

## Connie Morella Library Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

### Date: September 10, 2024

Attendees: Ardie Bausenbach; Claudie Deane (Chair); Carol Ann Greenberg; Jim Montgomery; Alison O'Brien

Absent: Valerie Alstadt (Secretary); Barbara Levine; Tannaz Rahman; Colin Repetti; Chris Sinsheimer

### Chair's Report

The Council welcomed a new member, Carol Ann Greenberg.

### Requests to the Regional Director

#### Updates in red text, below.

Organization chart of the Connie Morella staff, including open positions, noting hiring process phase and length of vacancy.

9/10: Patrick indicated he has created an organization chart which he will share with the Chair.

Clarification of the status of Friends of the Library and money raised at Connie Morella.

9/10 The Council discussed the status of funds raised by CM's FOL for use by CM.

Educate the LAC on the digital content purchasing decisions made for Connie Morella/MoCo library system.

9/10: The Council requested that CM's digital resources manager "Felicity" attend a future LAC meeting.

Apply more robust and expeditious efforts to improve the physical user experience at Connie Morella by making better use of the space, both inside and outside, and enhancing the overall aesthetics to bring it up to par with other comparable MoCo libraries.

Provide a roadmap for increased volunteer involvement at CM. The capability and resources of the Bethesda community are not being sufficiently tapped to help the library achieve its full potential for patrons.

9/10 Patrick said that "Patricia" is the Volunteer Coordinator for CM. The Council requested that Patricia attend a future LAC meeting.

## Board Liaison Report

9/10 Jim Montgomery reported on the Children's Opportunity Alliance and shared the schedule of upcoming Community Conversations, highlighting the intersection of childcare and kindergarten readiness. The role of libraries is overlooked.

**LAC request:** The LAC would like an in-person meeting with the new MCPL Director when s/he is hired.

## Regional Manager's Report

9/10 Patrick reported that circulation is relatively static at the moment, but foot traffic is lightly higher. The Council asked if there is any formal tracking of the number of very young children (infant – age 5) visiting the library. Patrick indicated the data coordinator at MCPL may be tracking that.

Staffing at the library: good news regarding some recent new hires.

Library programming: challenges persist in meeting the need for more programming but with the new additional staff it looks promising. Aiming for "sustainable growth."

### LAC suggestions:

Weekend programming: the weekends are when the library is most utilized thus a prime time for programming, which is a challenge with fewer staff on weekends. Perhaps staffing could be adjusted throughout the week, moving staff from less busy weekday periods to the weekend.

Publicizing events: community and school listservs are the most effective way to reach the local community. MoCo central chooses whether to post an event on social media.

**LAC request:** what is the criteria for choosing which events to post?

9/10: Patrick said someone at CM ("Mattie") is responsible for technology and social media. The Council requested that Mattie attend a future LAC meeting.

Event collaboration: seek opportunities for collaboration with other libraries, to both amplify and co-produce programming.

Partner with local schools: develop programming to address the language needs of non-native English-speaking students and parents; and schedule activities in alignment with the school year calendar.

9/10: Patrick said Joe is the CM staff person responsible for reaching out to the local schools. He and Angela plan events three months out and post them on a digital platform (shared with the schools?) and Kirstra reports out quarterly. The Council requested that Joe (etc.) attend a future LAC meeting for a focused discussion about this.

Facilities: the LAC shared thoughts about facilities improvements that do not or should not require waiting for a formal “refresh.”

The bathrooms are too small for the number of people who pass through thus requiring more frequent maintenance.

9/10: Patrick noted that despite its smaller size, CM’s level of foot traffic has been bigger than Silver Spring’s. The usage of CM’s facilities warrants additional attention (“porter hours”) such as routine spot checks during the week.

The teen “area” is essentially a few chairs and a table and should be expanded when empty shelves are eliminated.

The Circulation and Reference desks layout/footprint could be streamlined.

What is the plan for the now vacant shelving where print publications used to be?

It would be helpful to have an action plan for maximizing potential use of the outdoor space so we can work toward changes no matter which season we are in.

**LAC request:** Meet with the library’s facilities manager to better understand issues and to establish a timeline for proposed improvements.

9/10 Patrick said that while he knows the changes he would like to make, and shared those with the LAC, changes are on hold until the new MCPL Director is in place. The Council looks forward to meeting CM’s facilities manager “Patricia” at a future LAC meeting, when the time is right.