

Potomac LAC Meeting Minutes [DRAFT]

Sept 7, 2021

LAC Member Attendees

Gael Cheek, Co-chair

Wei Lu, Co-chair

Don Libes, Secretary

Sylvia Diss

Rosemarie Lentini

Fred Olowin

Meenu Mohan, left early, 8:24pm

Absent

Unfilled, MC Library Board (MCLB) Liaison

Other Attendees

Adrienne Miles Holderbaum, Potomac Branch Manager

Timothy Hendricks, Potomac Adult Librarian II

Patty McGrath, Patron

Sonja Roberts, MC Library Board Chair

Chair and Member Updates

Meeting held using Zoom. Gael called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. Agenda previously distributed by Wei via <https://groups.io/g/plac:>

[2021 09 07 Potomac LAC Agenda.docx](#)

MCLB Liaison Bonita Slade resigned from MCLB in June.

Current [Potomac LAC Members](#)

Minutes from Previous LAC Meeting

Rosemarie moved to approve minutes from previous meeting with no changes. Gael seconded. Approved.

[2021 06 01 Potomac LAC Minutes](#)

Adrienne Miles Holderbaum, Branch Manager Report

Re-opening has gone well.

Patrons expressed happiness with services during closure.

We're noticing more teens. Don't know why.

#1 reading participation for teens, county-wide.

Customers using catalogs more since pre-pandemic.

Fred: Maybe because catalog devices are hard to find.

Adrienne: Admittedly, we have new catalog devices which appear differently.

Fred: Signage might be helpful.

We're seeing a lot of families and kids. They can't wait for in-house programs to resume.

Fred: According to FOL Newsletter, the fish tank is gone.

Gael: New rule: No live animals. FOL thinks people will miss the fish tank.

Adrienne: MCPL Director made the decision.

Fred: Library is not as vibrant without fish tank.

Adrienne: Give me official feedback and I will forward it.

Wei: Maybe it was because the branches were closed during COVID?

Adrienne: Potomac closing for refresh soon enough so perhaps it's a moot point.

Circulation: 101,000 checkouts since June 14 opening.

Uptick in active users, new users, and kids.

We've doing outreach with schools that we haven't done before.

People are converting digital (online) cards to physical.

Meenu: Do you have stats for Hoopla and other digital services?

Adrienne: We don't get that data. It is tracked centrally.

Fred: Have patrons expressed concerns about entering library?

Adrienne: Not at Potomac. At another branch where I was temporarily stationed, a patron expressed unhappiness at mask wearing.

Programs

Programs have been on a bit of a hiatus since re-opening. We're focusing on in-person patron services. Personally, would love to stay Virtual. Waiting on decision for return to physical programming, expect decision by next week so we can plan for fall.

Personnel

Miranda is a temp children Librarian II on loan from Germantown. Going back soon / this fall.

She is doing Story time, labeling children books, Monday morning dance.

Vendana Singh is our permanent children librarian.

Danielle leaving for Davis.

Timothy Hendricks transferred to Potomac as Adult Librarian II replacing Danielle.

Dorothy, adult librarian, helping with teens.

Circulation: New library assistant, Irene.

Potomac Day, Oct 23

FOL is organizing on behalf of Potomac branch. FOL will have table, Adrienne and Outreach librarian will be there. Would like at least 2 LAC members to participate.

Don expressed reluctance and questioned whether the event would be safe or well attended. Historically, it's crowded and raised voices are the norm due to the music and crowd noise. Not things conducive to social distancing.

Refresh

Refresh is on track.

Estimated time line:

1. Design phase ends in Dec.
2. Bidding begins in Jan.
3. Feb-Mar close to public.

Fred: Suggest Potomac give suggestions and directions to nearby branches while PL is closed. This information should be on the website and, for people unaware of closure, the physical doors of the branch.

Access

Fred: A few flagstones on the property across Glenolden would make it easier for shoppers already visiting Potomac Village Shopping Center to cross the road and visit the library. Will volunteer to talk to appropriate officials.

Environmental Push

Sylvia noted that given the concern of climate change (which the MC Council has declared an emergency), Potomac should restore the display of environmental books permanently. LAC voted unanimously to support Sylvia's recommendation.

MCLB

Wei talked about MCLB's focus on social media, its monitoring, its support of MCPL goals and outreach.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library/resources/files/board/minutes/board-minutes-20210512.pdf>

Adrienne and Sonja described 20% funding shortage of MCPL overall.

Don: Is shortage due to 2020 library budget cuts?

Adrienne: What budget cuts?

Don: See [2020 09 11 Potomac LAC Minutes](#)

MCPL current ('20-21) budget has been cut by \$1.5M. It may have to return money. This money will primarily come from salaries from unfilled positions and collections that have not been purchased. The next year's budget will be painful.

Adrienne: No.

Sonja: Perfect storm. Many staff retired, many due to COVID. More than anticipated or that would have ordinarily.

Fred: Is budget shortfall temp or permanent? Should we be hiring if branch is closing?

Sonja: Anita can speak to that. Email me specific questions and I'll forward them to her.

Fred: Is Potomac cut by 20% also?

Adr: Not directly but effectively yes because MCPL moves staff around branches to rebalance. Also some staff have children which causes staffing issues.

Sonja: We have vacancies on MCLAB. LAC members are welcome to apply.

Don: MCLAB?

Sonja explained that "Advisory Board" is the official name. [Since I have never seen it written that way, I'm sticking with the common MCLB abbreviation in these minutes. - Don]

Don: Potomac LAC has gone a year now without MCLB liaison. Is MCLB supposed to recognize this or is it our fault for not letting MCLB know?

Sonja: We didn't have June meeting. And we've lost a lot of people.

Adrienne: There are 5 empty positions on MCLB

Sonja: We'll address the situation at tomorrow's MCLB meeting.

8pm Sonja: Left meeting.

LAC

Gael expressed interest in getting new and more LAC members.

Adrienne: Page 12 of LAC Handbook has suggestions for getting new members.

Long discussion of how many LAC members is appropriate. Some wanted more. (Fred: 5) Some thought we had the right number already.

Adrienne: Family members on LAC would be nice. Let's recruit at Potomac Day.

Adrienne: I have a lot on my plate that you don't see. The more you do to help me, the better.

Fred: I would be happy to talk to people interested in being LAC members. You can give my contact info out.

Fred: Can we put something about LAC in FOL newsletter?

Adrienne: Could we have some LAC subcommittees? LAC recruitment? Programming advising? Discussion of pros and cons of subcommittees. The LAC came to no conclusion and therefore created no subcommittees.

Gael: Hard to know if we are having an impact. Can we see a clear cause and effect? Example: Is our refresh feedback being used? Is our request for the climate display acted upon? Impacts would be helpful to recruiting members.

Wei: Agree with Gael. The examples we have are discouraging. Examples: FOL roadblocks, refreshments ("can't do anything about it"), no response to report on virtual library, unsatisfying communication from MCPL to patrons.

Fred: Quarterly meeting schedule is too slow for impact.

Adrienne: Agreed. We need more timely communication. Another example: book contribution truck.

Fred: Another example: Lack of an MCLB liaison for a year.

Don: Suggest members comb through minutes from previous year or two. Which topics have been raised but need our attention? Post to plac list.

Patty: Will apply for LAC.

Meeting End

Next meeting: Dec 7 2021, 7pm

Meeting adjourned: 8:40pm