



LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

September 14, 2016

BOARD PRESENT: Amir, Brooks, Christman, Duval, Persaud, Ram, Reedy, Watts

STAFF PRESENT: B. Parker Hamilton, Director; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary; Mary Ellen Icaza, Public Services Administrator, Community Engagement, Programming and Learning; Rita Gale, Public Services Administrator; Space Management, ADA, and Collection Management; Dianne Whitaker, Wheaton Library Manager; Jan McHenry, Damascus Library Manager; Nathan Chadwick, Long Branch Library Manager; Karen Miller, Germantown Library Manager; Lennadene Bailey, Business Manager; Barbara McClayton, Human Resources and Accountability Manager; Carol Legarreta, Public Services Administrator, IT Infrastructures, Digital Strategies and Emerging Technologies; Uzo Onyemaechi, Chevy Chase Library Manager; Anita Vassallo, Davis Library Manager; Eric Carzon, Twinbrook Library Manager

GUESTS: Manya Shorr, Director of Public Services, DC Public Library

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Watts at 7:10 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Board members, staff and guest self-introduced.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

The minutes from the July 13, 2016 Board meeting were approved.

LAC APPLICATIONS:

The LAC applications were approved.

PRESENTATION: Fines and Fees Recommendation - Bill Duval

- Library Fines Working Group (LFWG)- Bill Duval, Tanner Wray, Kimblyn Persaud, Anne Core, and Brandon Rippeon
- Background
 - MCPL's mission is to offer free and equal access to services and resources that connect the people of MC to ideas and information which sustain and enrich their lives

- MCPL is increasingly concerned about the issue of access to library services and the barriers that fines can impose, particularly on young readers and high risk populations.
- Working Group Charge
 - This working group will examine the Montgomery County Schedule of Fines related to loan periods and renewal limits for all materials, including (but not limited to) adult, children's, and young adult materials and will not examine the schedule for Montgomery County Library Fees (such as for holds, replacing a lost library card, or printing). The review will include gathering information from MCPL administration about current fines practices and current MCPL philosophy about the use of fines, as well as reviewing 'industry practice' via benchmarking and other methods. The goal of the review will be to provide any recommendations to the Schedule of Fines for Library Board consideration within 6 months.
- Issues
 - Fines as a barrier to literacy and information access
 - Disproportional impact on high-risk populations
 - Libraries as a place to access information, not as punishment
 - Impact of elimination of fines on circulation
 - Potential reduction of library income without fines
 - Idea of fines as teaching social responsibility
 - Comparison to library system peers and public practice
- Research and Sources of Information
 - Reviewed fees information from websites of major and comparable library systems across the country, as well as media references to library fee policies
 - Reviewed academic literature on the topic
 - Solicited feedback from Montgomery County Library branch staff and LACs
 - Reviewed relevant excerpts from the MCPL Policies and Procedures Manual
 - Discussed policies for library fines with San Francisco and Washington DC library systems
 - Solicited detailed questions to Director Hamilton and held a group discussion to go into further detail on the issue
- Recommendation
 - Eliminate fines for children's materials and/or accounts for a period to be determined after discussion with library staff
 - Library staff should identify criteria, both qualitative and quantitative, to evaluate the effectiveness and un/intended consequences of the policy's implementation at the end of the pilot
 - Simplify the current Schedule of Fines
- Pros
 - Reduces barriers to literacy and information access, especially for high-risk populations
 - Promotes libraries as a community resource, not as a place of punishment/shame
 - Builds goodwill with local communities and stakeholders
 - Helps free MCPL staff time and fosters less adversarial relationships with library patrons
- Cons
 - Potential impact on circulation

- Fines as a tool for teaching social responsibility
- Decreasing potential county revenue in a time of fiscal restraint (FY15 - \$118,000 for users 0 – 13)
- Acknowledgments
 - Working Group
 - Director Hamilton
 - MCPL staff
 - LAC members
 - Library staff from San Francisco and D.C.
- Discussion:
 - The money collected through fines does not directly go back to MCPL.
 - The total children's fines owed in FY15 was \$118K.
 - Early literacy is a huge barrier, so it is worth the \$118K.
 - It is difficult to measure the impact on circulation.
 - Circulation has not gone down at DC Public Library.
 - What is being measured in DC? Check outs and check ins.
 - Consider why items are not being returned.
 - DC Public Library (DCPL) Fines and Fees Structure
 - Eliminated daily fines across the board in 2012.
 - Eliminated all fees for all customers 18 years and younger.
 - DCPL does not use a collection agency.
 - DCPL did not market the elimination of fines and fees; it was tied into another initiative.
 - Recommend linking to age of person and not to the material type.
 - Those over 18 who own fees (lost materials) are blocked from checking out, but not from using public computers.
 - No one receives a notice anymore.
 - Most important is access.
 - A public library is not an archive. We want materials to be out in the world.
 - DCPL customers do their own renewals.
 - Impoverished children tend to move a lot and abruptly.
 - The national standard is to spend 30% of income on housing; around the beltway 70% is being spent on housing.
 - Even if the book is never returned, it is most definitely doing that child more good.
 - When there is a threat of money, that is a deterrent for customers to return to the library.
 - MCPL's maximum fine is way too high; it discourages adults from using our services.
 - Children do not, for the most part, control when they come to the library.
 - If you take away the fine barrier, circulation might increase.
 - LFWG collected community input by surveying LAC members and attending various LAC meetings.
 - The lesson should be that we just want children to read.
 - Educate people – give them the articles regarding the benefits of forgiving fines.
 - How are the users invited back who have fines? Conduct a massive amnesty campaign.

