

Wheaton Library Advisory Committee
May 22, 2023
Minutes

Attendees: Dianne Whitaker (ex-officio, Wheaton Library Manager), Yesvy Gustasp (chair), Diana Dubrawsky, Grace Manubay (board representative), Carol Bender, Barbara Friedman, Elisabeth Macias, Thelda McMillian, Mhambi Musonda, Melanie Newbrough, Hoa Nguyen, Carolyn Teich.

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

Minutes from April 17 meeting: Yesvy moved to approve the minutes. Carolyn seconded the motion. No objections or corrections reported.

Membership Report:

- One new member: Elisabeth Macias was approved at the April Library Board meeting. Total is now 12 members.

Dianne gave the Manager's Report:

- Facilities:
 - Elevator inspection passed (after three years of being outdated) so the elevator certificate is current.
 - Facility services has been called twice in the past month to address bathroom clogs.
 - There are several outstanding work orders including: the door to the library meeting room (ongoing since Nov 2022), plexiglass end panel in adult fiction area, and plexiglass protection panels in children's area. They are looking for a contractor to do the work.
 - The blinds in the children's area and collaboration area 3 are stuck or have fallen.
 - The sliding doors of the children's programming room remain challenging to use, and don't completely close. This has been a problem for quite some time. The track is aluminum, doors may be too heavy and have bent the track.
 - Diana D. said that almost every time she goes to the library a maintenance vehicle is parked in one of the marked (10-minute) spaces in front of the library. Dianne will let Mr. Banks (property manager) know that contractors should not park in 10 minute or fuel efficient spaces.
 - Thelda asked if there has been follow-up on the No Parking signs? Dianne said that permit parking signs have been placed on Hermitage but not "No Parking" signs. Dianne will contact the traffic person for DoT to find out what is going on with the signs; if it becomes a problem again they can ask police to ticket or tow offenders.
- Programming:
 - Ongoing weekly programs include: Wed Family Story Time; Thurs English conversation, Master Gardeners.
 - Information tables: Mont College, MoCo Reconnects, Pathways to Housing.

- Monthly Programs: Adult book club; fiber arts; community schools family night (Oct-June); internet basics, accessing e-books, streaming video and more.
 - Special Programs: New Orchestra of Washington concerts for young children; How to Plan Your Retirement; Why Bees Matter; Punk the Capital (film screening), Story Tapestries talk with your hands.
 - June programs: Juneteenth; Summer Reading.
 - System wide activities for June: Pride Month Contemporary Conversation sponsored by FOLMC – a poetry reading by Emmanuel Xavier and Reggie Cabicio on June 9 at Wheaton Library
- Collections: Children’s fiction beginning level and seasonal books have been weeded through, as well as children’s DVDs and music. Adult DVDs are being reviewed; usage rates have dropped dramatically since streaming is currently the favorite mode to watch movies and TV. Additional thermal cameras have been added to the collection. Displays on Jewish-Americans, and Asian/Pacific Islanders have been set up for May. May is also mental health awareness month.
 - Staffing: Alicia Ugomori has been hired as a Library Assistant I; there are plans to hire a children’s librarian and a teen library associate. A Library Assistant II will be hired to help the library supervisor/branch manager. Yesvy mentioned kudos to a library staff member who helped a patron access the Wall Street Journal through his laptop/chromebook.

Library Board Liaison Report: Grace reported that there are a number of new board members. Some members were able to take a tour of the collections management facility up county. It was very interesting, they met collection management staff, saw sorting and tagging of books; they learned how much material comes through interlibrary loan.

The Board has been very busy with the county council and budget. The schools want more funding; the county does not know where it can come from so they are looking to cut other areas including the libraries. A concern was the number of vacancies at the library could not be filled. The county voted recently and maintained library funding, but it is not guaranteed until final budget approval in June. Committee members may want to contact council representatives and talk about how important the library is and why funding should be maintained.

The collections manager talked with the board. She is revising the collections policy, so comments received from the Committee will be considered. Grace thanked everyone who took the time to review policies and provide feedback. Carolyn asked whether the Board has a policy on censorship? Grace said the board does not have a policy, that would be up to the collection manager. With member input, the board could come up with recommendations/suggestions but the collection manager will decide whether to follow it. Dianne said when the collection manager receives a challenge to a book based on content, the selectors review the book, its content, which section it is located in and reasons for that criteria; then reply to the challenge with a letter. Challenges are not common in Montgomery County. Programs may have had more challenges than reading materials. The Library Board does not affect what is in the collection, it is determined by professional librarians, particularly in collections department. Dianne said some people have attempted censorship by removing books and not returning them to the library. A group of LGBTQ books were missing from the adult section—no challenge, the books were just taken. The library has attempted to replace those items. Sometimes people mark up or deface

books. Incident reports are done when this occurs. Yesvy asked about book tags that would raise an alarm if items were removed from the library. Dianne said tags have not been used for 10-12 years. That would deter people from self-checkout and the current focus is on ease of use and ease of access.

