



Montgomery County Library Board

July 13, 2022

ATTENDEES: Ahmed Wilder, Briskin-Limehouse, Christman, Duval, Levine, Lighter, Manubay, Montgomery, Pant, Roberts, Schiff, Spencer

STAFF: Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Dr. Lolita Smith, Manager, Human Resources; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary;

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roberts at 7:03 PM

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Roll call of Board members

MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:

- The minutes from the June 8, 2022, meeting were approved.
- The following LAC applications were approved:
 - Aspen Hill – Muralikrisnan, Zhu
 - Brigadier General Charles E. McGee – Holmes
 - Germantown – Singh
 - Kensington Park – Arellano
 - Wheaton - Waller

PRESENTATION: Introduction and Recruitment Update - Dr. Lolita Smith, Manager, Human Resources

- Dr. Smith worked with the federal government for 26 years; 21 of those years were active duty. Went back and did the same thing without the uniform on. Wanted to do something different, and knew Montgomery County was a diverse workforce where she could better utilize her skills.
- Purpose: 1) To provide Library Board members the status of MCPL current vacancy list as of July 13, 2022; 2) To discuss MCPL recruitment strategy for FY23 and beyond; 3) To discuss MCPL recruitment strategy for FY23 and beyond; 4) MCPL HR current focus area
- Overall Current Vacancy Status
 - MCPL has a total of 101 vacant positions
 - 82 positions are actively being worked
 - 19 positions are in line to be addressed no later than August 26, 2022
 - 82 Positions In-depth Update
 - 26 pending interviews
 - 14 pending re-announcement
 - 12 pending wage analysis worksheet
 - 8 pending re-class/re-vamp/organizational structure

- 6 are completed and have a new employees orientation program (NEOP) date through August 1, 2022
 - 5 positions are duplicate (MII restructure to grade 25 positions)
 - 5 pending NEOP date
 - 2 pending offer letters from OHR (Librarian II FT)
 - 2 positions are currently open and will be closed July 13 and July 22
 - 1 position is currently going through MCPL Voluntary Transfer Opportunity program
 - 1 position just declined the offer; scrubbing list for additional candidates before re-announcement is needed
 - 19 Positions In-depth Update
 - 13 x Library Associate positions
 - 1 x Administrative Specialist II (Business Office)
 - 1 x Administrative Specialist I (Collection Development)
 - 1 x Program Specialist II (Public Service Administration)
 - 1 x Program Specialist I term (Deaf Cultural Digital Library)
 - 1 x Program Manager I (Human Resources)
 - 1 x Information Technology Tech III (Technology Management)
- MCPL Recruitment Projection Update
 - Manpower Data
 - 483 current onboard strength
 - 346 merit employees
 - 137 non-merit employees
 - 101 number of vacancies
 - 82 current open recruit fill actions being worked as of July 13
 - 19 remaining vacancies to be addressed
 - Recruitment Plan
 - Continue to recruit all 82 vacancies
 - Establish and meet with panel members of remaining 19 vacancies no later than August 26, 2022
 - Establish Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) on hiring process for MCPL
 - Ensure panel members, interview questions, and panel availability are established prior to submitting hiring action to OHR
- MCPL-HR Focus Area
 - Focus area – Recruitment
 - Hiring a workforce with the ability to attract and retain employees requires an organizational approach that analyzes talent, implements innovative strategies to recruit, reduces time to hire, increases effectiveness of the hiring processes, and projects an actionable plan for a diverse, inclusive, and ready workforce.
 - Continue to use and update MCPL Vacancy Tracker to provide end-to-end stats
 - Continue to conduct weekly OHR meetings with the Recruitment POC, which will allow MCPL HR to monitor the recruitment process
 - Ensure MCP trains supervisors on the ability to hire a workforce with the right skills, in the right places, at the right time
 - Foster relationships in order to perform outreach and build relationships with the community