- Libraries and parks are two of the only voluntary government entities, the rest are mandatory or punitive.
- Are there statistics regarding the percentage of library cardholders who owe fines?
- Paying a little back is very common in government.
- Once parents are subjected to fines for their children's late materials, they are hesitant to allow their children to check out materials again.
- Seniors are also impacted by fines.
- Recommendation: After a great deal of research and discussion on the topic of library fines, the LFWG recommends eliminating fines for children's materials and/or accounts (age 13 and under) for a pilot period of a length to be determined by MCPL staff. The LFWG recommends that both qualitative and quantitative criteria be established prior to implementation of this policy in order to properly evaluate the outcome of the pilot. If, at the end of the pilot period, the evaluation shows positive results, the elimination of fines for materials age 13 and under would become permanent policy. Separate from the issue of children's materials fines, the LFWG would also recommend that library staff work to simplify the current Schedule of Fines for MCPL.
 - It was moved by Kathleen Reedy that the Board accept the recommendation made by the LFWG. The motion was seconded by Kim Persaud. Chair Watts put the question and the members voted. The vote was 5 in favor and 2 abstains. The motion was carried.
- MCPL accepts the recommendation of the Library Board.
 - An ad hoc committee will be created to do the work based on the groups recommendation.
 - Director Hamilton will come back with a plan in December after briefing the County Executive.
- Amnesty week is a great way to start.
- The link was sent to the ULC webinar regarding fines and fees.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- **Librarian of Congress**
 - Carla Hayden was sworn in at noon today as the 14th Librarian of Congress by Chief Justice of the United States John G. Roberts Jr. Ms. Hayden is the first woman and the first African-American to serve as Librarian of Congress. She was nominated by President Barack Obama and was confirmed by the U.S. Senate.
- **Personnel Changes**
 - Carol Legarreta, Public Services Administrator for IT Infrastructures, Digital Strategies and Emerging Technologies, will be retiring, effective January 1, 2017.
 - MCPL is working with the Office of Human Resources on a temporary overage so that Carol Legarreta will have 30 days to train her successor.
 - Fran Ware, manager for Silver Spring Library, is retiring, effective January 1, 2017.
 - For continuity of operations, effective October 2, 2016, Fran Ware will manage the Chevy Chase branch and Uzo Onyemaechi will manage the Silver Spring branch.

- Frank Sun, Senior Librarian in Collection Management, will retire, effective October 1, 2016.
 - Arlene Means, Senior Librarian, will be transferring from Silver Spring to Collection Management.
- **Strategic Plan**
 - County Executive Leggett has approved MCPL's FY17-20 Strategic Plan.
 - We have begun rolling it out to the branches. I am visiting each branch to hear feedback and answer any questions from staff.
 - It will be rolled out to the Library Board, LACs and FOL at the Joint Meeting.
 - After the Joint Meeting, we will begin the rollout of the Plan to the public via posters, bookmarks and our website.
- **Career Online High School Program (update in folder)**
 - On September 7, 2016, the County Executive held a press event to announce the enrollment of the first students into MCPL's Career Online High School program.
 - There were a number of reporters from area news stations in attendance.
 - Two students were able to attend.
- **Staff Development and Training Day**
 - Staff Development and Training Day 2016 is on October 10.
 - We will be convening at two locations this year, the Silver Spring Civic Building and the Silver Spring Library.
 - Board members should watch for registration information coming via email.
- **Refresh/Construction Projects**
 - Wheaton - LAC meeting on Monday night had a guest speaker, Susan Krasnican, member of the Save the Wheaton Library community group, who asked for the LAC's support for keeping Hermitage Avenue in its current location. Construction on new Hermitage continues. No official word on when the demolition of the library and construction on the new library/recreation center will begin. Request has been made to Moving Services to dismantle the ballroom contents for the Wheaton Interim starting Monday October 24th. We will close the interim on Thursday, October 20th or Friday, October 21st to pack up the few items that will require packing. By contract with the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad, we must vacate the ballroom by 8 a.m. on Wednesday, October 26th and cannot reoccupy it until after 12 noon on Friday, November 4th. The interim library contents will be stored temporarily on the first floor of the Silver Spring Library. After the Board of Elections vacates the space in November, we will bring in shelving units to house the collection of 18,000-20,000 items that was packed when the Wheaton Library closed in March 2016.
 - Davis and Little Falls construction: Demolition of the interior has been completed on both branches. The contractor is working on electrical rough in of the lower level restrooms, infill and modification of the masonry wall and door openings, and building close in inspections on both branches. Asbestos abatement was completed at Little Falls the week of July 25th. Asbestos abatement was not planned for Davis Library but was completed over a five-day period in late August when the construction contractor found asbestos in the flooring material on the main level.
 - Bethesda, Quince Orchard, and Bethesda refresh design work: A design contract was awarded to Delta located at 860 Hooper Road, Endwell, NY.13760 in July (this is the same architect who did the refresh design work

