

Potomac Library Advisory Committee – DRAFT Minutes

February 6, 2019

Attending: Gael Cheek, Sylvia Diss, Lunden Gillespie (branch manager), Carol Leahy (chair), Rosemarie Lentini, Don Libes, Wei Lu, Meenakshi (Meenu) Mohan, Jane Williams (MCLB liaison)

Chair Leahy called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. and welcomed everyone. She read pertinent items from the Preface to the *LAC Handbook* about the role of LACs. The *LAC Handbook* is accessible online at

https://montgomerycountymd.gov/Library/Resources/Files/board/lac_handbook.pdf

Ms. Williams provided copies of the “Roles and Responsibilities” page of the *LAC Handbook*.

There was discussion of how and where the LACs fit, as subcommittees of the Montgomery County Library Board (MCLB), which is advisory to the County Executive. The Montgomery County Public Libraries are a department of the county government. The Friends of the Libraries Montgomery County Inc., is a separate, non-profit organization. Branches that have FOL chapters benefit from their fund-raising, sponsorship of various programs, and underwriting of other projects in/for their branches. Ms. Gillespie will provide the LAC members charts and names of how the various organizations interrelate and who leads them, along with other key staff in the library system, including Potomac staff.

Ms. Leahy invited everyone to introduce themselves. There were four continuing LAC members (Cheek, Leahy, Lentini, Mohan) and three new (Diss, Libes, Lu) present.

Members expressed a wish to see past minutes of the group. Ms. Williams said they are on the website of MCPL. [Correction: The library board’s minutes are there, but not the LACs’.] There was also mention that the LAC could create its own archive via Google.

Ms. Gillespie handed out copies of her report and reviewed the report verbally. Her prepared report is included below, followed by comments, questions and answers with LAC members.

Branch Manager’s Report-February 6th, 2019

Collection

2 yr. weeding plan beginning in March

4 month Transfer Pilot has ended. HOS will meet 2/7 to discuss feedback of program and how to prepare for all system rollout.

The Collection Development dept. is seeking a new vendor for Foreign Language materials.

Necessary to update our Chinese Collection.

Playaways have been added to all MCPL branches.

Opportunity- Improve branch merchandising and weed collection to reflect community interests and wants.

Facilities

Refresh slated for FY20

Library Lady Sculpture has a new plaque.

Seeking additional shelving for children's area.

Added area

Opportunity- Think about areas of focus for branch refresh that would improve patron experience as well increase shelving space.

Programming

Highlights:

Dec.-Fun w/Playdough-featured in the Potomac Almanac-60+ people

Potomac Garden Club Holiday Arrangement Sale-all but 2 arrangements sold.

Jan.- Origami for Kids-50+ people & Learn to Draw Magna 30+ people

Upcoming:

Chinese New Year Celebration-2/16 @ 10:30AM

Pre-K Art Class 2/21 @ 10:30AM

Family Movie: Hidden Figures 3/2 @ 2PM

Janice the Griot- Harriet Tubman Tells Tales of Who Would be Free 3/23 @11

Children's programs for the summer months are being finalized.

Opportunity- Increase Adult programs to include relevant topics such as health, retirement, etc.

Services

We are discussing adding drop-in e-book assistance during the week.

Opportunity- Determine what other services the community would be interested in.

Discussion ensued at each point, first about the pilot project in MCPL to keep books at branches where they are returned, regardless of the location for which they are cataloged. Evaluation of this pilot is pending. There was much interest in the Prince George's County Memorial Library system's practice of entirely floating collections – i.e., never assigned to any given branch. There are advantages and disadvantages to each system. The MCPL system assures branch staff of knowing their collections, but there is also the cost of getting materials returned to their "homes" when patrons return them to other branches. The floating collection may cost less administratively, but the branch staff may not know what is in its collection at any given time. Mr. Libes said he thought the LAC should recommend to the board that the MCPL "throttle back" on the time and costs of getting materials back to their "homes."

Ms. Gillespie is experienced in merchandizing and is interested in merchandising of the library materials – i.e., showcasing through exhibits and other means. She asked about additional places or outlets to publicize Potomac Library's collections, services and programs. Ms. Diss and Ms. Lu asked about publicity through *Potomac Almanac* and at the Community Center. Mr. Libes asked about social media presence, and Ms. Gillespie said that is managed system-wide. Branches have their own blogs during and after refresh projects. Ms. Gillespie will ask if she can start one for Potomac before its scheduled refresh in 2020.

Ms. Diss and Ms. Cheek recommended recruiting students and retirees to lead drop-in visits for e-book assistance during the week. MCPL does not send texts or e-mails about upcoming

events. Doing so would have to be system-wide. Ms. Gillespie will follow up. LAC members would like to know more about what other library systems are doing. For example, the Prince George's system does area newsletters to its library users.

