



## Montgomery County Library Board

April 13, 2022

**ATTENDEES:** Briskin-Limehouse, Christman, Levine, Lighter, Pant, Roberts, Spencer, Fiery, Miller, Montgomery, Schiff

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

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

### **INTRODUCTIONS:**

- Roll call of Board members

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

- The minutes from the March 9, 2022, meeting were approved with one correction: page 7 line 38; change distribution to disruption.
- The following LAC application was approved:
  - Aspen Hill - McKoy

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

- **Personnel** - The following staff changes took place during the month of March 2022:
  - New Hires:
    - Stephanie Deal, Librarian I, Gaithersburg
    - Katherine Maleckar, Librarian I, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee
  - Promotions:
    - Cassandra Harper, Librarian I (Wheaton) to Librarian II (Rockville Memorial)
    - Priya Kuppuraju, Library Assistant Supervisor (Rockville Memorial) to Librarian I (Twinbrook)
    - Lesya Brannman, Library Desk Assistant (Germantown) to Library Assistant I (Maggie Nightingale)
  - Transfers:
    - To Anh Chung, Library Assistant I, Marilyn Praisner to Olney
    - Linda Curvey-Brown, Senior Librarian, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee to Connie Morella
    - Judy Juh, Library Assistant Supervisor, Chevy Chase to Rockville Memorial
    - Yizhi Peng, Library Assistant I, Gaithersburg to Damascus
    - Raymond Prather, Olney (Library Assistant I) to Collection Management (Driver/Clerk)

- Rachel Rappaport, Senior Librarian, Rockville Memorial to Collection Management
  - Marilyn Smith, Librarian II, White Oak to Olney
- **Hiring:** During FY22, the Department undertook a robust recruitment effort. A new model for the Department’s role in recruitment and selection was implemented. As a result, we were able to interview more than 300 candidates and fill more than 55 vacancies. Nine were outside candidates and the remaining were transfer requests – many part-time to full-time and promotions. The result of this change in technique and implementation is more far reaching than the number of positions filled. Transferring responsibility for completing a full recruitment package, allowed the unit to concentrate on simultaneous recruitments, big issue items and organizing the work.
  - Branch positions
    - Librarian I part-time
      - Four new part-time librarians for Brigadier General Charles E. McGee Library attended County orientation on Monday.
    - Library Assistant I- part-time
      - Ten MCPL employees were promoted to LAI positions effective in March and April. Additional offers to fill remaining LAI positions are with OHR.
    - Librarian II adult
      - New LII A has started at Rockville Memorial
      - New LII A will start at Long Branch on April 25
      - Brigadier General Charles E. McGee candidate withdrew from consideration- new promotional offer at OHR
      - White Oak position filled by transfer
    - Librarian II children’s
      - Wage equity calculations underway for several offers
  - Teams are completing draft job postings for all remaining branch positions.
  - Library Assistant II, Library Desk Assistant and Library Aide will be the next recruitments, scheduled for later this month. OHR has the ads and will be posting.
  - In anticipation of the reclassification of several MIII branch positions to Senior Librarian, the Senior Librarian recruitment will be reposted in mid-April.
  - Other Positions
    - Driver/Clerk position filled internally
    - Senior Librarian at Collection Management filled by transfer
    - HR manager interviews underway
      - Barbara McClayton will retire effective May 1. We wish her all the best. Barbara has been the HR manager for six years and with the County for 28 years.
- **Refresh/Construction Updates:**
  - **Maggie Nightingale-** Staff report back to the branch on April 18. Final completion by contractors is scheduled for May 8. The collection will be delivered to the branch from storage and Collection Management (April 20 – 25). Staff will work to get everything on shelves and inventory collection.
  - **Damascus** - Assessment continues. Lighting audit of library and recreation center completed.
  - **Chevy Chase** – The library has been added back into the CIP under the Library Refurbishment Project.

