



Montgomery County Library Board

May 14, 2025

ATTENDEES: Bouie, Brier, Clouse-Radigan, Johnson, Manubay, Mohan, Schiff, Solomon, Spencer, Van Puymbroeck, Will

STAFF: Darcell Graham, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Patrick Fromm, Interim Assistant Director, Programming and Outreach

GUESTS: Yesvy Gustasp, Chair, Wheaton LAC

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lighter at 7:10 PM.

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Roll call of Board members
- Introduction of guests

MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:

- The minutes from the April 9, 2025, meeting were approved. [Motion to approve made by Marilyn Schiff, seconded by Suzette Spencer, and unanimous vote to approve.]

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- On May 6, after discussion and questions, County Council voted (straw) to accept the County Executive's recommendations for MCPL's FY26 Operating Budget and Amendments to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Anticipating the budget will be approved later this month. Per the Montgomery County Charter, the Council must take final action on the County's Operating Budget by June 1, 2025 for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2025. Operations will still wait for Governor's budget that will be released in the fall, which will have more detail about the state's budget.
- Maryland Library Association (MLA) Conference was held May 6-May 9 in Ocean City. Thirty-two MCPL staff attended. Professional Development included safety and security, artificial intelligence, and more. Brigadier General Charles E. McGee LAC member also attended the African American tour of the Eastern Shore. Conference was supported through funding from the Institute of Museum of Library Services.
- MCPL will launch our annual Summer Reading Challenge on Saturday, June 14, inviting children, teens and adults to "Color Our World" through books, music, theater and art. The program will run through Sunday, August 31, with opportunities for all ages to participate in reading and creative activities celebrating imagination and self-expression. Early registration begins on Thursday, May 15, [online](#) and at all MCPL branches. MCPL will host three Summer

Reading Challenge kickoff events featuring activities for all ages: Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., [Twinbrook Library](#); Saturday, June 21, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., [Germantown Library](#); Sunday, June 22, 2-4 p.m., [Chevy Chase Library](#).

- **Building Projects**

| LIBRARY FACILITY | STATUS |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Damascus Library | In Progress |
| Brigadier General Charles E. McGee | Design Phase |
| Noyes Library | Permitting Phase |
| Twinbrook Library | Assessment Phase |

- Will need to confirm with Angelisa Hawes regarding a firm date for beginning the Noyes renovation. Unclear whether the contract has been put in place.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

- Chair requests to have LAC updates sent to him after the meeting.
- Some Board members' terms have expired. Vice Chair Manubay followed up to inquire from the Boards, Committees, and Commissions Office to determine whether new members will be recruited.
- Grace Manubay is compiling volunteer hours, which are important for MCPL to report to the county to demonstrate how much the Board supports the system.
- MCPL tour of libraries with unique things. Chair Lighter and Marilyn Schiff joined staff on a tour of different libraries across the area. Intention was to see what 21st century libraries are doing in Maryland, and provide the opportunity to ask questions of the staff, learn about growing pains, and experience of starting these programs in a traditional library space. A way to explore ways to take libraries to the next level, especially when opening new branches. How to have new family experiences. How to have libraries be engaging and vibrant places. How can spaces like this be sustained. Perhaps do it with County staff.
 - Exploration Commons in Carroll County (Westminster): Part of an older library building. Difficult to convert the basement, many challenges to renovate during COVID. Many activities, such as an industrial/commercial kitchen for cooking classes and fabrication lab. Art displays, 3D printing. A lot of demand for these programs. MCPL has 3D printing but it is not currently active. Main audience for 3D printing is seniors. People need to take classes to use equipment; the access is free to the public. Near to a center for handicapped, so the facility includes an adult changing table. Very enthusiastic staff. A lot of space was underwritten by donors and it feels like a true community space.
 - Lessons for MCPL: harder to fundraise because of the government agency, but maybe the Board can leverage/recommend donations of time and talent.
 - DIY Education Center – Elkridge: Equipment lending (wheelbarrows, weed whackers, power washers, ladders), videos and classes, sewing machines, woodworking, seed library. Lots of enthusiasm. Open to anyone in Maryland; can get a library card to borrow materials.
 - Lessons for MCPL: asked questions about waivers, loss of items, staffing for classes. An example of a different type of collection that libraries are offering the public. Need to think about warranties and replacement costs. Fines are implemented to encourage return and to recoup cost due to loss.
 - Storyville at Rosedale (Baltimore County): A place for children to play within the library, partnered with a children's museum. Interactive play, sensory areas. Has

