

Potomac LAC Meeting Minutes

Mar 1, 2022

LAC Member Attendees

Gael Cheek, Co-chair

Wei Lu, Co-chair

Don Libes, Secretary

Sylvia Diss

Absent

Rosemarie Lentini

Patty McGrath

Fred Olowin

Other Attendees

Patrick Fromm, Potomac Branch Manager

Jim Montgomery, MC Library Board (MCLB) Liaison

Edie Wingate, President, Friends of the Library (FOL), Potomac

Chair and Member Updates

Meeting held using Zoom. Gael called the meeting to order at 7:08pm. Agenda previously distributed by Wei via <https://groups.io/g/plac>
[2022 03 01 Potomac LAC Agenda.docx](#)

James "Jim" Montgomery appointed MCLB Liaison.

Current [Potomac LAC Members](#)

Minutes from Previous LAC Meeting

Wei moved to approve minutes from previous meeting with no changes. Approved.

[2021 12 07 Potomac LAC Minutes](#)

James Montgomery, MCLB Liaison - Background and Report

Background

Finished 6 years on FOL Board of Trustees doing library advocacy.

Recently joined MCLB doing legislative affairs.

Report

Recommends LAC members read "[The Changing Nature of Libraries](#)" produced by MC Office of Legislative Oversight. Report describes issues, ideas, and trends of public libraries.

Staffing vacancy rate is 25% caused by a variety of problems.

Don: Is problem lack of money?

Elrich says staffing is the problem. MCPL is hiring; However hiring priority is for front-line staff. Managers are at the end of the hiring queue. Several branches are sharing managers.

Gael: What about low compensation?

Patrick: MCPL is extremely competitive.

Don: Then what explains remarkable turnover?

Patrick: MCPL thinks rotation is a good thing.

Don/Edie: Patrons see it the opposite way. 1 to 1.5 years or less is frustrating.

Patrick: 5 years would be appropriate before rotation. We recognize Potomac has had more frequent management change.

Don: When do you think Potomac might get a permanent mgr?

Patrick: Maybe a few months but I'm mentally prepared to stay for a year.

Edie: Do managers at larger branches get paid more?

Patrick: No. Larger branches offer bragging rights only.

Patrick Fromm, Branch Manager Report

Branch now has Sunday hours.

New librarian: Mike Joseph, ex-military.

2 new pages: Sara Miller, Sharon Phelps

Don: How many open positions remain at Potomac? How many unfilled hours?

Three vacancies:

- LTJ2 Juvenile Librarian II
- LTJ1 Juvenile Librarian I ½-time
- Front desk assistant ½-time

40+20+20 = 80 hours total

Effective today, in-person programming can begin.

Had a children's talk today although not with a lot of people.

Don: What's the policy for deciding which program goes in-person or remains virtual?

Patrick: Conversation groups will be polled as to physical vs virtual. We've been doing that at Rockville. Craft programs will default to in-person.

We also just got hybrid kits (shared by 2 branches) to support virtual programming alongside in-person.

Edie: FOL is willing to pay for more kits.

Don: Please try to avoid what happened with book club: The librarian-host simply announced that the branch manager decided to go in-person. No one was polled. The book club broke up. Has not met since.

Patrick: Related improvements for the book club: Shifted to repeating Zoom links. Improvements for all online programs: Zoom account requirement to reduce troublemakers.

Refresh

Bidding is going on now.

Can expect physical refresh work in summer.

Gael: Can we get details?

Patrick: Won't be made public until the building is re-opened.

Gael: So we won't see details until it's too late.

Edie: Large meeting room is good but could be bigger if anything. Let FOL spend money. FOL received request from MCPL for 35-40K to put in family bathroom and trim meeting room. FOL felt inappropriate use of FOL money plus it would severely decrease size of meeting room which is already often filled to capacity.

Gael: Example of planning process issues.

New business

Sylvia: Working with Librarian Tim recently, 3 of 6 computers were not working. Who takes care of them?

Patrick: I'll follow up with Tim.

Sylvia: Is there a flyer for Kolbert lecture?

Sylvia: Why can't there be announcements on the boards?

Gael: Why can't there be announcements in lobby digital signage and checkout devices?

Patrick: Will check with tech department.

Don: Too many automated emails from new MCPL systems. Examples: materials checked-in, checked-out, due soon, auto-renewed, late, etc. Doesn't matter what you say during self-checkout, you still get email notifications.

8:00pm Sylvia: Leaving to watch State of the Union. Others agreed.

Meeting ended 8:01pm