



**2022-2023 MCC Governing Board  
Programs & Outreach Committee  
September 14, 2022 6:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

- Committee members present:** *in-person:* Anna Bartosiewicz – Chair; Lisa Mariam; Melanie Sletten; Charlotte Loving
- Committee members absent:** Ari Ghasemian
- Other Board members present:** Barbara Zamora-Appel; Sarah Tran
- MCC Staff present:** Evan Braff, Acting Executive Director; Sarah Schallern Treff, Performing Arts Director; Holly Novak, Exec Assistant; Mike Fisher, General Programs Director; Sabrina Anwah, PIO; Matthew Hockensmith, Special Events Assistant Manager; Erin Bieger, Instructional Programs Manager; Andrew Carter, Old Firehouse Manager; Asma Sarwary, Special Events Assistant
- Guests:** Paul Kohlenberger; Matthew Campbell (marketing consultant)

**CONVENE MEETING**

Chair Bartosiewicz convened a meeting of the Programs & Outreach Committee of the Governing Board of the McLean Community Center on September 14, 2022, at 6:35 p.m. This meeting was open to the public attending in-person. She announced that the meeting is being audio-recorded. No changes were requested to the proposed Agenda; it was adopted by acclamation.

**UPCOMING EVENTS & NEW PROGRAMS IN FY22; FY23; FY24**

**Old Firehouse Center** *\*comments by Andrew Carter*

New Programs of FY22:

“Festival of Frights” and “Trunk or Treat” – After learning about all the permits required to do a haunted walk through, we transitioned to a more welcoming family event for all ages (500-1000 people attended in 2021). The Festival of Frights will have entertainment, games, and music in addition to a larger and safer trunk or treat experience.

Winter Block Party – An event on-site at MCC with wintry themes and activities; last year we had faux ice rinks, fire pits for smore’s making, attractions and crafts. This year we’re using pieces from all MCC programs to showcase our programs in addition to offering a fun inside/outside event.

Sensory Day (April) – a few participants in Afterschool Program have special needs. We wanted the community to understand what they go through on a daily basis. In recognition of Autism Awareness month, OFC created an event that included different sensory related toys and activities to promote and show inclusivity. SPARC helped participate and they had a good time. Best Buddies program from McLean H.S. came by; after school kids and families participated at night. An example of some of the popular activities included Kool aid painting, body sox obstacle course and drinking your applesauce. These were fun events that everyone can enjoy and it helps people learn about the special needs community.

Open Game Night – Open Game Night was created for individuals and families who want to enjoy the OFC and its activities on a Thursday night. We currently have our group of ping pong players, our afterschool program alumni members, and also families who enjoy dinner and playing pool – all regularly attend. We have a variety of games available.



### Upcoming OFC Events - Fall FY23:

Old Firehouse After School Program: The OFC Afterschool Program is now offered for kids in 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade.

Block Party – September 17: This is the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual OFC party and open house!

Monster Mash – October 21: The annual 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Halloween themed party sells out every year! It's a great time!

Festival of Frights – October 29: See information above.

Snack & Paint – November 18: Taught by a professional art teacher referred by MPA, this event is for anyone who loves painting of just wanting to get out and get messy.

Ugly Sweater Dance – December 9: 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade holiday-themed dance

Light Up McLean - December 19-January 1: Yearly holiday house decorating competition. This will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the program and in each of the first two years we've had more houses in the McLean area participate and even more people vote. This was a COVID-19 pandemic innovation program that MCC continued. The community votes on which house is best in three different categories. It's great for the community to go out and support each other!

### Potential New Programs for FY24:

Hershey Park Overnight: Planned for Spring Break of 2024. MULTI-DAY TRIP. OFC's goal is to offer a trip that will allow us to expand the time at a theme park that is the most-liked but frustrating trip we take during the summer camp season. It is always crowded and Hershey Park has so many good rides – but only 3 hours to enjoy all the rides before traveling back to McLean on the bus. Our initial developments are to depart from OFC Thursday morning, attend Hershey Park Thursday afternoon and all of Friday, returning on Saturday late morning/early afternoon. A question regarding the interest of an overnight trip was included in the summer camp survey and 65% of those who answered were interested.

