



## Montgomery County Library Board

October 14, 2020

**ATTENDEES:** Briskin-Limehouse, Christman, Duval, Melnick, Negro, Rippeon, Roberts, Spencer, Villar

**STAFF:** Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary; Felicity Brown, Manager, Chevy Chase Library; Dianne Whitaker, Manager, Wheaton Library

**GUESTS:** Linda Pottern, Chair, Davis Library Advisory Committee; Jim Montgomery, Friends of the Library Montgomery County, Inc. (FOLMC)

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

### **INTRODUCTIONS:**

- Roll call of Board members; guests were introduced.

### **MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:**

- The minutes from the September 9, 2020, meeting were approved with one correction.
- The following LAC applications were approved:
  - Chevy Chase - McDonald
  - Olney – Chiu
  - Potomac – Cheek
  - Rockville Memorial - Zhang
  - Silver Spring – Anderson

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

- Personnel - The following staff changes took place during the month of September:
  - New hires:
    - Joseph Elliott, Clerk/Driver, Collection Management
    - Laurie White, Program Specialist II, Digital Strategies
  - Separated from County service:
    - Pik Au Chan, Library Assistant I, White Oak
    - Nancy Benner, Branch Manager, Connie Morella
    - Melida Riedemonn, Library Associate, Marilyn Praisner
    - Susan Cohen, Librarian II, Germantown
    - Kathleen Johnson, Technician, Collection Management
    - Lindsey Phelan, Program Specialist I, Deaf Culture Digital Library

- Staff Day 2020 was held virtually on October 12. The theme was “Racial Equity and Social Justice,” which is a County-wide initiative funded by the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc. Speakers included: Tiffany Ward, Montgomery County Equity Officer; Dr. Carolyn Coleman, Vice President of Montgomery County NAACP; Kelli McLoud-Schingen, specialist in global and domestic diversity, dramatic presentations, cross-cultural communication; Dr. Rene Hill, The University of Maryland College of Information Studies (UMD iSchool) Principal Lecturer; and Christine Platt, Managing Director for the Antiracist Research and Policy Center, American University. The day also included Lunch and Learn with interactive activities such as yoga, Zumba, Body Blast and a time to chat and share areas of passion. There were also interest sessions with topics including ageism, environmental justice, diversity in books, meditation and stress management, and MCPL data.
- Refresh/Construction Updates:
  - Long Branch Library – Substantial completion for this refresh is expected on November 3, 2020 and that the branch will be readied by Libraries to re-open in January 2021.
  - Germantown Library –Expect carpeting to start in late November 2020 and finish in December 2020. Furniture will be installed by January 2021. We will also be performing some ADA remediation work. ADA work will be complete by January 2021 as well.
  - Maggie Nightingale Library –Maggie Nightingale design was just awarded on September 18, 2020, which is only a couple of weeks after the design start month of August 2020. We are still on track to complete design by April 2021. Construction is scheduled to begin in May 2021 and end August 2021.
  - Potomac Library – Planning is scheduled to be completed September 2020, with design estimated to begin in October 2020 and be completed in December 2021. Construction is estimated to start January 2022 and end in June 2022.
  - Damascus Library – Division of Building Design and Construction will begin planning for this refresh in January 2021 and end planning August 2021; start design September 2021, end design December 2022, start construction January 2023, and end construction June 2023.
- MCPL has received four **National Association of Counties (NACo)** awards for outstanding programs. The annual Achievement Award Program recognizes efforts by local jurisdictions that promote responsible, responsive and effective county government initiatives. The NACo award-winning MCPL programs and initiatives include:
  - MoComCon: A comic and fandom convention for adults, teens and children of all ages.
  - Just for the Record – A Vinyl Day: Since 2018, MCPL, in partnership with Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc. and other community partners, has offered an annual event in celebration of vinyl music, its culture, art and sound.
  - In the Hands of Customers: Improving efficiency and availability of materials.
  - Data Analysis: Deconstruct, remodel, rebuild and map institutional data to assess the true impact of library services to the public, customer information needs, engagement and learning.
- Department Employee of the Year Award was bestowed on Maddie Hines. Maddie, Manager of the Digital Strategies Unit, led the team, which was propelled to the forefront of MCPL’s operations after our closure mid-March, in implementing our first virtual program. A few short weeks later, nearly 40 programs a week were offered virtually. We now offer over a hundred virtual programs monthly with thousands of attendees. Maddie single-