- Comments/Questions:
 - Did you find those candidates were still available or are you finding that they have found other employment?
 - Out of all the candidates we reached out to, we were able to probably get a little over 50% of them that were still available and interested in working for Montgomery County Public Libraries.
 - Does Montgomery College or any other Maryland college have a library track for people interested in getting a degree in Library Science?
 - Currently, in in the state of Maryland, and in the surrounding jurisdictions, it really is only the University of Maryland and Catholic University that have the Master's degree programs. Not sure if any offer a Bachelor's degree in library science.
 - Dr. Smith will check with the community college.
 - Library Associate – Goes through a six-month training program provided by the state of Maryland, which is referred to as the Library Associate Training Institute. Attendees go through an intensive course on library reference services, children's services, etc. At the end of that period, although they do not have the professional librarian certification that the MLS degreed staff members have, they do have a certificate, and they're able to work at the information and circulation desks.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- **Personnel:** The following staff changes took place during the month of June:
 - New Hires:
 - Lolita Smith, Human Resources Manager (MIII)
 - Grace VanderVeer, Library Assistant I, Twinbrook
 - Claire Rossin, Senior Librarian, Kensington Park
 - Kylie Sparks, Senior Librarian, Little Falls
 - Promotions/Reclassifications:
 - Clotilde Puertolas, Central Administration, Program Specialist II to Program Manager I
 - Transfers:
 - Ching Ip, Library Assistant I, Potomac to Gaithersburg
 - Nesibu Awelachew, Library Assistant I, Twinbrook to Wheaton
 - Separated from County Service:
 - Kate Spencer-Kociol, Librarian I, Rockville Memorial
 - Bruce Williams, Library Assistant Supervisor, Twinbrook
 - Still have a lapse target which prevents all positions from being filled.
- **Refresh/Construction Updates**
 - Damascus - Final Facility Assessment submitted on June 30, 2022.
 - Potomac - Notice to Proceed (NTP) issued to CDCI. NTP#2 expected on July 17, 2022. All shelving has now been removed (completed July 7, 2022). Contractors met with Garden Club and arranged for them to relocate plants in front of the timber retaining walls to be removed. All plants have been relocated.
 - Noyes – Added back into the Capital Improvement Plan. Expected closure spring 2023.

- 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.
- Brigadier Charles McGee (Silver Spring) - Facility Assessment, January, 2023.
- **Questions/Statements re Friends of the Library**
 - Is it the function of an FOL to serve as an informal intermediary between branch staff, particularly library assistants and branch managers, and to have daily interaction with library staff?
No – it is no way the role or function the Friends of the Library to act as intermediaries between staff members, or between supervisors and their direct reports, or to have daily interaction with library staff as part of their volunteer responsibilities.
 - New structure of FOLMC creates a new burden on staff.
The Department disagrees with this assessment.
 - How will appreciation for library staff be handled?
Branch supervisors will still be able to request funds from FOLMC for staff lunches, etc.
 - How will the MCPL director solicit input from libraries and funding?
Community input regarding libraries and library services is specifically the role of the Library Advisory Committees and the Library Board.
- The [Summer Reading Challenge Kick Off](#) held on June 18 was a huge splash! By our estimates, over 2500 people attended, which is just incredible. We had almost 5,000 children and teens sign up in less than a week; there are now 10,500 children and teens registered.
- **Upcoming Events**
 - [Chesapeake Critters!](#) - In-person: See live animals of the Chesapeake Bay Kensington Park, July 16
 - [Career Corner](#) – In person: Resume help and advice on job hunting Brigadier General Charles E. McGee, July 18
- Comments/Questions:
 - What we want is robust active library advisory committees that reflect the diversity of the communities they serve.
 - Educating the LACs on their roles regarding funding is very important.
- Certification of Appreciation from County Executive Elrich was presented to outgoing Board Chair Sonja Roberts:

The County Executive of Montgomery County, Maryland, awards this certificate to Sonja Roberts in recognition and appreciation of your dedicated time and energy serving the residents of Montgomery County, Maryland, as a member of the Montgomery County Library Board, you have my thanks and gratitude for making our community a better place to live, work and raise a family. September 30th, 2019 through July 30th, 2021.

 - Board members thanked Chair Roberts for her service.

CHAIR' S REPORT:

- Chair Roberts thanked the Board for their support and well wishes. She stated that it has really been a pleasure. She had the pleasure of learning so much in this capacity and just helping to make sure that our community has the resources they need from the library. She has enjoyed her time working with everyone and learned a lot.
- This is Chair Roberts last meeting. Laura Briskin-Limehouse will lead the meeting in September.

- Chair Roberts encouraged the Board members to continue to drum up support from the community, increase LAC membership, and more engagement from the community, which is extremely important. The Library, as seen during the pandemic, has been such a great resource for the community.

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Duval, Briskin-Limehouse, Manubay, Fiery)
 - Planning to meet with Director Vassallo regarding the policies document.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Montgomery, Schiff)
 - The one pending item that came out of the budget process is that during the final budget session of the full Council, Councilmembers Friedson and Jawando agreed to have a work session in September regarding County personal procedures, particularly as they apply to the library.
 - Will put together a list for Dr. Smith with the names and phone numbers of Council staffer and everybody who is going to be involved in this session, because they will be very interested in what she has to say.
 - Otherwise, budget is passed, things are quiet
- LAC and Board Activities (Roberts, Levine)
 - Work on getting this group reconstituted. Revisit during the September meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- LAC Handbook – Based on conversations about the FOLMC, the references to FOLMC in handbook should be reviewed. Tabled until September to assure alignment.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Election of officers – Board chair and vice chair
 - Chair Roberts called for nominations for the chair position.
 - Tim Lighter was nominated.
 - No other nominations were made.
 - Questions were called for by Chair Roberts; a vote was held. Tim Lighter was elected chair.
 - Chair Roberts called for nominations for the vice chair position.
 - No one expressed interest in the vice chair position.
- Naming of public libraries
 - There have been some comments regarding confusion as to where a library is located if it is not included in the name/new name.
 - The MCPL website shows locations of all libraries.
 - The renaming of a library, or any County facility, is at the discretion of the County Executive. There is an Administrative Procedure for the process.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Marilyn Praisner – The LAC has not met since the last Board meeting. Plans to meet next month.
- Brigadier General Charles E. McGee – They are preparing for summer break.
- Rockville Memorial – Met earlier this month. They are focusing on recruitment of new members.
- Twinbrook – Still defunct. Will reach out to whomever comes on board August 1 to coordinate and try to reconvene that group or find interested members in the community.