*Question: Are parents comfortable with an overnight trip?*

We are talking to parents about their comfort level and trust on the concept of an overnight trip.

*Question: What about permits?*

We are looking into it. We are consulting with the high schools to see what permits are required. Fairfax Co. Risk Management will need to vet whatever plan we come up with (this is part of the program planning process.)

Open Game "Saturday" – planned for Saturday mornings, 9-12/1PM. This will give the opportunity to those who can't make it to the Old Firehouse late on a Thursday or those families with kids the ability to attend and enjoy the fun without having to rush. The initial thought is to open on Saturday mornings so parents with kids can come to enjoy the same things that the adults do.

### **Classes** \*comments by Erin Bieger

#### New Programs

- Kids Yoga Classes – kids are so stressed in school. After the year of virtual learning, they didn't get to relax. Non-competitive, relaxing situation. A lot of kids do not get to relax. Come to a place where they can have a calming class area.  
*Comment by Acting Executive Director Braff:* Research shows that kids are feeling a sense of hopelessness – coming out of COVID-19, the statistic is 38% who are feeling a sense of hopelessness. We are thinking about this survey data and how we can align our MCC programs with those identified needs.
- Babysitting Classes – bring this back on a regular basis (fall/winter/spring). We receive requests all the time for this.
- CPR & First Aid Classes – this may merge with babysitting classes.
- Sports classes – we have a gap in our programming for 8 year-old to 12 year-old boys: we are missing a niche in that age group of boys. New vendors have been approved by Fairfax Co. – we can consider T-Ball and Soccer (harder; more advanced; skill building)
- Cooking Classes – Chef Joel is only here for a specific time and then the kitchen sits empty. We are looking to expand the offerings.

SIA Program

- Started last year with a few members who would come to build relationships, play games, and attend an occasional potluck lunch. It has helped them grow their social ability. For people who were shy or going through grief and change – this program has been a positive effect on them. We currently have **40 memberships** and we’re constantly welcoming new members to join! A core group attends daily. Below you will find the repeating schedule that allows SIA members to make friendships, live a healthier lifestyle, and keep their minds simulated with one of our SIA Games and Game Learning Series. This program offers special events such as cooking classes, technology classes, dance classes, and more.
- Since this program is growing very rapidly, we are working on developing a plan to handle the high volume for some of the classes since they can only hold a certain amount of people. We will be looking at partnering the SIA Program with our other senior programs offered here at MCC. Caroline Conley has great rapport with the community.

<b>Monday</b>	9-10 a.m.	SIA Chi Kung
	10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	SIA Games & Game Learning
<b>Tuesday</b>	9-10 a.m.	SIA S.A.I.L. Exercise Class
	10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	SIA Mah-Jongg Practice & Play
<b>Wednesday</b>	10 a.m. Check calendar for details End times vary	SIA Speakers & Special Events Cooking; fitness; technology
	Check calendar for details Start time & frequency may vary	SIA Community Connections
<b>Thursday</b>	9-10 a.m.	S.A.I.L. Exercise Class
	10:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.	SIA Bridge

We met with Lewinsville Senior Center about how to pilot free programs in Spring (when we have a 3-week gap in our classes); perhaps involving AARP and Master Gardeners - we met with their director and will partner with them.

*Comment by Mike Fisher:* **We are excited to have a robust and growing senior active adult program. Prior to COVID-19 MCC’s previous senior coordinator passed away. We are proud of Carrie Conley’s attention and compassion with this population – it has been phenomenal - her commitment to them and what they have been able to do. We have seen a couple of these folks come out of their shell, which is awesome!**

*Opinion expressed:* For 8 – 12 year-old boys, I suggest Legos and robotics. We have McLean Little League close by, so maybe some of those different activities as well.

*Clarification from Erin Bieger:* The technology and robotics classes this summer were wildly popular.

