



Montgomery County Library Board

April 9, 2025

ATTENDEES: Bouie, Brier, Clouse-Radigan, Johnson, Lighter, Manubay, Montgomery, Solomon, Spencer, Van Puymbroeck, Will

STAFF: Darcell Graham, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Angelisa Hawes, Assistant Director, Facilities and ADA; Steve Kapani, Interim Assistant Director, Business Operations; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Staff Liaison

GUESTS: Ari Brooks, Executive Director, Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc.; Jennifer Diamond, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee LAC; Megan O'Brien, Public

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

- **INTRODUCTIONS:**

- Roll call of Board members
- Introduction of guests

MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:

- The minutes from the March 12, 2025, meeting were approved. [Motion to approve made by Candice Will seconded by Suzette Spencer. Unanimous vote to approve.]
- The following LAC applications were approved. [Motion to approve made by Jim Montgomery, seconded by Candice Will. Unanimous vote to approve.]
 - Aspen Hill – Angel-Ramirez, McKoy, Stephenson
 - Quince Orchard – Howell
 - Twinbrook - Fox
 - Wheaton – O'Brien

PRESENTATION: Steve Kapani, Interim Assistant Director, Business Operations

FY26 County Executive (CE) Recommended Budget

- The County Executive transmitted his FY26 Recommended Budget to County Council on March 14.
- There were some reductions recommended, the CE reflected his commitment to MCPL by recommending some much-needed enhancements to MCPL's budget.
- County Council will make final decisions on the FY26 budget in late May.
- The CE's recommended General Fund budget for FY26 included \$44,413,073 for Personnel and \$10,139,766 for Operating, for a total budget of \$ 54,552,839.
 - The approved FY25 budget was \$52,451,70. The FY26 budget reflects an increase of \$2,101,138 or 3.98%.

- The FY26 budget included funding for 426 positions which are a combination of full-time and part-time positions equaling 383.11 FTEs (full-time equivalents).
- The net overall increase in the FY26 budget was driven by wage adjustments and recommended budget enhancements.
- CE's Recommended Enhancements
 - Increase Collection Acquisitions budget by \$121,464 to meet the demand for digital materials. The projection is that this increase will enable MCPL to continue to offer five Hoopla checkouts per month despite the anticipated increased usage and cost in FY26.
 - Increase the World Languages collection by \$153,667 to begin the revitalization of these collections, with purchases in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, French, Amharic, Farsi, Russian, and Bengali, distributed to library branches where those languages are most spoken.
- CE's Recommended Reductions (or Opportunities to Explore Other Resources and Efficiencies):
 - Two (2) Program Manager II positions created to manage the Outreach & Education and Central Programming Teams were recommended for elimination.
 - Reductions to the Adult, Teen, and Early Literacy Programming funds resulting in an approximate 20% reduction to their overall funding budgets. MCPL is looking at alternative funding to cover this shortfall.
 - Reductions to the Office Supplies, Furniture and Moving budgets of approximately 20% - 25%. When MCPL was tasked to identify possible areas for reductions in the FY26 budget, these areas were considered since they have the least direct impact to staff and customers.
 - Discontinuation of two of the lowest performing databases - Brainfuse and Gale Business Insights.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- It is National Library Week! A message was sent to MCPL staff on National Library Workers Day (April 8) from the Director and County Executive Elrich.
- Impact of the News of the Institute of Museum and Library Services Funding
Letter sent to Public Information Office; Library Board; Friends of the Library, Board of Trustees; and posted on MCPL's website and social media platforms.
- MoComCon 2025 was great! This two-day event was held on March 22 and 23 at Germantown Library and BlackRock Center for the Arts.
 - Approximately 4,000 attendees participated over the weekend
 - Over 500 buttons were made on Saturday
 - Approximately 100 costumed customers took part in the Cosplay Parade on Sunday
 - Over 600 people joined in playing board games
 - Over 200 people participated in the Superhero Storytime
 - One adult Cosplay contest participant shared she had participated in our very first cosplay contest 9 years ago as a youth!
- **Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Council Sessions**
 - February 27 – Education and Culture Committee session
 - Amendment to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program and Supplemental Appropriation #25-32 to the FY25 Capital Budget, Noyes Library for Young Children Rehabilitation and Renovation - \$3,000,000 (Source of Funds: GO Bonds, Contributions, Federal Aid)
 - March 24 - Education and Culture Committee session

- 21st Century Library Enhancements Level of Effort
 - Clarksburg Library
 - Library Refurbishment Level of Effort
- April 1 – Full Council (To make preliminary decisions – straw vote expected)
 - FY26 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program
- **A Tour of Area Libraries with Unique Elements** is planned for Friday, May 2nd from 8 AM – 5:30 PM. Plans are to visit [Exploration Commons](#) (Carroll), [DIY Education Center](#) (Howard), [Lunch], [Storyville@Rosedale](#) (Baltimore), [Medfield Rec Center Esports Lounge](#) (Baltimore). Members of the Board are invited to participate.