nationwide recognition. Includes a stage and separate areas for children of different ages. Staffed by someone who was not a librarian but who has experience with youth (children's museum association). Children must be accompanied by an adult (someone older than 14-years-old). The space uses less fabric (curtains) so it does not need to be washed as much.

- Medfield Rec Center (Baltimore): Gaming lounge, e-sports gaming center where youth can compete. Baltimore is looking to build a standalone facility for all ages. Youth are not gaming at home, and can be in a safe space and encourages healthy competition. A different perspective of programming. This is not a library space but library partners with the rec center. The youth were well behaved and engaged in the space.
- Question: how is this different than Dave and Busters? How are you cultivating learning? Can include programs for youth to learn about coding, how to work in a team, safe competition, access to technology that is more sophisticated than home gaming systems. Also offers the resources free for anyone.
- In Carroll County, one side of the experience is creation of music, the other is learning how to mix sounds, etc.
- Next month is Tim Lighter's last month as chair. His term as board member has not ended.
- Next meeting will be elections for new officers.

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Will, Clouse-Radigan)
 - Tim Lighter sent around the draft Library Board Manual for feedback and Grace Manubay provided comments. The draft needs formatting. Tim Lighter made a motion to approve the text. Marilyn Schiff seconded. Motioned passed.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Bouie, Montgomery, Schiff, Solomon)
 - Steve Solomon watched the Education and Culture Committee and full committee recommendation, very enthusiastic. Waiting to see the full adoption.
 - Library programming includes financial wellness seminars. Thinking about how to work with other groups regarding advocacy.
 - At an LAC meeting, one person said they were going to present at her next civic association.
 - Dr. Hayden, the Librarian of Congress, was removed from her post.
 - Rockville Memorial LAC has several new members, but one meeting did not reach a quorum. The second meeting, there are 18 members and it's hard to get a quorum. Perhaps include in LAC Handbook, people get removed if they do not attend two meetings.
 - Ari Brooks, FOLMC Executive Director, is recruiting volunteers for FOLMC, and Marilyn Schiff also sat at the table.
- LAC and Board Activities (Manubay, Brier, Mohan)
 - Recommend interested members attend a meeting first before applying. Wilma Brier sent around the LAC draft handbook. Board members should be sure to send it to their LACs for feedback. Networking event, starting with a smaller regional group. Tentatively scheduled for June 25, Kensington, Wheaton, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee, Long Branch, and Noyes. Kavita Mohan and Wilma Brier will reach out to Kate Sweeney to start planning.
 - Potomac is creating an all-LAC list. Tim Lighter would like the name of the person who attended the Davis LAC and will also follow up with Jim Montgomery. The LAC seems

to want a list that is separate from the Board. Director Graham will ask staff to see whether there is discussion.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Fair Access and Maggie Nightingale – Abby Clouse-Radigan attended the Fair Access meeting, and they wanted to know how libraries work, how decisions are made, and encouraged people to join LACs as a resident/community members, not as part of Fair Access.