*Question:* What about a “Happiness Lab” podcast? Or nerd fandom? Has MCC ever thought about hosting a Con convention?



MCC building is too small to bring in a large convention. We have had low-key discussions about this idea but it hasn't progressed beyond that: What we are exploring: Cons are focused on some aspect of a fandom (how prevalent is that niche in our area)? What will work here? AwesomeCon is in DC. What is McLean's favorite Con?

*Question from Board Chair Zamora-Appel: How do those programs fit with the feedback that we have received from the community over the past two years? The community and board have provided comments. At Cooper middle school, they are having a Marvel movie and then talk about it. This is something that is growing. Kids want to watch a movie and then talk about it.*

*Clarification by Erin Bieger: I get phone calls all the time. I also have seen the kitchen empty when classes are not going on and I realize that we are missing out. The cooking classes fill up and the community really enjoys it. I also reference my own experience from past summer camps.*

*Question: Have you thought of any first aid classes?*

Yes – we want to have one for Fall and one for Spring. The vendor will come back on a regular basis.

### **Special Events** \*comments by Matthew Hockensmith

Community Parking Lot Sale – this Saturday! You can get some good bargains. All booth spaces are full.

Petfest – first one was a great success last year (over 2,000 people attended).

Antique Show – Nov. 12, 13

Craft Show – Dec. 1, 2, 3

### New programming:

Cultural Festival – we are looking to do a rotating cultural festival (not the same one every year).

1. Latin American Festival – first floor & patio of MCC (February/March). Music, dance, food, games for children, vendors of the Latin American community; community resources (job fairs) inside McLean and surrounding area. For everyone to celebrate the culture and learn more about the culture. People from different countries in that community – to show similarities and differences within the Latin American community.

\*would like to change it every year to focus on different cultures

\*Special Events team – talks with The Alden about cross-over programming. This weekend we are promoting the Garage Sale + Block Party at OFC + concert in the park.

\*Last week, the budget was approved – we will try to program together across departments. Now it is incorporated into the budget. We are planning this year's events + next year's events to collaborate. We are planning two festivals concurrently.

*Question: The Latin American festival sounds great. Will there be bi-lingual programming?*

Yes – it's something we want to do right. We are relying on the person who is entrenched in the community so that we can do this correctly.

*Question: Would there be a tie-in with The Alden Theatre?*

We book The Alden season about one year in advance, so that will become a future opportunity.

*Opinion expressed by Board Chair Zamora-Appel: That's an awesome idea. I have planned events showcasing food from different countries. It brings so much community joy – Churchill Road School had 500 people who wanted to attend. I think it's a great idea! And during the pandemic, we gave them a picture of a girl to paint or color based on their heritage; then they displayed it around the auditorium. People get engaged; kids want to be recognized for their art.*

2. Special Events is developing a yearly cultural event.
  - a. The focused culture will rotate over time (yearly or as otherwise determined)
  - b. The first cultural event will be Latin American Festival
  - c. Targeting February/March 2023 – one day event
  - d. Inside MCC main level and patio
3. Working with local contractor who is a member of the Latin American Community
4. Event features are planned to include: music; dance; food; games; vendors; community resources.

*Question: I recommend finding out about Goat Yoga. I used to be a member of Arlington County Fair: three years ago they brought goat yoga – it sold out! It's so different – really relaxing and fun! Kids and adults enjoy it!*

### Discussion about Earth Day:

*Question: I did not hear anything about Earth Day. Where is the Earth Day event? We always had recycling – but there was no program or learning. Can we do something where the community can come in and learn about Earth Day? Kids can make art projects: it makes sense to have an activity-based event. Drive-in made pedestrian walking impossible. Make it more of a community event. Some board candidates last year were having conversations with the public and wondered where recycled art projects were?*

*Opinion expressed: The ‘Art of Mass Gatherings’ lectured on how composting works.*

*Clarification by Matt Hockensmith: We had approached the county to give lectures (in 2020; it had to be cancelled because of COVID-19). Last year we did approach the county but there was a conflict and non-availability. But the county representative has shown interest in giving additional lectures (we will have to research the availability to offer something).*

- *Comment by Acting Executive Director Braff: We can look into it and whether there are things we can do to work around that day. Earth Day is not just recycling – it’s specific activities.*

### **The Alden Theatre** \*comments by Sarah Schallern Treff

Every year has new programs because we book different artists – we may have fan favorites come back but it’s always whole new slate of artists every year.

