

Wheaton Library Advisory Committee
March 20, 2023
Minutes

Attendees: Dianne Whitaker (ex-officio, Wheaton Library Manager), Yesvy Gustasp (chair), Grace Manubay (board representative), Carol Bender, Bianna Ine-Ryan, Mhambi Musonda, Thelda McMillian, Melanie Newbrough, Hoa Nguyen, Andrew Rein, Carolyn Teich, Ania Waller

The meeting was called to order at 7:34pm.

Minutes from February 27 meeting: Thelda moved to accept the minutes; Ania seconded the motion.

Membership Report: Mhambi is now an official member of the committee. Members introduced themselves).

- Dianne has worked with the Wheaton library for 12 years.
- Yesvy has been involved with the library LACs since 1989.
- Carolyn was chair of the LAC for 3 years; has been on the committee for a long time.
- Thelda lives in the neighborhood; has been on the LAC for 5 years.
- Ania said this is her 3rd meeting; she has lived in Montgomery county for 40 years.
- Mhambi is a student at Montgomery College who has lived in Montgomery County all his life. This is his second meeting and he is looking forward to working with everyone.
- Andrew has been on the LAC since before covid. He's been a lifelong fan of the library and volunteers with the FOLMC bookstore.
- Carol has been on the LAC for years; she was recruited by Dianne's predecessor during discussions about relocating the library.
- Helen (Hoa) moved to Montgomery County about 5 years ago. She teaches at Montgomery College; has a 20-month old. She loves the library, she and her family read a lot. This is her second meeting.
- Bianna moved to Montgomery County in December. She is a native Washingtonian who grew up in and around libraries. She is a librarian by trade and has a 9-year old son.
- Grace serves on the Montgomery County Library Board; is liaison between this group and main library board. She has lived in Montgomery County about 20 years and works for the DC Government.
- Melanie is a recent addition to the LAC; has lived in Montgomery County over 30 years.

Dianne gave the Manager's Report:

- Facilities: plexiglass piping in the children's area is still broken due to supply issues. The order for new plexiglass is still pending with no estimate as to when it will be complete. The meeting room door needs to be specially ordered and reframed so it will likely take several more months.

Programming: It has been a fairly successful month so far. Weekly family story times continue on Wednesday mornings. Sunday March 5 the library celebrated "Read Across America Day. Mark Elrich (County Executive) read to children and the event was featured on local news.

Dianne provided a link to the Fox 5 broadcast on Sunday March 5, 2023 [WTTG 3-5-23 Read Across America 10pm.mp4](#)

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 - On March 25, there will be a special program “Hatchlings Ready to Hatch” part of A Mother Goose on the Loose introducing new parents to literacy skills and child development. The second part (for children birth-4 months old) will take place in the fall.
 - Adult programs continue with the addition of Introduction to Library Apps. Grace asked if this is just being held in Wheaton? Dianne said other libraries are also offering this program. Since the library no longer carries print magazines, a number of branches have programs or apps to assist people with periodicals.
 - March is Women’s History Month. On March 11 there was a program “Divided Nation, Divided Town, One Woman’s Story” based on a story Dora Higgins wrote to her mother as confederates came through Rockville.
 - April there will be a financial literacy program but Dianne does not have all details yet.
- Collections: There is no formal update. Library staff are preparing the children’s collection for summer. There are displays for women’s history month and a new area with some holiday and seasonal books on display
- Staffing: Cindy Gill (new children’s librarian) has started. She is considering adding baby story time and bilingual story time; those plans are not yet firmed up. There are plans to another children’s librarian and another desk assistant.
- Vita Tax services continue through April 18.

Library Board Liaison Report: Grace reported that the Board met on March 8 and discussed some of the programs Dianne mentioned. The Board also discussed Legislative Day in Annapolis and support of some library bills being introduced. The budget was released March 15; information is available on the County website. As the hearing schedule is publicized people can provide written or oral testimony. Collections: FOLMC donated a set of picture books called The Welcoming Library about immigrants and immigrant communities. This is available at 6 library branches and will rotate through the system. It will be good for conversation clubs or people interested in learning about immigrants and their communities.

Grace asked the Board about the suggestion raised last month to hold a book drive/donation event for incarcerated individuals. Library policy is not to host donation events for organizations. There may be too many requests from various organizations to select which to support. There are very strict policies on content and other regulations governing what can be donated to incarcerated people. Two organizations were mentioned for people who wish to volunteer for this sort of effort: Freedom Reads (<https://freedomreads.org/>) and DC Books to Prisoners (<http://dcbookstoprisoners.org/>).

Grace did receive some comments and feedback about Library Policies on “Facilities Use” and mentioned that library central staff is also reviewing policies at this time.

- The comment from last month was repeated that the policies are detailed and important to know; would be good to send a link to new library card recipients. Yesvy said the “no fines” policy is very popular.

- Carolyn mentioned that the policy for large space on the second floor is not included. People don't know the space is there and whether they can use it. Dianne said the second floor belongs to the recreation center, not the library. Maybe that should be clarified on the library website.
 - Grisel Castro does bookings for the social hall at Wheaton Library.
 - Mark Comer is the recreation center director.
 - The computer lab is shared with the recreation center and senior center, but the library manages booking of the lab. Technology instruction in the computer lab is part of the library strategic plan, so it will continue to be offered. The computer terminals are linked to the MC Guest WIFI server and can print to the library printers but their primary use is for training/classes.

Please continue to send Grace your comments on these policies

The committee's next assignment is Collections – (1) a pdf document about 11 pages, and (2) policy related to local authors. Committee members can send comments directly to Grace or time will be allowed during the next meeting. Dianne mentioned that one of the rules of librarianship is to be sure the most current information is available for library users.

Other Business

When/how will next meeting be held? Yesvy prefers for at least the next two months to continue via Zoom. Dianne suggests finishing this fiscal year (through June) via Zoom, then in September moving to earlier start time with in-person meetings (every other month?). Perhaps virtual meetings can be held in the winter if the committee prefers.

The next meeting will be April 17; the May meeting will take place May 22 both with 7:30 start time and via Zoom.

There was some discussion about the FOLMC bookstore which is open 7 days/week. Media is also available, prices are very low. DVDs but not VHS tapes are accepted as donations. Cassettes are popular once again.

Hoa mentioned that she did not see Read to a Dog events on the Wheaton Library calendar --- is there a particular reason? Dianne said that the previous children's librarian was not involved with that program, and that volunteers for that type of event tend to go to the smaller, less crowded libraries (Kensington, Twinbrook, Long Branch). The volume of people in Wheaton library could make it difficult but this could be raised with the children's librarian at Wheaton. Dianne was at Twinbrook when this program first started; finding volunteers with well-trained dogs to participate can be a major issue. Hoa said she attended a Read to a Dog program in downtown Silver Spring for which small room(s) were reserved with two dogs and only two children allowed in at a time; she believes this could work in Wheaton. Dianne said it could be considered but, at the moment, the focus at Wheaton is on getting programs running for the youngest children (ages 0-3 years). Going into the summer and fall, the focus will likely move to older children.

Hoa asked whether Wheaton will get a children's discovery room as other libraries have? Dianne says several years ago the decision was made not to have a Discovery Room because management and organization of that type of space is too complex for the staffing Wheaton has now. In addition, keeping the space and toys clean is very challenging.

At 8:40 Yesvy moved to adjourn. Andrew seconded the motion.