NEW BUSINESS:

- None

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Germantown - No LAC meeting.
- Gaithersburg – Liaison was not able to attend. Will share minutes when available.
- Long Branch - No LAC meeting in April; will meet on May 20. Dedication for new canopy on June 1.
- Brigadier General Charles E. McGee (Silver Spring) - Met in April. Will transition to new chair with election next month. Excited about Hatchlings program. Will participate in Farmer's Market in downtown Silver Spring and Thanksgiving parade, and staying updated with the Purple Line. Had a walk through with the Director about the refresh project. Has a new vendor for the café.
- Maggie Nightingale (Poolesville) - Has been having scheduling issues for their quarterly meeting and will have next meeting first week of June to discuss.
- Quince Orchard - Met in April. LAC member requested of Regional Manager Adrienne Miles Holderbaum that she provide info about the library budget. Wanted to host the principal of Quince Orchard High School (QOHS) to discuss some of the student behavior issues and student uses of the library space. QOHS has an interim principal, so they may want to wait until the permanent person is put in place, who would start on July 1. Director Graham is trying to meet with MCPS Superintendent, would like them to wait until that introductory conversation occurs.
- Aspen Hill - Has not met since March, next meeting is in June; they will have elections.
- Marilyn Praisner - Met in April, had difficulty meeting quorum. Will need new officers, and will have nominations at the meeting next week. Able to discuss matters that did not require a vote. The chair testified on the budget as a resident. Also brainstormed ideas for programming; one idea was a "know your rights" program, focused on immigration and criminal matters. MoCo usually partners with the Gilchrist Center.
- Accessibility Advisory Committee - Will be going to the Disability, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Libraries Conference this week.
- Olney - Many wildlife entering through the back door, which has been fixed. Some nonfiction books put in teen section.
- Kensington Park - Did not meet.
- Wheaton - Window shades are broken and new contractor is needed for repair. Family storytimes is two times on both Wednesday and Friday. Excited about the new children's librarian.
- Damascus - Meeting cancelled, will meet in June.
- Noyes - Met in May, had elections for new officers and set schedule to begin in September. Interested in doing a tabling event in the summer when the weather is nicer. Programming is

now moving outside (storytime), and doing a tabling effort in tandem. Want to learn more and receive updates on the refresh.

- Rockville Memorial - Did not have a quorum. Questions about Hoopla and Libby and how electronic systems work. The Library does have some control over what is offered on Hoopla and Libby, some duplicates because average wait time on Libby is 65 days (want to get it down to 35-40). The Hoopla collection is more curated for maximum access. MCPL is number 3 in the country for audio books. For e-books, we are number 2. Added 20K users in the last few months.
- Little Falls - Post-it notes at the library for customers to say what they want in the library. It was unseasonably warm, so most comments were that the building temps were uncomfortable (libraries cannot control the climate, it is done by Building Services). Some comments include more speakers.
- White Oak - Met in May, one new member in December that has not returned. More participants in tai chi and teen advisory board. Elections of officers, most people wanted to hear about the Library of Things tour.
- Twinbrook - Has two members, liaison asked to see if they wanted to meet informally, which they declined.
- Montgomery College – Suzette Spencer is being recognized with an MC award for serving students.
- Montgomery County Public Schools - Two things under legal review regarding the library card. Four MCPL staff attended professional learning community of school libraries to present info about summer reading program.
- Davis - Met for the second time, and it was informational – what do the officers do, and a lot of community interest.
- Aspen Hill - Met on May 19. Discussion regarding: LAC members intending to continue serving on the LAC; a “tabling” activity for people in the AH community interested in library activities. The activity will also serve as an outreach, or recruiting, activity for the LAC; concern whether the LAC applications are getting to the Library Board. The LAC Secretary will follow-up with Regina Holyfield-Jewett about one missing application; when the joint meeting with the Library Board will occur in October 2025, and will it be a hybrid meeting; highlights from the Library Branch Report—Upcoming Programming; and elections for the LAC leadership are in June. Don Libes of the Potomac LAC introduced the topic of LACs networking with each other. The Chair asked him to send her written information about the plan before discussing it further with the LAC.
- Marilyn Praisner - Met on May 21. The liaison was not able to attend this month’s meeting. Offered to provide a written report about the May Library Board meeting to the LAC Secretary, if desired. The LAC did have enough people in attendance to have a quorum (this has been a major issue all year). They held elections at the May meeting, and the new Chair is Johnna Mahoney, and the new Secretary is Natasha Dahl. They will meet in June, but they may change their meeting day.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

ADJOURNMENT:

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