The refresh project for Potomac will be discussed and planned in more detail in the future. It might include a space in the foyer for drinks and food. The Potomac FOL chapter will continue to need space for its book collections and monthly sales.

Ms. Gillespie invited LAC members to recommend community contacts for various workshops, speakers, etc. There was feedback about the Great Decisions programs and the recent one on Glenstone. Programs of local interest – e.g., the C&O Canal -- were suggested.

In lieu of an oral report from the library board, Ms. Williams asked LAC members to read the paper copies she had provided of her report, which will also be appended to these minutes.

The group agreed to meet on Tuesdays at 10:30 and for now to meet every other month. The next session will be April 2.

Ms. Leahy reminded the group of the upcoming Friends of the Libraries "Library after Dark Gala," April 13. The link is <https://www.folmc.org/events-calendar/library-after-dark/>

Ms. Williams passed out copies of the schedule of Education Budget Forums to be held in Feb. and March, co-hosted by Craig Rice, chair of the County Council's Education and Culture Committee.

Ms. Leahy adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

January 25, 2019

TO: Wheaton Library Advisory Committee, Potomac Library Advisory Committee,
Accessibility Advisory Committee
C: Dianne Whitaker, Lunden Gillespie, Elizabeth Lang
FROM: Jane Williams, MCL Board Liaison
RE: January 2019 Report

Joint Meeting

The Montgomery County Library Board met with Library Advisory Committees and the Friends of the Library Montgomery County on January 9, to continue planning for the upcoming budget season and related educational efforts with elected officials on behalf of the library system. Below are discussion summaries.

Anita Vassallo, State of the Library

FY19 “savings plan” of 1.5% can be met with lapsed savings – salaries for unfilled positions. FY20 savings plan will be 4%, again to be met by lapsed salaries and perhaps a position or two that will need to be held open. Hours at Damascus and Long Branch can’t be expanded in FY20. They are the two remaining branches still at recession-level cuts.

MCPL will need to align with Executive Elrich’s priorities. Libraries are under “Thriving Youth and Families” priority – e.g., closing the achievement gap, children ready for kindergarten. Libraries make strong efforts in early literacy. \$400K is spent on picture books every year. Libraries also fit other priorities, such as workforce development.

MCPL has moved from the County Council’s HHS Standing Committee to Education and Culture, chaired by Craig Rice and with members, Will Jawando and Nancy Navarro. Mr. Jawando is the lead for libraries.

The county has hired a search firm for three department head searches, including MCPL. Libraries have filled several key senior positions: managers for Chevy Chase and Correctional Facility and three other senior librarians too. In other progress, MCPL is getting new materials out to users much faster. Interlibrary loan has sped up too. The no-fines pilot for late children’s materials has been made permanent.

Tom Thomson, President, FOLMC -- Input from attendees on draft position paper and priorities to be used with elected officials

- Should reflect MCPL’s strategic plan too.
- Current draft focused on two of Mr. Elrich’s priorities: early childhood education and economic growth.
- If any library needs extended hours, it is Long Branch, because of the nature of its community. Extended hours would make for a more affordable and welcoming county too (another of Mr. Elrich’s priorities). Tie to affordable as well as welcoming because

early intervention and development get children on more productive paths. Damascus is a small library and it's in far northwest, a developing area.

- Under the “welcoming” rubric, MCPL is meeting needs of a diverse county. Would love to make sure all our populations are served.
- Libraries transforming to common community centers/bases – “public commons” of any community.
- Final document should be very direct and specific.
- Libraries are already doing a lot; they just need to do more and we need to ask for more resources to do it.

Final position paper will go to lawmakers, community allies, *In the Know*, and distributed other places as well. It will be a handout for meetings with officials.

Kim Durcho, MCLB Vice Chair, Making the Ask

Reviewed contents of draft “2019 Advocacy Toolkit.” The final position paper will be included and talking points will continue to be refined.

She will provide instructions on linking to Facebook’s Town Hall function, which lets officials know when a constituent contacts them.

Jim Montgomery, Chair, FOLMC Advocacy, Upcoming Advocacy Opportunities

Noted Mr. Ellrich’s upcoming budget forums. He encouraged attendees to check websites of council members who will hold forums around the county too.

Upcoming Dates:

Feb. 2: Kickoff, Library Lovers Month, Gaithersburg Lib, 11 a.m.

Feb. 4: Mr. Elrich’s final FY20 operating budget forum, at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, 7 p.m.

Feb. 5: Maryland Library Legislative Day in Annapolis

Check out the online calendar of events too, especially for the slate of events for Black History Month.

The next library board meeting is February 13, 7 pm., Rockville.