)
 - March (21 programs with 1,016 attendees)

Questions for Library Board Chair

- Interest in getting data about Connie Morella (both internally and potentially external rankings)
- Bethesda is continuing to grow rapidly
 - 21 new residential developments with 6000 units
 - Bethesda Elementary has a unique demographic breakdown
 - Majority minority, 16% of students get free school meals, 10% of students in the special education program
- This will be relayed to Anita tomorrow and we should have an update next meeting
 - There is a new Performance Management and Data Specialist, Dr. Weihua Zhao, whose job is specifically to get this data and should be able to make this information available in the future
 - This is a very new role, ramping things up will take time
 - If possible, we would like to have Dr. Zhao attend a future LAC meetings to answer questions provided in advance

Volunteers

- There is a desire to find ways to have volunteers to help with programming
 - Volunteers cannot do anything that someone is paid to do

- There was an interest in a list of jobs that can or cannot be done by volunteers but no such list exists as that varies by branch
- Outside organizations can have programs which involve volunteers
- One potential area to help out would be technology assistance by volunteers, especially for older folks and people who don't speak English as a first language

Proposed Budget

- Not a lot of specifics
- Councilmember Mink and her Chief of Staff are starting to wrap their heads around the library budget
 - Specifically interested in the staffing issue, vacancies and how that has affected programming

Jim Montgomery's Report from the Library Board

- The budget
 - If we have questions, write them down and give them to him
- Friends and Board members testifying before the County Council this week
 - Based on a letter previously sent to County Executive Marc Elrich
 - Some gaps between Library Board/FOLMC requests and what was in the budget
 - The biggest one is a marketing budget