Residency: This year, a Fairfax-based flamenco dance company will do a residency here; they are rehearsing twice a month in Rehearsal Hall. Family show: “A Trip to Spain” on October 8 (dance, music, audience participation). June – main stage show combining Middle Eastern dance with flamenco.

Cross-promoting: Workshop for SIA; family workshops; open rehearsals; artistic director has done lectures on history and styles of flamenco – it always sells out. (well-rounded throughout the year).

Social Media artist: An ‘influencer’ social media artist: blksmth Coming in for two residencies: Fall (in-house: SIA, after school program, UTP); Spring (public events). Danielle Van Hook is developing this. He develops quotes and then arranges them with balloon letters, flowers or LED lights. Much creativity! Spring Show (neighborhood kids) -we are doing the set using blksmth’s work. The kids will use the quotes in the set.

Shoulder season for outdoor concerts (June/July is so hot): We have some this year (last Sunday and this Saturday at 5 p.m.) In May, Ocean’s Orchestra (local Celtic group) will do a concert: “The Lusty Month of May” (focused on Druid holiday; traditional and original music). We are experimenting with shoulder season programming. We will ask for community input. Right now, summer season stays the same; we are just adding things.

Local artists: all summer concert artists are local; many chamber music artists are local. This will continue in FY23 and FY24.

### Programs for FY24:

Cultural exchange grant: Sarah went to Brighton, England to the festival and wanted to bring a particular artist to MCC. It is the exact right time for the community. Production = similar to The Handmaid’s Tale. This is about women who are lawn ornaments, on demand. It speaks to what is going on and will be impetus for great discussions. They are creating a new musical based on “The Birds.” Principal actors will be their company and they will cast the Birds from our local community. This company is forward-thinking about technology (projection mapping); fully integrated for accessibility. A/V will have visual representation of words on screens; motion capture. It will be excellent opportunities for cross-collaboration: programming camp for Spring Break. It will be awesome for the community – connection of technology, social issues and theater (story-telling). Limbic Theater.

Heritage Month celebrations: all foreign language films are celebrating the corresponding Heritage Month. We offer two free movies per month. On day before Thanksgiving we will have a recorded live concert of Alice’s Restaurant. We will continue those – a whole programming section called “Celebrations.”

Focusing on the military and celebrating the human aspect: It came from the community input to honor the military more. We realize we must let people know about this significant segment of our community. Estella (flamenco dancer) is a federal judge for the V.A. and she hears disability hearings (heartbreaking stories); dance is how she personally heals. We will feature podcaster and YouTuber named MrBallen (a good story-teller and former Navy Seal). He has an interesting background. It will be interesting for us to hear how he is healing through storytelling and how his experiences with trauma inform how he tells



stories of trauma. There are stories in McLean that need to be heard by everyone. We want to help people tell those stories and we want to understand their military experiences.

*Opinion expressed:* GMU has trends in the arts program – we can connect with the person who runs that. Army Museum is also great resource (maybe arrange for a tour). Armed Forces Arts Council is a good resource.

*Summary by Acting Executive Director Braff:* **You can see our staff is working very hard and you can note how diligently they are working on ideas from the community.**

## COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

Program Guide for Winter/Spring – because of printing costs it will be a limited run. Other things to supplement programs: postcard to all households; e-newsletters; e-blasts; digital and print advertising. We will no longer mail the Program Guide to every household.

*Question:* In addition to limiting the number of printed copies, have you considered newsprint or something less expensive?

Yes, we are looking at what FCPA produces for ParkTakes. This last printing run was downgraded (it was \$30K this time).