- **Potomac** - Pre-bid meeting held April 7, and bids are due by the end of the month by interested contractors.
- **Noyes** – Added back into the CIP.
- **Clarksburg** – The Department of General Services Division of Building Design and Construction submitted a Program of Requirements for the new Clarksburg library for MCPL to review. MCPL is reviewing and updating outdated items.
- **The Purple Line Corridor to Success** – Programs offered May – July in collaboration with Prince George’s County Memorial Library System to highlight resources available to residents from both library systems along the Purple Line Corridor.
- **Reorganization of MCPL Branch Administrative Structure** - On August 17, 2021, a Decision Memorandum was sent to Chief Administration Officer Rich Madaleno requesting approval to reorganize our branch management structure in order to improve organizational effectiveness, branch operations and service to the community. On October 26, 2021, the memo was approved and signed by Mr. Madaleno. Implementation is set for July 2022.
- **FY23 Operating Budget** - On March 15, County Executive Marc Elrich released his recommended Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Operating Budget of \$6.3 billion, which is an increase of 5.7 percent from FY22 approved all funds budget. It is a 7 percent increase for the Montgomery County Government (all funds except for debt service). The section of the operating budget for Public Libraries can be accessed at this link - <https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/basisoperating/Common/Department.aspx?ID=71D>
- **Upcoming Events:**
  - **Stories to Broaden Understanding: Authors Series**
    - April 19, 6-7 p.m. **Meet Author Eman Quotah**  
Born in Saudi Arabia, Eman Quotah will discuss her work, *Bride of the Sea*, named the best debut novel of 2021 by Booklist. *The Washington Post* described it as a “nuanced view of the Saudi kingdom through a cast of compelling characters and a sweeping plot that spans continents and decades.”  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6347985>
    - May 10, 7-8 p.m. **Meet Author Ruby Namdar**  
Born and raised in Jerusalem to a family of Iranian-Jewish heritage, Ruby Namdar will discuss his book, *The Ruined House*, which won the 2015 Sapir Prize, Israel’s most prestigious literary prize and described by *Newsweek* as a “wildly original novel...unsettling and beautifully written.”  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6348066>
    - June 14, 7-8 p.m. **Meet Author Laila el-Haddad**  
Howard County author, social activist, policy analyst and journalist Laila el-Haddad will discuss her work, *The Gaza Kitchen: A Palestinian Culinary Journey*, which received the “Best Arab Cuisine Book.” With photographs by Maddie Schmitt, it recounts stories about cooking, farming and family.  
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6348097>
- **FOLMC Restructure:** As most are aware, about three weeks ago the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, a 501(3)(c) nonprofit organization, announced that after careful consideration, it was changing its chapter model. They stated that the decision to create a new model was based on a years-long business review that showed some of the chapters had failed to file required documents to maintain their status as charities under Maryland Law. These oversights threatened the charitable status of the whole organization. Despite efforts to resolve these issues within the chapter model, it was determined that revising their model was the best way going forward.

- After some discussion and based on questions from Board members, the FOLMC executive director and/or FOLMC Board of Trustees president will be invited to the May Board meeting.

#### **CHAIR' S REPORT:**

- Based on the poll from a prior meeting, it was agreed there would be a few in-person meetings this summer. The Board will meet in person in June and July at the Rockville offices unless there is a change in the COVID situation, which will continue to be evaluated.
- In past years, the Board has recessed in August. Board members were asked ot vot
  - The Board members voted to take a break in August 2022.

#### **WORKGROUP REPORTS:**

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Duval, Briskin-Limehouse, Manubay, Fiery)
  - Progressed as far as they can in updating the Library Board Manual.
  - A few items in the Manual that may be for legal reasons. These have been sent to the Boards, Committees and Commissions Office to determine if they can be deleted or updated.
  - Will begin reviewing the Library Policies.
  - Are there other policies that should be reviewed?
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Montgomery, Schiff)
  - There are five sessions of public testimony next week. Working with FOLMC to coordinate the testimony of MCLB chair and FOLMC Board of Trustees President Pam Saussy.
  - Will set up individual meetings with Council members.
  - Will circulate the testimonies.
  - Board members are encouraged to write to their individual Council representatives and Councilmember Jawando (Council Lead for Libraries).
  - The Council will vote on the Operating Budget by the end of May.
- LAC and Board Activities (Roberts, Levine)
  - Working on a plan to assist LACs to recruit new members.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- None

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- None

#### **LIAISON REPORTS:**

- Long Branch – Still no LAC. Has been in contact with Acting Branch Manager Dianne Whitaker regarding strategies for recruitment. Discussed using the regional services center to get information out about joining the LAC. The branch manager will see who is already active in that community and can provide names of people who would be interested in joining the LAC. Branch manager mentioned attending the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to promote the LAC. Working to meet the branch manager in person.
- Marilyn Praisner – Has not met since the last Board meeting.
- Silver Spring – The LAC is doing fine.
- Montgomery County Public Schools – Schools are on spring break. Will be back in full swing on Tuesday.