handedly configured the Zoom platform for this use, spending hours learning and configuring the intricacies of the platform's privacy settings to safeguard the department and our customers. Her guidance and technical implementation was vital in the rollout of MCPL's Digital Card as well as the Holds to Go service. Maddie and her team have been pivotal to our department's communication strategy during the constantly changing operating scenario for which we find ourselves.

- MCPL has partnered with Montgomery Magazine to provide book recommendations in every issue of their publication. See the first of these articles in the October/November issue. <http://digital.montgomerymag.com/issues/October-2020/index.html>
- **Summer Read and Learn: Highlights (See Attachment)**
  - Program overview
  - Customer survey
  - Staff feedback
  - Analysis of findings
  - Customer feedback
- **Upcoming Events**
  - Citizens Advisory Boards (CABs) Forum
    - [Monday, October 26, 2020 \(7:00 pm. To 8:30 p.m.\) – Up County](#)  
Or Dial In: 1 – 443-692-5768; Conference ID: 156 421 695#
      - [Transportation, Bridges, and Roads - Breakout](#)
      - [Education - Breakout](#)
      - [Recreation, Parks, and Libraries - Breakout](#)
      - [Environment - Breakout](#)
      - [Health and Human Services/Other CIP issues - Breakout](#)
    - [Wednesday, October 28, 2020 \(7:00 pm. To 8:30 p.m.\) – Silver Spring](#)  
Or Dial In: 1 – 443-692-5768; Conference ID: 930 761 975#
      - [Transportation, Bridges, and Roads - Breakout](#)
      - [Education - Breakout](#)
      - [Recreation, Parks, and Libraries - Breakout](#)
      - [Environment - Breakout](#)
      - [Health and Human Services/Other CIP issues - Breakout](#)
- **Recovery Plan**
  - We are still in Phase 2 of the County's recovery. There has been no date announced regarding moving to Phase 3.
    - For Libraries, this means remaining at the status quo with the addition of computer labs at some branches. It will be a limited, appointment-based service.
      - We are waiting to hear from the Chief Administrative Officer regarding free printing for customers.
    - The only other consideration is printing for customers with pick up.
- **Budget Update**
  - Things seem to be looking better regarding the FY21 budget situation.
  - The County is counting on Congress passing another stimulus package.
  - The County is currently working on documentation to recover some funds from FEMA.
- **Questions and comments:**
  - How to inform people more about what the Library has done and is doing.
    - MCPL has been doing a lot of marketing via social media.

- Currently looking for funding to purchase OrangeBoy Savannah, a software as a service customer intelligence platform designed to help organizations report customer insights in real-time. Savannah also offers tools to engage customers using targeted email communications and mechanisms to gather valuable customer feedback.
- Recently interviewed on Seniors Today and Montgomery Al Dia.
- Flyers and information regarding MCPL's services and programs have been shared with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).
  - Lauren Martino, Acting Early Literacy and Children's Services Program Manager, is emailing the MCPS media specialists directly.
  - Director Vassallo and Andrea Christman will discuss the sharing of MCPL staff email addresses with MCPS.
- Suggestion: Try to get a segment on the Kojo Nnamdi Show.
  - MCPL will work through the Public Information Office to try to schedule this.

**CHAIR'S REPORT:**

- Still looking for a vice chair for the Library Board. Anyone interested should contact Chair Roberts.

