



## **Library Board Meeting March 13, 2019**

**ATTENDEES:** Briskin-Limehouse, Chiu, Durcho, Duval, Rippeon, Villar, Wallace

**STAFF:** Anita Vassallo, Acting Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

**GUESTS:** Andrea Hall, Chair, Twinbrook Library Advisory Committee; Ronald Morreale, Secretary, Twinbrook Library Advisory Committee

The meeting was called to order by Chair Chiu at 7:00 PM

The minutes from the **February 13, 2019** meeting were approved with corrections.

The LAC applications were approved:

- Quince Orchard – Lin
- Silver Spring – Thomas
- White Oak – Bloom, Melle, Passamaneck, Schueler

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- **Personnel** -The following staff changes took place during the month of February:
  - New hires
    - Luz Flores, Librarian I, Noyes
    - Sean Riley, Librarian II, Noyes
  - Promotion
    - Rachel Rappaport, Librarian II (Chevy Chase) to Senior Librarian (Connie Morella)
- **Refresh Projects Update:**
  - Chevy Chase – No definite date. It is not scheduled for this fiscal year.
  - Long Branch – No definite date; anticipate August 2019.
  - Marilyn Praisner – No definite date; anticipate late April 2019.
  - Wheaton – Substantial completion expected by late April 2019.
- County Executive Elrich will present his **FY20 Recommended Operating Budget** and highlight his budget priorities on Friday, March 15, 10:30 -11:30 AM, at the Executive Office Building, Lobby Level Auditorium. The press conference will be broadcast live on County Cable Montgomery, Comcast/RCN Channel 6 HD 996/1056, Verizon 30. The conference can also be viewed live on the County's website at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/CCM/ccmlive.html> and on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/montgomerycountyinfo>.

- **Make Music Montgomery**  
Enter MCPL’s first music competition! Submit audio or video musical acts by March 18. A select group of musical acts will be invited to perform in front of celebrity community judges during the Just for the Record – A Vinyl Day event on April 27, 2019. All County residents are invited to participate. For more information on how to enter, visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library).
- In partnership with Recorded Books, MCPL has begun **offering new and exciting resources**. To date we have rolled out:
  - Acorn TV (January) - Provides thousands of hours of international, commercial-free programming. Customers can “checkout” the Acorn TV channel for seven days and have unlimited access to all content. Currently, there is no limit on the number of seven-day “checkouts” a library cardholder is permitted.
  - The Great Courses Library Collection (February) - Offers unlimited access to top university professors and experts from Ivy League and other renowned schools and institutions. There are hundreds of videos on subjects ranging from photography to physics, astronomy to art, history to health.
  - Stingray Qello (March) - The world’s largest collection of concert films and music documentaries. This service allows MCPL cardholders to watch over 1,500 amazing live moments in music streamed on-demand to most digital devices.
- **VOX™ Books** has been launched as part of the collection. VOX™ Books are the world’s first audio books that live in print books. The permanently attached VOX™ Reader transforms an ordinary print book into an all-in-one read-along. There’s no need for computers, tablets or CDs. Children simply push a button to listen and read. VOX™ Books combines outstanding picture books and non-fiction with audio recordings that capture children’s attention and make learning and literacy development fun. Features:
  - Hardcover book with full audio recording. Simply push a button to listen and read, from beginning to end.
  - Speaker for parent and child or group listening, plus earphone jack for individual use.
  - Fully portable read-along with rechargeable battery provides 100+ listens before recharge. No data or Wi-Fi required.
- There was a recent incident at the **Silver Spring Library** in which an individual physically assaulted staff. The police had already been called when the customer initially became unruly, so they were able to apprehend the person. A meeting has been scheduled with the District Commander to discuss ways to try to prevent these occurrences before they escalate any further. Security services for the County is going to conduct building assessments for six of the buildings. Working with the Department of General Services to make the staff desk work area more secure.

## **CHAIR’S REPORT:**

- Two vacancies on the Library Board.
- Library Board and the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc. sent a brief letter to the County Executive regarding the status of the MCPL director position.

## **WORKGROUP REPORTS:**

- Legislative and Public Affairs

- Waiting for the budget to be announced and then mobilize from there.
- All Board members should be sure to send the Advocacy Toolkit to the LAC chairs.
- Board and LAC Activities
  - Have a broader discussion regarding the purpose of the report. How to make it more useful, more effective. The current form is very one dimensional.
- Library Policy and Practices
  - Three-year term issue will be addressed.
  - Take comments from the December discussion and tie back into the PowerPoint presentation.
  - The elimination of fines and fees is snowballing across the nation. Fines and fees are real barriers to accessing needed materials and resources.

### **LAC LIAISON REPORTS:**

- Maggie Nightingale – Did not have a meeting.
- Germantown – Examples of the VOX books shown by the branch manager. A directive from administration regarding how to store/shelve the books. The sign is still damaged. Branch manager indicated that she had attended some of the budget forums and found the comments made about Libraries distressing. Felt the libraries was taking a lot of very unnecessary criticism. Felt staff morale is great.
- White Oak – Met last week. The big topic was the LAC applications that were submitted in September. Did not see the value in the one page. Did not mind completing it because it did not take much time to do so. They meet bi-monthly.
- Long Branch – There is no activity with the LAC.
- Chevy Chase – Meeting this Friday. Still focusing on the refresh. Interested in knowing about Lindsey Hundt and whether she can serve on the LAC. Some members of the LAC want to work with the FOL Chapter to talk to outside officials.
- Little Falls – Lost the chair. Have a meeting on March 21; first meeting in a while. Will have to select a new chair and secretary. David Schumaker, who attended the February Board meeting, has expressed an interest in becoming a member of the LAC. He has been sent some information and has contacted the branch manager.
- Noyes – Noyes did not meet in March and the next LAC meeting is April 4.
- Quince Orchard – The next meeting is Tuesday, March 19.
- Olney – Was going to meet in February, but it was cancelled due to inclement weather. Will meet next Wednesday, March 20. Has not met the acting manager of Olney yet.
- Kensington Park – Met last week, did not have a quorum. There are a couple of individuals interested in joining the LAC; will check with the chair regarding the status of their applications. A new member expressed interest in climate change and wanted to have a few more materials and displays on this hot topic. Suggested that it be a topic of the month. The VOX books is a cool tool. The branch manager expressed some concern regarding the feeling that morale is low within libraries. She feels that morale hasn't been better in a while. She said that individual LAC members could submit their thoughts to County leaders on the matter. It is important to hear from multiple voices.
- Gaithersburg – Received a letter from a community member regarding an animal that was brought into the branch. The LAC chair responded to the letter.

