

## **Potomac LAC Meeting Minutes**

Apr 15, 2025

### **LAC Member Attendees**

Mary Ammermann, Co-chair

Gael Cheek

Sylvia Diss

Sheila Graves, Co-chair

Karen Grimm

Caitlyn Jennings

Millie Kahn (virtual)

Rosemarie Lentini

Don Libes, Secretary

Patty McGrath

Roger Williams

### **LAC Member Absentees**

Ella Hu, previous meeting missed

Anne Ma, previous meeting missed

Michael Namath

Carole Ottesen, previous 4 meetings missed

Cara Seitchek

Mallory Starr, previous 4 meetings missed

### **Other Regular Attendees**

Patrick Fromm, Regional Mgr for Potomac, Chevy Chase, Little Falls; Interim Asst Dir for Programming and Outreach

### **Other Attendees**

None

### **Other Absences**

Jim Montgomery, MC Library Board Liaison, previous meeting missed

Nancy Samson, Branch Supervisor

### **Names and abbreviations (unofficial, for convenience and clarity)**

FOLMC: Friends of the Library, Montgomery County (old)

Friends or OneFOL: One FOLMC (new)

FOLPatrick: Friends of the Library, Potomac Chapter (old)

FOPL: Friends of the Potomac Library (new)

PL: Potomac Library

MCLB: Montgomery County Library Board

plac: Potomac LAC mail list

### **Chair and Member Updates**

Sheila called meeting to order at 7:10pm. Agenda previously distributed by Sheila via plac.

Mary: Cannot be co-chair because I cannot attend until next year.

Patrick: Recommend stepping down entirely due to attendance requirements.

Mary: I agree to resign.

Carole Ottesen resigned (announced in advance via plac).

Roger: Have not been receiving minutes via plac.

Don: Check spam folder.

### **Minutes from Previous LAC Meetings**

Two sets of minutes need approval because previous meeting did not have a quorum.

Motion by Mary to approve Dec 2024 Minutes, seconded by Rosemarie, passed unanimously.

☰ 2024 12 17 Potomac LAC Draft Minutes

Motion by Mary to approve Feb 2025 Minutes, seconded by Rosemarie, passed unanimously.

☰ 2025 02 18 Potomac LAC Draft Minutes

### **Patrick Fromm, Regional Manager Report**

Patrick: Regular trends continue.

Use of print media continues to descend. Lower than previous year.

Electronic is up, particularly Hoopla and Libby up. Hoopla is up normalized to the recent hoopla limit decrease from 10 to 5 borrows a month.

All branches show upcount in in-person visits.

In Potomac, programming continues to be a huge draw, especially to kids programs.

Year to date: 297 programs, 7689 attendees

Compared to programs among all branches, Potomac is solidly in the middle.

Paula's last day (part-time associate). We expect to fill the opening.

I encourage you to watch county council budget meetings, especially the one on library issues and funding.

Advocacy would be appreciated.

Patty: Is there any pro forma letter we can provide for support?

Patrick: Not that I'm aware of. But even if you don't have specific requests, you can offer general support such as "We love libraries."

Patty: Are we happy with the budget that the Executive proposed?

Patrick: "I'm always happy with what the Executive proposed."

Patrick: Regarding the LAC's continued interest in the Grandreaders program, I spoke to the person handling Grandreaders. Potomac was not chosen for the program. But she will talk to JCA about the summer program: Read Across America, where children and adults read together.

Sylvia: How can people volunteer for that program?

Patrick: Contact the JCA.

Sylvia: Can the program be performed in schools as well as the library?

Patrick: Logistics are too difficult to do in schools.

Rosemarie: I've been involved [and gave examples why it is too hard].

Sylvia: Can other groups besides JCA help?

Patrick: There used to be other groups. But it is a lot of work. Too much to keep their involvement.

### **Jim Montgomery, MC Library Board Liaison Report**

No report since Jim did not attend. Second meeting in a row Jim has missed. Concern?

### **Old Business**

#### **Effect on MCPL from closing of the Institute of Museum and Library Services**

Patrick: Darcell put an explanation on the main MCPL page. Some libraries are deeply affected and more dependent on that funding such as Enoch Pratt. In contrast, MCPL is almost entirely self-supporting so we don't expect to suffer impacts except from other libraries elsewhere in MD either via Marina or library cards. As an aside, MD residents are allowed to get library cards from any MD library. So we are concerned in that sense.

Gael: What about banning books? The US Naval library was forced to ban books.

Patrick: MD recently passed a law preventing banning books for political reasons so, outside of MC itself, there is no one else in MD that can force books to be banned.

Roger: Roundhouse Theatre is doing "Bad Books."

Patty: Thrift Books website has a banner on "Banned Books."

### **Discussion of events and events calendar**

Don: Some community meetings that take place at the Potomac Library and are of broad interest are shown on the library calendar but not others. Example: Some Potomac Community Village (PCV) meetings are shown but not West Montgomery County Citizens Association (WMCCA). They're equally valuable. Can we get more of these shown?

Patty: Same for Just Eat It movie last week on April 10. Not on calendar so low attendance. Even the librarians here at Potomac knew nothing about it. PCV and WMCCA should definitely be listed.

Patrick: Only meetings sponsored by the library can be on the event calendar. Meeting room bookings are handled by CUPF.

Sheila: FoL used to be able to get its events on the calendar.

Patty: Can the CUPF form ask: Would you like MCPL co-sponsor?