**WORKGROUP REPORTS:**

- Library Policy and Practices – (Duval, Briskin-Limehouse)
  - No report.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup – (Rippeon, Melnick, Negro)
  - Discussion of doing more regarding advocacy and promoting what Libraries has been doing in our current climate.
- LAC and Board Activities (Roberts, Villar)
  - No report

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Taskforce Recommendation on Adult Fines
  - Chair Roberts called for discussion and questions on the recommendation.
  - Bill Duval reported that no questions regarding the recommendation were received via email.
  - A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to accept and adopt the recommendation of the taskforce.
    - The Board members recorded their votes via chat. These votes were transferred to the minutes:
      - In favor: Melnick, Briskin-Limehouse, Duval, Christman, Spencer, Negro, Roberts, Villar, Rippeon.
  - Next steps: Bill Duval will forward the final recommendation to Director Vassallo, who will draft a decision memo to the County Executive. She will meet with staff to determine the most expeditious way to submit the memo.
  - Bill Duval thanked the taskforce members for their heavy work on this assignment.
- Reviewing LAC assignments.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Joint Meeting – Virtual, November 18, 6 PM
  - Encourage LAC chairs and members to attend.

## **LIAISON REPORTS:**

- Davis – Next meeting is October 20.
- Silver Spring – Next meeting is October 19.
- Aspen Hill – Met on September 14. A new chair was elected.
- White Oak – Met on September 15. A new chair was elected.
- Noyes – Met on September 17. There are 15 members, 11 of which participated on the last meeting. Due to the library being closed, they were concerned about getting visibility for the branch. They talked to the acting manager, Lauren Martino, about conducting some virtual programs.
- Quince Orchard – Membership has gone down. The LAC has advertised for members on community listservs and has two prospects.
- Rockville Memorial – Met on October 6. Passed on a huge thank you to Andrea Christman from the branch manager, Patrick Fromm, who was very complimentary regarding the information she shared on how to work with schools for better collaboration and sharing of information. Questions and concerns regarding the computer lab pilot and the safety of staff due to Covid-19 were passed to Administration and the responses shared with the LAC. There are a couple of new members. The LAC is starting to grow a little, all by word of mouth.
- Twinbrook – The LAC has gone very dormant; there are one or two members now. Eric Carzon, branch manager, has transferred to Connie Morella.
- Damascus – Next meeting is November 10.
- Germantown – Waiting to hear back about the date for the next meeting.
- Little Falls – Met on October 6. Virtual environment opened up new opportunities; including an opportunity to attend other LAC meetings to learn new things and partner with other LACs to increase participation.
- Maggie Nightingale - Met on September 23. Staff morale is very high. Everyone was appreciative of what Libraries is doing now.
- Gaithersburg – Met on October 6. Branch Manager Cindy Schweinfest reported that staff morale is high and that some days they pull almost a thousand items for holds to go and interlibrary loan.
- Montgomery College – MC is in the midst of planning the spring schedule. The decision was made to remain virtual until end of March 2021. To meet the needs of students, the 15-week course offerings will decrease and instruction will primarily be delivered in seven-week courses through spring 2021. Curbside drop off service was conducted during the second week of September; plans are being made to do it again. A post pandemic workshop will include vetting architects for renovation and submission to the state for funding. Working with procurement for a new library management system; hopefully it will be in place by the end of spring. MC will actively engage employees on equity and inclusion – how not to be a racist. There is a hiring freeze (MC Libraries has seven vacancies and one retirement).

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Jim Montgomery
  - FOLMC is encouraged by the initiative Libraries is taking to try to send emails to current library cardholders.
  - How much money is OrangeBoy?

- Approximately \$45k/year.
- Has Libraries increased the Wi-Fi at the branches?
  - MCPL was working with the Department of Technology Services on a grant for this but we did not get the grant.
  - MCPL is moving forward to add outside hotspots to nine of the branches.
- Looking forward to the Joint meeting on November 18.
  
- Diane Whitaker
  - Wheaton LAC held a meeting on September 15. They are scheduled to meet again on October 19.
    - Chair Roberts will reach out to Dianne Whitaker regarding having a Board liaison at that meeting.
  