- Maggie Nightingale – Had the opportunity to meet with the members, which was wonderful. They are due for the election of LAC officers. Tracy Slaughter has been elected chair, replacing Ralph Hitchens; Barbara Ebert has been reelected as secretary. No longer has a treasurer but will have a LAC book sale coordinator who will be a member of the Friends of the Library. This raised some questions regarding new terms for officers and when elections should be held.
- Damascus – Damascus is down two LAC members who were long running participants. They had to step down, which is unfortunate. Hopefully they will be able to replace those members. There was a question about the increase in ebooks.
- Quince Orchard – Making progress. May 4<sup>th</sup> is the next meeting. Acting Branch Manager Steve Warrick working with the members.
- Potomac – Met once with the LAC. They are perplexed by the FOLMC actions – many people are on both LAC and FOL. There is some concern. Staffing is an ongoing issue – when are the new staff going to show up?
- Connie Morella – Met twice with the LAC. Branch Manager Eric Carzon lead a discussion about the reorganization – why it makes sense and is going forward. There was a discussion about the collection. Maybe there could be a section in the newsletter about the collection and how it works.
- Olney – No meeting this month.
- Accessibility Advisory – Met last week. A lot of effort and thought put into the inclusion training the group developed for library staff. They are anxious to see it put into action. Elizabeth Lang explained that the Staff Development Coordinator position is vacant. This position is responsible for training. Met with Ari Brooks and Lysette House regarding FOLMC newsletter not being accessible. They communicated that as a non-profit, they are not required to be ADA compliant. Elizabeth Lang disavowed that.
- Kensington - No update. Did not have a chance to check in with the branch manager this past month.
- Wheaton - Met on March 28. Was not present, but LAC chair reported that during the meeting they discussed the budget and its impact on libraries. The branch manager led a demonstration on how to access digital newspapers. The next meeting is scheduled for April 18 at 8 PM.
- Little Falls - Met on April 5. LAC members continue to share news about the library through neighborhood community newsletters and listservs. The LAC was interested in hearing about the new MCPL outreach vehicle, and suggests having one of the first stops be the Bannockburn Community Center. The LAC still has issues with "sinkhole" area in front of the library. Fencing was installed to protect kids from falling in, but there is a big gap in the fencing (3 feet). A gate cannot be installed since it needs to be open for access. Maybe a decorative, but sturdy barrier be put in perhaps attached with zip ties, so an adult can get access but not a child? LAC members also think the gate is unsightly and recommend working with the garden club to plant something on/around it, or put banners on it. The LAC has also been in conversations with the branch manager about improving the outdoor space at the library. The group is drafting a memo to Director Vassallo with a project request to improve outdoor seating/access for programs. The memo will be sent in the near future. The LAC secretary is stepping down from the role, as he is moving away from the area. The next meeting is scheduled for June 8 at 6:30 PM.
- White Oak – Has not had a meeting this month. Will meet next in June when they are slated to have elections.

- Aspen Hill – Met on March 21, which was the first Monday following the FOLMC announcement, it was emotional and passionate. They wanted to notify the Library Board of the LACs extreme sorrow and grief over the decision of the FOL.
- Noyes – Will meet on May 12.
- Germantown – Still trying to reconstitute.
- Davis – Has not met since the last Board meeting. Has spoken to everyone involved and meetings are being planned.
- Chevy Chase – Has not met since the last Board meeting. Had a productive meeting with Acting Branch Manager Tina Deifallah. She is working to get more members. The LAC had three members, and one has resigned. The person who resigned was upset about FOLMC and did not find the LAC productive.
- Montgomery College – Earlier this semester, Montgomery College’s Dual Enrollment Program launched a new Virtual College Program. It is a partnership between the College MCPS. Students from all MCPS high schools, private high schools, and home-schooled students can participate in the Virtual Middle College Program enrolling in online courses, while enrolled in high school. This is different from the Early College Program which is offered to 11th and 12th grade high school students. Between both programs, the student population is approximately 1,400 students. These students have full access to MC’s online library resources. In the event a student enrolled in one of programs contacts one of the MCPL branches for assistance, they can refer the student to chat with one of our librarians or feel free to help the student access the resources.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.