## WEBSITE REDESIGN

September 22 is launch date. We thank everyone who gave comments (staff + board) which were sent to Kompleks on Monday. At some point we will see a second look (mounted on development site). It will look more cohesive.

## SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

At Acting Executive Director Braff's suggestion, we will change the format of the Social Media toolkit. We had been sending out images and suggested copy; now we will change it to send out a single event every other week. You can cut-and-paste into your social media. Next upcoming features will be the Afterschool program and McLean 5K.

## MARKETING CONSULTANT FOR THE ALDEN THEATRE

*Matthew Campbell was introduced. He is doing an 8-week consultation with MCC Performing Arts to help us get more audiences. He has worked with Stanford University Jazz Festival. He has a great background in arts marketing and has been a leader in the non-profit world doing strategic planning and marketing.*

*Comments by Matthew Campbell:*

The Alden does a wide variety of offerings: one artist for one show for one night. It's easier to get people to come when the same show is running for 8 weeks. **ASSIGNMENT:** The assignment here is to assess The Alden's marketing programs and make improvements within the current budget: 1. Tools 2. Internal systems  
**GOAL:** offer solutions that can be in this season and can be replicated in upcoming seasons.

Key elements Matthew Campbell has contributed to MCC through his professional consultation:

1. Processes – after analyzing recent campaigns and patron feedback, I encourage the team to focus on digital marketing (more and more people are getting info. online). Another advantage is that digital campaigns are highly measurable (people in NoVa who like the arts). Print (Washington Post) – moving to WaPo digital. Ads on the Post's website and WP+
2. E-blasts: The monthly e-news was transactional (come buy a ticket). We want to evolve it to make it more newsy (features on the artist background; culture they come from).
3. Institutional content about the Alden – to build brand identity. Jeff Virchow interviewed long-term ushers. You can replicate that concept with "Super Patrons"... "Board members" - generating a sense of community.
4. Adopting a new practice: a snippet or teaser and then link to full-length piece on website. Direct people to the website for more content and buy tickets. This kind of E-blast will seem very content-rich in a small space with lots of opportunities to dive deeper.
5. Interest-based e-mails: reach out to past dance patrons to advise about upcoming dance shows; kids & family; calendar of timed messages.

6. Season-long e-blast spreadsheet (send date; intended audience; main content; additional notes)
7. Social Media: transform the approach to notifying audiences just before the performance, but rather, to engage people more deeply in the program with more lead time (to get to know artists better). An actual news source; evergreen stories about The Alden; artist features. Use content that you already have ready and direct attention to it from a different place >> gets people to the website.
8. Building video posts – video posts perform better. We will reach out to performing artists to make short 3-minute videos about why they are excited to perform here. It's important for the artist to tell about their concept.
9. Systems: the e-blast calendar + detailed advertising calendar for the entire team: annotating every ad (concept; booking; delivery & production; publication). Technical section with ad dimensions, file formats. Everything you need to know about the ad is shown on this calendar.
10. New tool (very robust) – marketing budget planner & tracker. Massive spreadsheet with separate worksheet for every event organized chronologically. Each page is organized by format: print ads; e-blasts; dedicated budget columns; budget variance; seasonal marketing page (brochures, postcards). There is a cover sheet to which everything in the document rolls up (budgetary columns totaling). This tool has been used for many years in other places: it helps you plan, change in mid-stream, and stay on-budget. Formulas are built-in and can be replicated each year with the new shows.
11. Web redesign – offering some general branding suggestions for The Alden as it is represented on the website. Click from banner ad to a sale on your website (to be able to measure that this ad actually resulted in a sale). The web designer will do this in several dedicated hours of coding.
12. Social media = this is a conversation with people. Not just “buy, buy, buy” – but a conversation about the show, about a culture. You are talking with an audience – it results in more clicks and data about viewing.

*Question: Regarding the content of social media – who is creating that?*

Matthew Campbell will start on some (short blurbs). After he concludes, this will evolve to an MCC staff member or volunteers (basic marketing writing). Matthew Campbell will focus on shows imminently coming up.