New Business

A Chair and Secretary were elected for next year.

- Yesvy nominated Melanie to continue as secretary; Carolyn seconded, no other nominations or objections.
- Thelda recommends that Yesvy continue as Chair. Diana and Carolyn seconded. No objections or other nominations.

Miscellaneous

Dianne asked about requests or suggestions for the coming FY; anything we would like the library to do for the community.

Yesvy said some of his neighbors said they do not want any curtailments of privileges, no reductions of current policy or loan periods; they would like more .pdfs on streaming, hoopla, libby, research.

The world language collection has not been updated, they are trying to get additional funding to increase collections in Spanish, Chinese and other languages. Grace said the library recently hired a new outreach manager who is a Spanish speaker; one of his tasks is to do more outreach with the Spanish-speaking communities. Some areas of the county have higher density Spanish speaking populations so they are working to get networks in place to let people know the library is available. Yesvy mentioned the Long Branch library used to have a large Asian language collection – is that still the case? Dianne said the languages offered have changed over time with demographics. Wheaton has Chinese, Vietnamese, and Spanish. Fairland has Farsi and possibly Korean materials. French is available in a couple of locations. No Korean or Vietnamese books have been purchased for a number of years but Chinese and Spanish materials have been purchased fairly recently. If people want to see more foreign language materials in the library they need to advocate with the council – those funds have been cut twice in recent years.

Thelda asked what the schools do to provide information to students. Dianne said that depends on the school; the library is working with Highland and Arcola Elementary. A liaison brings students and family into the library once a month to introduce them to services. It is harder to reach middle school and high school parents but they are working on that. The plan is to have additional staffing to support teen services and reach out to media services at middle school and high school level. Monthly Community Conversations is part of this outreach; the outreach manager for MoCo Public Schools has asked the author or presenter to also present at a high school, as well as offering outreach to students during the day.

Anecdotal comments indicate that co-location of library and rec center has brought in people and families who did not use the library in the past who come in to use the rec center and stop into the library.

Carolyn commented that for ease of use there should be schematics indicating where books are located. When she is looking for specific books she has to walk through the aisles to locate the

appropriate section. Dianne said they need to refresh maps that were available when the library first reopened and make them available for use.

Elisabeth said she has been so grateful that the library has had covid tests and masks available; Yesvy agreed.

Barbara Friedman lives in Glenmont Forest where they have about 11 little free libraries and a number of bulletin boards around the community. Could they work with library liaison to put together an informational flyer to attach to the little free libraries and post on the bulletin boards? Dianne said the focus now is on website and digital links but there may be some printable brochures and flyers. Grace suggested having a QR code to scan as people walk by rather than printed brochures. Dianne will consider that and work with the digital strategies group. There was extensive discussion about using NextDoor to disseminate information. County staff are not allowed to post official information on social media – this can only be done by the Digital Strategies Group. Barbara asked if the committee can get rules and procedures to know what we can post. Is the advisory committee allowed to post library information on social media? Dianne said she will ask for an official reply, and invite the digital strategies manager to address the committee in Fall 2023.

Yesvy asked whether a chromebook from the library can be connected to one of the library monitors? Dianne said they would have to use collaboration room 1 or collaboration room 2 – both rooms have large TVs that can be connected using an HDMI cord that can be obtained at the front desk. Public computers are set; nothing else can be connected to those monitors.

Barbara commented that prior to covid the library had thumb drives to loan to library patrons – can we get funds to renew thumb drives as a service? Dianne said library sells 64MB thumb drives for \$3/each. They no longer give them on loan for temporary use. You can also bring your own thumb drive to use with library computers if you have a file to print using library printers.

Meetings are usually held the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:30pm. Dianne did find a tool that can be used for hybrid meetings but in person meetings will need to start at 7:00 to end when the library closes at 8:00. The 3rd Monday of June is Juneteenth so the June meeting will be held June 26 at 7:30 via zoom. The Committee does not meet in July or August so meetings will resume Sept. 28.

At 8:45 Yesvy moved to adjourn. There were several nods to second the motion.