- Quince Orchard – Were planning to meet in July, but one of the two members was not available, and the other could not meet in August. The next meeting will be in September.
 - Janice Levine expressed her willingness to assume the liaison positions for the LACs currently being liaised by Chair Roberts (Germantown and Noyes).
- Olney – Met this month. Meet again in October. Shared information conveyed by the FOLMC during the last Board meeting. Branch Manager Kate Sweeney will be moving to a different position as of August 1.
- Accessibility Advisory – Elizabeth Lang and liaison Tim Lighter presented. The committee would like to present to the Library Board. They are drafting a mission document and developing their own version of LAC handbook. Will meet again in early September.
- Kensington Park – Did not have any LAC member until today, so that is exciting. There will be a change in branch management. Councilmember Jawando visited as a part of his Library Tour. Staff appreciated his visit.
- Little Falls – Held elections. They are still interested in learning about their proposal for facilities improvements for outdoor space. The facilities assistant director was going to get back to respond sometime before the end of July. The LAC meets on August 2, so we'll hope to hear something before then.
- Wheaton – Held elections – co-chairs and a secretary. They will meet in September.
- White Oak – Met on June 7. Met for about an hour in person. Talked more about the budget. Invite them to the June Board meeting, so I think a lot of them heard what the FOLMC had to say. The meetings are held quarterly, the next meeting will be in September.
- Aspen Hill - Met June 13; was not able to attend. They have two new members who are high school students. Taking July off; August 15 is the next meeting.
- Davis – Has not met since the last Board meeting.
- Chevy Chase – The LAC is sadly still defunct. There will be a new manager beginning August 1.
- Montgomery College – Experiencing a big sweep of retirements in senior leadership. Just within the last week, it was reported that two campus presidents/provosts will be leaving – one relocating, the other retiring. The College is currently looking to find who will be interim in these positions until they can do a national search. There are also two other senior leadership positions that will need to be filled soon.
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) – In the summer there are a lot of professional learning events and there are summer school happenings at the different schools. The acting superintendent is now the official superintendent as of July 1. She is getting her senior leadership in place. They just announced the Deputy Superintendent, the Chief Academic Officer, and a Chief Operating Officer. So all of those people are in place. Looking forward to the new school year. The first back to school event is August 18. Has been working with FOLMC to get the full support with book sale and book signing because there are two children's authors coming to the back to school event – Peter and Paul Reynolds. MCPS had a number of last minute retirements of media specialists.
- Noyes – Was unable to attend the last Noyes meeting.
- Germantown – This LAC is defunct.
- Maggie Nightingale - Had some very successful big events: Our "Sharks!" program and Peter Wood magic show each had over 75+ in attendance! Summer Reading signups are doing amazingly well, and as of yesterday, our tiny branch has captured a good portion of the overall signups. Gearing up for several partner programs, including Games Unbound's Dungeons and Dragons, Pets on Wheels' Read to a Dog, Department of Environmental Protection, Recycling 101 programs, Build your own Terrarium, and SHIP Medicare programs. The next LAC meeting is scheduled for July 28.

- Damascus - To celebrate Shark Appreciation Week, Damascus is hosting a Shark-a-palooza event on July 25, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in-person for ages 3-10. LAC meetings will resume in September.
- Potomac – The LAC did not meet since the last Board meeting.
- Connie Morella - Met on July 12. The members gave a fond farewell and best wishes to Eric Carzon; they clearly value him very highly. Mary Gies from Councilmember Friedson's staff attended. She will be handling his part in the September joint work session by the Government Operations and Education and Culture committees on County personnel practices with particular reference to libraries. Staffing was the main topic of the meeting and they were urged to tune into Dr. Smith's presentation at the Board meeting the next day.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Anita mentioned that some of the FOLMC groups might become independent nonprofits. Will they be like foundations? Is there a foundation for Montgomery County Public Libraries? [Martha Kyrillidou]
 - The intentions of any of the disaffiliated chapters are not known to us.
 - MCPL does not have the foundation model.

ADJOURNMENT:

- The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.