

Little Falls Library Advisory Committee Meeting
April 8, 2021
via ZOOM

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. The attendees included: Chair Dave Shumaker, Kathryn Scott, Hannah November, Robert November, Branch Manager Carolyn Bogardus, Grace Manubay, the Little Falls Library liaison with the Library Board, John Stodola, Elida Bessalel, and Yassir Essai, and Kathy Davies, Secretary.
2. Approval of agenda. Kathryn Scott moved to approve the agenda for the meeting. The motion was seconded by Robert November and the agenda was approved.
3. Approval of Minutes. The minutes for the February 2nd meeting were approved by email, but the Branch Manager asked that the last word on the first page be changed from “rent” to “borrow”.
4. Chair’s Report. John Stodola was approved as a member of the Little Falls Library LAC in March. He is a native Washingtonian, grew up in Wood Acres, and now lives in Bannockburn. He was a technical writer and served as President of his community association. He is retired and currently volunteers at vaccine clinics.

The Chair used a summary of the minutes to circulate in the Sumner neighborhood. He proposes that the minutes be submitted as soon as possible after the meeting in order to facilitate the circulation of the LAC activities to neighborhood groups.

Montgomery County Media has an article regarding the continued closure of the libraries.

5. Branch Manager’s Report. The library is continuing to have on line programs. On May 6th, Little Falls Village presents a program on the COVID-19 pandemic. The library is working on “Prints to Go”. Kathryn Scott asked if the reopening of the schools would affect the reopening of the libraries. The Branch Manager said no, since the schools and the libraries are operated by different entities. The libraries are no longer quarantining books.

The Branch Manager is currently serving as Branch Manager for Little Falls Library and as interim Branch Manager for Twinbrook Library. She works at Little Falls Library two days a week and at Twinbrook Library two days a week and teleworks one day a week.

Little Falls children's librarian Judy Ehrenstein does all of the children's book bundles and a children's library associate is at Little Falls Library for five hours a week.

6. Library Board Report. The Library Board Representative reported that the libraries were automatically renewing library materials which had no holds as they became due. The MCPL will be implementing a digital literacy program. The MCPL budget was approved by the County Executive and now goes to the County Council for approval. The budget is substantially the same as last year's budget. In considerations for library reopening, the Library Board Representative said that it was likely that not all branches would open at once. When a branch reopens, Holds to Go would no longer be offered at a reopened branch. The Library Board representative reports that MCPL is still in planning mode.

Robert November asked what Friends of the Library is doing for the system during COVID. The Library Board Representative said that it is paying for a system-wide summer reading program.

Kathryn Scott asked whether appointments would be required to come to a library that had reopened. The Branch Manager said that there would not be an appointment system.

Dave Shumaker noted that although some library systems remain closed, such as Prince George's County and Frederick, others are open, such as Fairfax, Loudon, Arlington (a couple of branches), Howard and DC, and that Howard has published a 5 phase model for reopening. He noted that there is a body of knowledge on reopening that is available for Montgomery County to use.

However, others noted the significant differences between the systems, and the Library Board Representative noted that DC libraries were only open to pick up books.

7. Old Business. Continuing a topic from the last meeting, the Branch Manager shared her priorities for Friends of the Library funding. They include: a monument sign, landscaping, new chairs, equipment to facilitate shelving in the children's room, and an outside spigot for gardening volunteers to maintain plantings around the upstairs entrance. It was noted that COVID limited her priorities as any purchase of more than \$99 must be approved by the Director and the Director was too busy at this time to focus on purchases.

8. New Business. The upcoming meetings for the year are June 1, August 3, October 5 and December 7. The Chair asks that members note those dates on their calendars. LAC elections will be held June 1. The Chair cannot continue to serve as Chair because the position is limited to two years, so someone else will need to be elected as the new Chair. Members should consider whether they would like to take on this role. The Secretary is finishing her first term and is eligible to be re-selected.

There was a discussion of the LAC's role and plans for coming meetings. The Chair suggested that we invite more guests to discuss community needs as was done recently with Little Falls Village. Connections with local schools were discussed. The Branch Manager noted the challenge of connecting students to the libraries.

Robert November asked whether the LAC could do a survey with the neighborhoods served by Little Falls to see what their priorities were. However, it was noted that LACs cannot conduct surveys. Options for engaging with more local neighborhoods were discussed. This will be continued at the next meeting.

9. Adjourned. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.