

Library Advisory Committee
Damascus Branch
March 8, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Pam Hosimer, chair. In attendance were Diane Cockrell, Marie Dean, Karen Miller, Bill Rogers, Donna Bangor, Ann Stillman, agency manager, and Holly Fiery, our new Library Board liaison. A very warm welcome to Holly, a Damascus resident. The minutes of the September 2021 meeting were approved as distributed. No minutes were taken at the February 2022 meeting; some members attended the January Joint Meeting.

The Friends of the Library, Damascus Chapter, accepts books, DVDs, CDs, etc., which they sell in the lobby of the library building. However, they are currently not accepting donations. We will contact both FOLMC and MCPL to find out when our sales will continue. Bill commented that the lobby sales are a reflection of the reading habits of the community.

Ann reported that Covid masks and test kits are still being offered in the building, but moved inside the library, allowing less staff involvement. Libraries are now free to plan in-person programming for patrons over five years old. Storytime will still be held virtually. The resident who helps with computers will return to the library, usually two days a week. A new program, “Manic Monday,” will provide activities for teens. The staff is considering organizing a daytime book club to add to the evening book club which has met at the library or on Zoom for years. Its April meeting will be in person, and Marie Dean hopes that it will attract a larger membership than have been attending on line. Ann asked if the LAC should continue online meetings or meet in person. No decision was reached. The branch is interviewing for new staff to fill vacant positions. “Refresh” is still scheduled for 2024, when the library will be closed for four to six months, the anticipated duration of the project.

The Strategic Plan is under way. Kate Frades, consultant from the county, will attend a Damascus staff meeting next week to get ideas. Once she has input from all sources, she will send out information and surveys.

- Pam reported that very few valentines were sent in or brought to the branch this year.
- Diane expressed concern about the proposed County budget and the effect on the libraries.
- Holly will forward the director’s report each month to committee members.
- Ann suggested that Wheaton Library, newly refreshed, be a choice for our visit in May or the fall.

Proposed schedule for spring of 2022:

All meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month, on Zoom or in the large meeting room of the library, from 7pm to 8pm, unless otherwise announced.

April 12; May 10; June 7, 2022

Note: We usually attend the County Executive’s upcounty forums, dates TBA.

Addendum from Holly: The MCPL Board met earlier this evening (March 9) and I wanted to share with you the following:

1. Director's Reports: Feb and March – attached to her email of March 9
2. Donated book sales: There have been some issues within FOLMC that have impacted when book sales can resume. An update should be made available soon. As shared by the Director, donors are encouraged to bring books to the FOLMC locations in Rockville and Wheaton.