PRESENTATION: Sustainability and Green Initiatives @ MCPL

Angelisa Hawes, Assistant Director, Building and Branch Operations

- **LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design**
 - A LEED certified building is a structure that meets specific sustainability standards, demonstrating a commitment to energy efficiency, water conservation, and environmental responsibility through a framework developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).
 - LEED certification has four levels: Certified (40-49 points), Silver (50-59 points), Gold (60-79 points), and Platinum (80+ points), each indicating a different level of sustainability and green building achievement.
 - LEED MCPL branches include:
 - Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center (opened 2019)
 - Brigadier General Charles E. Mc Gee (Silver Spring) Library (opened 2015)
 - Olney Library (re-opened 2014)
 - Gaithersburg Library (re-opened 2014)
- Rockville Memorial Library and Gaithersburg Library have solar panels.
- Renovations include:
 - LED lighting/Sensor lighting
 - Water efficient toilets (low flow)
 - Sinks w/sensors
 - Hand dryers to cut down on paper use
 - Carpets, paint, adhesives w/low emitting VOCs (volatile organic compounds)
 - Replacing old water fountains for water bottle fillers/filtered water fountains
 - EV charging stations at some locations (Brigadier General Charles E. McGee, Maggie Nightingale, Rockville Memorial, and Wheaton -more to come)
- **Green Projects**
 - Water Bottle Fillers/Filtered
 - Rockville Memorial Library (3 floors)
 - Olney Library
 - Collection Management Warehouse
 - Staff training from Department of Environmental Protection on recycling properly.
 - Batteries disposed of appropriately.
 - Green Team
- Reupholstering from fabric to easier to care for vinyl.
- Clarksburg Library Sustainability Strategies - The following list includes some of the prominent sustainability strategies that will be implemented on the Clarksburg Library project.

The project is targeting compliance with the Montgomery County Adoption of the 2021 International Green Construction Code (IgCC).

- Create an energy model to evaluate energy code compliance and building energy performance
 - The model will analyze scenarios with onsite solar PV
 - The model report will provide a feasibility analysis for net-zero
 - Select light colored site hardscaped materials to reduce heat island effect
 - Select exterior lighting fixtures with low backlight, uplight, and glare ratings to reduce light pollution
 - Provide bicycle parking for building occupants
 - Provide EV charging stations
 - Design for occupant thermal and acoustical comfort
 - Design for increased daylight and occupant lighting controllability
 - Select low-VOC materials
 - Select materials with environmental transparency documentation and recycled content
 - Perform a post-construction/pre-occupancy flush out or indoor air quality testing
 - Develop and implement operations and maintenance plans to support sustainable building operations
 - Develop plans to manage:
 - Indoor air quality during construction
 - Building site waste
 - Construction waste
- A suggestion was made to add the renovation information that is currently on the DGS website to the webpage of each applicable library branch.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

- Please remember to share information from the MCPL Director with the LACs.
- Testified before Council on Monday, April 7. Thank you to Steve Solomon and Jim Montgomery for their input.
 - A few LAC members and Vice Chair Manubay submitted written testimonies or testified.
- Please let Chair Lighter know if you are interested in working to develop an LAC for the Clarksburg Library.
- Encourage LAC members to think more strategically, with an eye for the big picture.

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Clouse-Radigan, Will, Lighter)
 - Several revised copies of the Board Manual and LAC Handbook have been circulated. Please let the group know if there are questions or comments.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Bouie, Montgomery, Schiff, Solomon)
 - Shared a letter with LAC members encouraging them to testify before Council or submit written testimony. Two White Oak LAC members submitted testimonies.
 - The County Executive is holding his CIP Community Conversations.

- In conjunction with Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, the Board is supporting National Library Week. Thank you to Director Graham and all library staff.
- LAC and Board Activities (Brier, Manubay, Mohan)
 - Updating the LAC Handbook. There are no major revisions. The revised version will be circulated to the Board. The goal is to vote and approve it during the June Board meeting.
 - A networking event with LACs is being planned. The date being considered is June 25. Considering a pilot event with geographically close libraries. Topics will include roles and responsibilities of officers. The networking events would be in-person at a library branch.