Patrick: I don't know that CUPF has access to MCPL calendar but I doubt it.

Patrick: What you are asking for is a big hurdle. MCPL would have to get the attorneys involved to get permission for co-sponsorship and it would take a lot of time. We would need permission from CUPF. Even without CUPF, it would be arduous and time-consuming.

Roger: Constant monitoring would be needed.

Don: I don't see why it would be that arduous. The events we are talking about are well-known community organizations and straightforward events. In comparison, if the KKK asked for co-sponsorship, of course MCPL would use common sense to turn it down.

Patrick: We already get complaints from CUPF bookings that people think are co-sponsored by the library.

Mary: Can't you put in a warning? "This event is not sponsored by MCPL."

Patrick: Display cases have been on moratorium for a year because someone complained. So we're revisiting this issue [in the context of the display cases].

Don: The monthly emails to patrons of upcoming events have many duplicates and even the ones that are not duplicates are repetitive. For example, in today's email, Family Storytime was listed 14 times for 7 dates. It would be easier to read if Storytime was listed once with the 7 dates.

Other people: We've noticed this, too. The emails are so much longer and harder to read though than need be because of that repetition.

Patrick: Please forward to me so I can look into it.

Don: Will do.

Gael: The emails also contain silly and unnecessary pictures. Please remove them unless needed for comprehension. They're making the emails longer for no good reason.

Don: I've never seen the pictures. My email settings don't download remote graphics by default. Yet another good reason to not bother with the graphics if they aren't even shown to many people in the first place.

Don: Is there a mechanism for alerting people to calendar corrections? For example, we discovered the LAC meeting date was wrong but the library never sent a correction.

Patrick: I don't know.

Don: MCPL needs a mechanism so people don't miss events or make a trip only to find an event has been moved or canceled.

Rosemarie: This reminds me of many MoCo websites in which people have trouble with the registration process. People call, employees fill out forms for people and many can't get into the class they wanted because it is already filled. We then forget about it until registration time comes around again.

Patrick: I will mention this to Kristine Brennan, our marketing director.

Don: The "Reserve a room" page for each branch is confusing. It shows a graphic with color coding that isn't explained until you start clicking on the hours but you'll be doing that without first understanding if the rooms are even available at those times. Just put in a sentence explaining the color coding on the initial page where the colors are used.

Patrick: Good point.

Don: The branch pages only explain how to reserve the tiny meeting spaces. No explanation how to reserve the big meeting rooms which uses a different method. Please add an explanation.

Patrick: Good point.

### **Status of grandreader potential at PL summer session**

Patrick: Not going to happen at Potomac this summer.

Rosemarie: There are Grandreader opportunities but I would make them more personalized. For example, instead of letting any potentially unreliable people sign up, use invited readers.

Patrick: But Potomac is one of 6 branches for the Hatchlings program for expectant and new parents. This program has already started; openings go quickly. Focus is on early literacy techniques. We're trying to expand Hatchlings to support Spanish.

### **Status of patron discussion list**

Don: 30 people have signed up. All posts so far have been from LAC members!

Don: Either this is a sign that we need more promotion or a sign that Potomac is so good that no community members have any complaints or suggestions.

### **Status of inter-LAC discussion list**

Reading from minutes of last meeting: "Patrick: Had promised to put LAC chairs in touch with another but decided to be cautious exchanging emails since mostly I have only personal emails. However, I have started with two people."

Patrick: Board was concerned with privacy. I will forward emails to two LAC chairs such as Erim, Little Falls LAC. To expedite, just pop in to other LAC meetings virtually and offer them the information.

### **Furniture**

Gael: We spoke to Nancy about furniture for PL. [See last month's minutes.] She said furniture was ordered.

Patrick: I'm not aware that furniture was ordered.

Gael: We were told to wait 1 year after refurb. We waited. The year is up.

Patrick: Furniture is hard to get.

Gael: Nancy specifically said she ordered it.

Caitlyn: Yes, I was in the meeting and heard Nancy say that, too.

Mary: Is there nothing in the budget for furniture?

Patrick: Furniture is incredibly expensive but made to last.

Gael: Nancy said lots of furniture was ordered and would include a teen reading nook.

Patrick: We must demonstrate need. I will follow up.

Patrick: Did you make a recommendation?

Caitlyn: Yes, we wanted more comfortable chairs and presented rationales for different types of furniture than other seating such as beanbags which Nancy agreed to.

Patrick: Doesn't sound likely to get approval.

Gael: Please follow up.

### **New Business & Misc Discussion**

Gael: How about a day that focuses on feedback on refurb, discussion group, etc.

Patrick: Great idea! You could put a table out for a day.

Patrick: Busiest on Friday and Sat at noon. Least busy day for Potomac is Sunday.

Don: I come on Sunday. Is Potomac at risk of losing Sunday?

Patrick: Not presently. But you never know if we might have to revisit it due to budget cuts.

Patrick: Other branches may choose differently. For instance, Connie Morella has more people on Sunday than Friday.

Patrick: Sunday hours came about after COVID.

Don: Do staff get paid extra for working on Sunday?

Patrick: No.

Don: Do staff complain about working on Sunday?

Patrick: Yes!

Patrick: But for various reasons, many people can only attend on Sundays. We split MoComCon across Saturday and Sunday and people love that split.

Gael: Can LAC survey library patrons to gather comments on library redesign?

Patrick: Yes.

**Meeting adjourned: 8:16pm**

**Next meeting: Tue June 17 2025**