- Felicity Brown
  - Very much missing Board Liaison Mike Wallace. Looking forward to having a new LAC liaison
  - The LAC attempted to meet last month but did not have a quorum to hold elections

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

## Program Overview & Data Methodology

- 04 Held June 15 through August 31
- 04 Correlates with County Executive "Priority Outcome and Headline Measure" *Thriving Youth and Families*
- 04 Three questionnaires review the program's operation and effectiveness
  - 04 Customer survey: outcome measures
  - 04 Staff overall assessment: review processes with the goal of improving quality
  - 04 Staff assessment of performance feedback on FOLMC-sponsored events
- 04 Participation data gleaned from Beanstack software

## Analysis of Findings (cont'd)

Although the overall numbers are lower than 2019, it is important to consider the proportion of participation to the number of registrations, as well as to view results within the context of each year's data set.

**2018**  
 Age 0-5 registrants 11,250 → 49% of registrants participate → 80% of participants complete the program  
 Age 6-12 registrants 17,031 → 43% of registrants participate → 79% of participants complete the program  
 Age 13-17 registrants 3,021 → 44% of registrants participate → 98% of participants complete the program

**2019**  
 Age 0-5 registrants 11,632 → 46% of registrants participate → 84% of participants complete the program  
 Age 6-12 registrants 12,014 → 34% of registrants participate → 82% of participants complete the program  
 Age 13-17 registrants 3,411 → 52% of registrants participate → 82% of participants complete the program

## Findings: Customer Survey (n=53)

03

Customer Needs	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
My son reads confident readers	4%	4%	27%	30%	25%
My son reads more often	4%	4%	24%	30%	24%
My son shows interest in more often	4%	4%	24%	30%	24%
My son reads more often sharing ideas or the books we read with family and friends	12%	12%	18%	44%	24%
My son reads spending more time on his reading experience	4%	4%	18%	34%	24%

## Customer Feedback: Making a Difference

*Comments are unedited*

I like this summer read and learn because it is the best and also helps those who don't want to read start to read very well.

I think that this is one of the best summer reading programs that you guys have held.

Thank you for continuing the program online this summer.

Thank you very much to every one that works in MCPL.

## Findings: Staff Feedback

03

- 04 Ninety-five percent of staff attended/received program training
- 04 Responses suggest the SRL is a positive customer experience. This year posed a multi-faceted challenge as the virtual platform was a novel approach for the program.
- 04 FOLMC-sponsored events
  - 04 Twenty-two programs were scheduled.
  - 04 Smallest attendance for a single event was 21; the largest, 131. The average number of attendees per event was 64.
  - 04 Staff describe 91% of attendees as "very interested" or "extremely interested" in the programs.

## Customer Feedback: Making a Difference (cont'd)

*Comments are unedited*

I just wanted to send a quick note of thanks: the virtual format of summer read and learn went well for my six year-old, and she was EXTREMELY satisfied with her prize pack especially the wizard brew goo. She also attended the make a dragon craft program last week and it was a perfect activity. Until we can return to the library, we really appreciate the programming the staff has adapted. Thanks!

## Analysis of Findings

03

- 04 Customer survey responses indicate interest in and appreciation for the program - particularly given the 100% virtual platform and the essentially self-guided nature of the program due to the pandemic.
- 04 On average, 58% of participants indicate behavioral and knowledge-based changes because of program involvement.
- 04 In 2020, there were more newcomer registrants to the program (52%) (2019 had 44%; 2018 had 48%).

## Customer Feedback: Making a Difference (cont'd)

*Comments are unedited*

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you and everyone involved with the "Summer Read and Learn" challenge. My 6-year-old son really enjoyed participating in the contest (as did his mom and dad!), and we were very excited to pick up his prize pack this afternoon. Upon arriving at Kensington Park Library and opening up his bag, he was absolutely thrilled with the dinosaur grabber, the shark tote bag, the wizard slime, and the book coupon - wow! These are really challenging times, and you and everyone at our county libraries are truly making a difference. (I can't tell you how great it is to be able to check out books and DVDs again!) From all of us, thank you so much!