for the Kensington Park and Twinbrook Libraries). Design meetings for each of the three libraries began the first week in August. To date, there has been discussion of general plan concepts, furniture scope, initial thoughts on color scheme and concept feel, as well as a review of the items in the project scope for each of the three libraries. The project architect visited the libraries the first week of August to survey for space layout and to photograph samples of existing furniture. Demolition and new work plans for the branches have been reviewed and an initial furniture presentation and selection for each library has been completed. The current timeline has design completed by mid-December with construction documents and bids expected in January and February, construction contract award in March, and construction in April through July.

- **Council Committee Sessions**

- Abandonment and closure of portion of Hermitage Avenue, Kensington-Wheaton T&E - September 22, 2:00 PM - 3CCR
- Discussion - homelessness in the Silver Spring CBD and in libraries HHS - September 26, 9:30 AM - 7CHR

- **Silver Spring Apartment Complex Fire**

- MCPL assisted after the fire in the following ways:
 - Talking to the residents affected and determining their needs.
 - Worked with Reemberto Rodriquez, Silver Spring Regional Services Center Director, to determine ways to help community members. Offered MCPL staff help with potential programs.
 - Spanish speaking Outreach staff provided much needed translation services.
 - Enabled Long Branch Library to serve as a meeting space for ATF and Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD). This space was needed in order to provide a command point to review resource needs and logistics. This was utilized over a period of several days.
 - Coordinated a deposit collection at the Recreation Center which included Spanish-language J and YA books. This was implemented after Outreach team members received feedback from staff at the Center on the needs of Flower Branch Apartment residents who were staying at the Center.
 - The outpouring of donations was extraordinary, and staff continued to direct these donations to the appropriate sites for several weeks.
 - Administration scheduled Outreach team members to return to the Community Center on August 12th. They provided activities and resources for families and children until 5:00pm. MCPL continued to make Outreach team members available throughout the next week, up until most of the families had been relocated.
 - Worked with MCPD and Health and Human Services (HHS) to use Long Branch Library as a starting point for a Sunday Night Vigil on the August 14th.
 - Present on Friday, August 19th when MCPD used the upstairs meeting room to notify family members on the positive identification of their loved ones lost in the disaster. This was a very difficult and emotional meeting for all concerned.
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counseling was arranged for Long Branch Library staff several days after the disaster occurred. It was important to give staff support, and facilitate the processing of this

tragedy. Staff members knew some of the affected families, and one of the young boys that did not survive the explosion, was a frequent Long Branch Library customer.

- Since those first few weeks, Long Branch Library has continued to host community meetings with the MCFD Fire Chief and Impact Silver Spring and CASA de Maryland. It has been a very productive forum and has enabled MCPL to connect the community with the Long Branch Library staff and resources.
- We also are working with HHS and Hospice Montgomery on establishing support groups that will start next Wednesday and last through November, at minimum. Contact has also been made with Maryland Legal Aid to provide a legal clinic on September 24th to help all residents that qualify to receive free legal advice.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

- LAC Awards
 - Mike Wallace has been nominated for the David Chiles Member of the Year Award. It was moved, seconded and voted to award this to Mike Wallace.
 - The award will be presented during the November 2, Joint Meeting.
- Kathleen Reedy has accepted the nomination for chair of the Library Board. It was moved, seconded and voted for Kathleen Reedy to become the chair of the Library Board.
- This is Chair Watts' last meeting. She was presented a certificate of appreciation.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

B. Parker Hamilton