**Clarification by Acting Executive Director Braff: PIO Sabrina Anwah has been working closely with The Alden and Matthew Campbell, perhaps taking some of these best practices and applying it across MCC. How can the PIO team take on some of this work? We appreciate the groundwork and joint efforts - especially the budget spreadsheet will benefit all departments.**

*Question from Board Chair Zamora-Appel: Some feedback I've heard is that there is a percentage of the community that is not on social media and will not be receiving this information. Is there another part of this plan to reach the people who are not on social media? How do these people get that information? What about the people who walk in the area – perhaps a banner?*

Yes – internet (and reading newspaper) has some of this information. We will still have news releases to newspapers. We still have active messages through Ovation Tix. We will have fliers and The Alden season brochure. We won't stop those – it will not be stopping the traditional messaging we have done.

**Clarification by Acting Executive Director Braff: We are using a variety of different media. That effort will continue. If people need something in hard print – we will still have a catalog. Your point is a good one. The place where we leaned-in more is to learn how we could expand our presence in social media but still recognize keeping the traditional sources (direct mail; flier in the community; connections with schools). The PR function is to let the media know about it. We are still doing print ads in WaPo; we are just adding more effective digital. If anyone is concerned about getting something in print, refer them to the Program Guide. We are not going totally digital. If there is a resident who has no online presence, have them contact us: we will make sure to send a brochure. We don't want to leave anyone out. We are being very intentional to have longer-range planning on ads.**



*Clarification by Sarah Schallern Treff:* What Matthew Campbell has given us is optimizing the pricing and it is well within our budget to advertise in a variety of ways (digital + print ads). *Guide to the Lively Arts* (classical music fans look at that publication): he has made a package of these options.

*Comment by Matthew Campbell:* A great question to ask of a person who is not on social media: How do you find out about events? They may tip you off about a source which they refer to that we don't know about. We are not focusing on fliers for every event. But there is direct notification to apartment complexes and senior centers.

*Comment by Sarah Schallern Treff:* The Alden seasonal brochure will continue.

*Comment by Chair Bartosiewicz:* Thank you to Matthew Campbell! He is handling a huge amount of information – we appreciate it and thank you for coming! He lives in McLean and he will benefit from this effort.

**BOARD ENGAGEMENT AT MCC PROGRAMS & EVENTS** \*a printed list of upcoming events was distributed

*Comment by Chair Bartosiewicz:* This is apropos because this past Sunday, I attended the concert where there were very few attendees. If more of us could have come and brought a friend, it would have been a bigger audience. MCC staff has put together a list of opportunities for volunteering.

*Comment by Acting Executive Director Braff:* This is not just about coming out and volunteering. We would like you to come out and see events.

*Comment by Mike Fisher:* One thing important to note is the event times: volunteering shift timing will be different than the actual event time. Trunk or Treat is coming up – we would appreciate you signing up for a spot and decorating a trunk. We will provide the candy and you can enjoy making your trunk décor! Enjoy a wonderful evening of interacting with McLean families.

Mike Fisher expressed a big THANK YOU to Board Chair Barbara Zamora-Appel who will introduce Supervisor Foust at McLean 5K: “Thank you for your participation at that event. We appreciate your presence.”

**OLD / NEW BUSINESS** \*Chair Bartosiewicz opened the floor to any topics of old or new business.

*Question by Board Chair Zamora-Appel:* Have all the things presented tonight made it into the FY24 budget?

Yes – when the board approved the FY24 budget, we proceeded to do all those programs.

*Question by Board Chair Zamora-Appel:* Can we include Earth Day program costs?

*Clarification by Mike Fisher:* Yes – we can be dynamic with expenses and make some choices to supplement the Earth Day event with some additional programming.

Nothing else was mentioned as a further topic for discussion this evening.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 2 6:30 p.m.

TOPICS: \*progress on comments/requests submitted by the public over the past year  
Mike Fisher has analyzed the comments from the last Public Hearing in March 2022.  
\*scholarship assistance (discuss update of current policy and how we want to move forward in the future)

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Bartosiewicz thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Holly Novak, Executive Assistant