- Aspen Hill – The branch manager has done an amazing job going through punch list with the LAC. They have concern regarding the location of the people counter – not sure if it is accurately counting the number of visits. Also concerned about the height of the paper towel dispensers.
- Silver Spring – Will not meet until this coming Monday, March 18.
- Marilyn Praisner – Manager still has not heard from the LAC chair, but has been interacting with one LAC member. An unofficial meeting with this LAC member will be held to determine how to drum up support and new members.
- Connie Morella – Next meeting is next Tuesday, March 19.
- Davis – LAC members are pleased with the branch’s current programming; they have the AARP tax aide program. Pleased with children’s programming, especially Dance Your Fanny Off. Happy that the HVAC work has been completed. Still pushing for a changing table in the men’s restroom. Have concern with the updating of the LAC Handbook, especially the term limits.
- Rockville Memorial - LAC applications were approved at the last Board meeting. The branch manager is scheduling a meeting during which roles for that group will be defined.
- Twinbrook – The chair and secretary for Twinbrook LAC are in attendance tonight. During the last meeting there was discussion on recruitment strategies; how to connect with community and staff; and how to serve as a voice for the community.
- Follow-up:
  - Germantown
    - The shelving/storing of VOX books will be left up to the branches.
    - The outside sign has been repaired.
  - Gaithersburg - A member of the community stopped by the library. She brought with her a macaw. Libraries does not allow animals of any type in the branches unless they are service animals. The manager explained this to the individual, also giving the definition of service animal according to the Department of Justice. The individual took umbrage at this, explaining that the macaw was a therapy animal. The individual wrote a letter to the chair of the Gaithersburg LAC accusing the manager of species discrimination and racial discrimination (the community member is Asian). The individual accused the manager of talking down to them. Anytime an employee is accused of discrimination of any type, that complaint is sent to the County’s EEOC office, which found no basis for the complaint. The LAC chair did respond to the individual apologizing that the person felt offended and reiterating the rules regarding and definition of service animals.
  - Aspen Hill
    - Anita Vassallo will follow up regarding the people counter.
    - There are standards regarding the placement of the paper towel dispensers and other items in public facilities.
  - Davis
    - The issue with the changing table in the men’s room is that there is not enough space to add a table and the area remain ADA compliant. Anita Vassallo will check with Angelisa Hawes, Assistant Director for Facilities and ADA, regarding this.
    - The LAC Handbook is updated annually in September.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Hold Fee [Anita Vassallo]**
  - Currently when someone places a physical hold on an item, and it is there at the branch or transferred from a branch, the customer is notified and has ten days to pick up the item or incur a \$1.00 fee.
  - Several things have happened since that fee was implemented:
    - No more print notices – There were issues with the print notices arriving in time for customers to make the ten-day window. It was not working for customers, and it was an expense.
    - Customers are now notified by email, text, or phone. There has been no feedback regarding anyone not having a means by which to receive these notifications.
  - Customers get notifications as soon as their materials are trapped.
  - Because customers are being notified in a more timely manner, we feel there is no longer a need for the ten-day window and want to reduce it to seven days. This will allow these materials to cycle through faster. Popular items and those on a long hold list will become available sooner. With a seven-day pick up, a week will be gained in three cycles.
  - In order to do this, we feel the \$1 non pickup of hold fee must be dropped.
    - The pickup window would be shortened.
    - Pushing to remove barriers to accessing services; fine and fees prove to be a huge barrier.
  - We still need to determine how much money is involved in the collection of the \$1 fee. The fee is commonly waived by the branches.
  - If a book is not picked up after the ten-day period, it goes to the next customer on the hold list or back to the owning library.
  - Next steps:
    - Provide information to the Board on the amount collected and amount waived for the none pick up of holds.
    - Board members should send any additional questions to Anita Vassallo.
    - Anita Vassallo will put this in writing to send to the Board.
- **Board Transition**
  - Kim Durcho, Vice Chair, will be leaving the Board due to relocation. Her last meeting will be the April 10, 2019 meeting.
  - Jane Williams' name was submitted by Chair Chiu to the Board to replace Kim Durcho as the vice chair.
    - Call for discussion – the Board supported the recommendation for Jane Williams as vice chair.
    - It was moved, seconded, and vote passed that Jane Williams be vice chair effective, April 11, 2019.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

This is the first Library Board meeting attended. It should be required that LAC members, at least the chairs, attend at least one Board meeting. It would be helpful to attend on a regular basis. It is great to see the feedback from the LACs being brought before the Board and addressed. [Andrea Hall]

Suggested possible solutions to lessen the occurrence of people not picking up holds or canceling holds. [Ronald Morreale]

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.

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Anita Vassallo, Acting Director