OLD BUSINESS:

- None

NEW BUSINESS:

- During the March Board meeting it was mentioned that [Fair Access](#) was trying to find ways to coordinate with the Maggie Nightingale Library. Fair Access is an advocacy committee of the town of Poolesville. It was suggested that the members of Fair Access should apply to become active members of the LAC. Per Chair Lighter, the LACs are in place to give feedback to the Library Board, and the Board does not want to take the LAC off mission. The LAC can make Fair Access aware of what the library has to offer.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Quince Orchard – Has not met since the last Board meeting.
- Maggie Nightingale – Has not met since the last Board meeting.
- Aspen Hill – Met on March 17. Conducted two Library Lovers Month events in February. Facility questions seemed to have been addressed. Interest in attending a larger LAC meeting. Interested in the refresh process of the libraries and asked if a charette would be held. Will have elections in June.
- Marilyn Praisner – Still struggling to get a quorum. Highlighted what staff thought is being used most. World Language collection needs to be updated to reflect the needs of the community today which include Spanish, French, and Amharic. Talked about the stem program and Earth Day.
- Gaithersburg – Has not met since the last Board meeting.
- Germantown – Met but did not have a quorum. Went over information which included MoComCon; the need for volunteers for the SRC program; visits to area schools to promote SRC, and issues with plants in front of the building dying. Excited about a meeting with other LACs.
- Wheaton – Met on March 17. Heating and cooling concern – some areas are hot and some areas are cold. There is a new part-time children's librarian. LAC members shared kudos on a black history program. There are challenges with parking. Apparently there used to be an agreement with the fire department regarding using their parking lot. Strong demand for print books. One of the LAC members submitted written testimony.
- Kensington Park – An LAC member submitted written testimony. There was not a quorum. Updates included, the April 19 garden party, facility issues, programming, celebration of Earth Day, KP will be a new site for Hatchlings, and the meeting room in the basement could have a mural to brighten it.

- Long Branch – Met in March; next meeting is scheduled for May. Has three new LAC members. Regional Manager Kate Sweeney reported there are two staff vacancies. Elevator repairs are almost completed. Planning a “know your rights” program. Very excited that LB will be getting pre-school play and learn program. Planning is in place for the new canopy celebration.
- Brigadier General Charles E. McGee – Met in March. Regional Manager Kate Sweeney reported on the condition of the building, staffing and programs. Walkthrough of the building with Director Graham is planned. Also discussed the Purple Line’s effect on the branch, succession planning, and conducting LAC outreach.
- Accessibility Advisory – Meets on April 10.
- Olney – Men’s bathroom flooded on March 10. Staff entrance/exit door needs to be replaced. A lot of programming has been held, including the Culkin School of Traditional Irish Dance. Had a daytime book discussion with author Lisa See which was attended by 117 people from around the world via Zoom. Branch volunteers record their hours in a notebook which are then put into the system by a staff person. It was suggested that an app could be used for volunteers to enter their own hours. The 3D printer program was terminated during the pandemic. Will it be reinstated?
- Connie Morella – Has not met since last Board meeting.
- Potomac – Has not met since last Board meeting.
- White Oak – Has not met since last Board meeting.
- Twinbrook – Only has two members; not the required three. They can meet with the regional manager.
- Montgomery College (MC)– The Takoma Park Library finally has its collection. The remaining technology pieces for the group study rooms have arrived and will be installed late April/early May. Working with the Dean of Student Affairs, who is overseeing the student-parent initiative. She will be purchasing furniture for the study room that will be used for a student-parent study space. Still waiting on permits from the City of Rockville for the Rockville campus library; those renovations have been pushed back until February 2026. The remaining funds in this year’s budget will be used to refresh the Germantown space, which is not due for a renovation for five years. The library budget has not been impacted, however, the budgeting model is being changed for FY27 to a zero-based model with an overarching view of how the funds are allocated. MC has a very diverse student population; has not heard of anyone being impacted by homeland security. It is a wait and see regarding the impact from federal decisions on the College. Trying to assist those who want to attend conferences.
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) – Met with Felicity Brown, Collection Management Manager, to discuss benchmarking, procedures, practices, and world languages. It was a good brainstorming session. Met with Ari Brooks to discuss ways that MCPS can support FOLMC and in turn support MCPL. Summer Reading is coming up. In May, a librarian from the children’s and teens’ group is coming to the professional learning community meeting for elementary, middle and high school librarians to talk about Summer Reading. This year they will be bringing bookmarks.
- Rockville Memorial – Has several new members.
- Davis – Will meet for the first time in several years on April 14. Six new members from the membership drive.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

ADJOURNMENT:

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.