



**2023-2024 MCC Governing Board  
Programs & Outreach Committee  
September 13, 2023 5:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Committee members ALL present:** *in-person:* Anna Bartosiewicz – Chair; Eleanor Ague; Sophia Bruno; Katie Gorka; Lisa Mariam

**Other Board members present:** None.

**MCC Staff present:** Betsy May-Salazar, Executive Director; Holly Novak, Executive Assistant; Mike Fisher, General Programs Director; Catherine Nesbitt, Special Events Manager; Sarah Schallern Treff, Performing Arts Director; Sabrina Anwah, PIO; Erin Bieger, Instructional Programs Manager

**Guests:** None.

**CONVENE MEETING**

Chair Bartosiewicz convened a meeting of Programs & Outreach Committee of the Governing Board of the McLean Community Center on September 13, 2023, at 5:32 p.m. The meeting was open to the public attending in-person. A courtesy announcement was made about audio-recording. No changes to the Agenda; it was adopted as written.

**REVIEW OF REFUND POLICIES** *\*remarks by Mike Fisher, General Programs Director*

Staff has done a review of MCC refund policies and has developed recommendations to improve and streamline them.

Problems encountered (predominantly focused on MCC camps):

1. Several years ago, MCC’s camps weren’t full. The refund policy seemed too liberal, allowing people to drop out at the last moment. To try to rectify, MCC instituted a policy to hold a \$100 deposit when a refund is requested until the spot was filled at which time the deposit would also be refunded. That added unnecessary steps to the refund for the policy and is consuming a lot of the Registrar’s time.

2. Based on anecdotal observations, it appears MCC’s camp offerings were being used as a ‘placeholder.’ Families would register for us, and then at some point down-the-line (especially nearer to start date) they would switch to a different camp. Unfortunately, MCC then wasn’t able to fill those spots and waitlisted families had already made their final plans for summer at that point. The second objective for changing the refund policy is trying to avoid MCC camps being peoples’ ‘second choice.’

GOALS of changes being proposed to refund policies: 1. reduce the amount of staff time spent on dealing with refunds - in multiple transactions that the registrar must undertake. 2. to disincentivize people from dropping out later in the season.

We also looked at MCC’s class refund policy and trips refund policy – minor or no changes were required on those policies. MCC’s refund policy for tours and trips will remain as is. The Alden Theatre’s refund policy will also remain as is.

Comparison research: FCPA (contracts with many of our same vendors); Reston Community Center (similar operations to MCC); Falls Church city (government agency with similar size, reach) – these are MCC’s most direct contemporaries.

| MCC Refund Policy Review                                      |  |              |                       |  |                      |
|---|--|--------------|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
|   | MCC Current                                | MCC proposed | FCPA                  | RCC  | FC City              |
| <b>Classes</b>  |  |              |                       |  |                      |
| More than 14 days   | Full refund less \$25 (Fee rarely applied) | Full refund  | Full refund           | Full refund less 20%                       | Full refund less 10% |
| 13 days or less   | No refund (refund often given)             | No refund    | Full refund less \$15 | Full refund less 20% (only if spot filled) | No refund            |
| <b>Camps</b>  |  |              |                       |  |                      |
|   | MCC Current                                | MCC Proposed | FCPA                  | RCC  | FC City              |
| Prior to First Friday of April                                | Full refund                                | Full refund  | N/A                   | N/A  | N/A                  |
| After First Friday of April (but before First Friday of June) | Full refund & hold \$100 until spot filled | 50% refund   | N/A                   | N/A  | N/A                  |
| After First Friday June                                       | N/A  | No Refund    | N/A                   | N/A  | N/A                  |
| More than 14 days   | N/A  | N/A          | Full refund           | Full refund less 20%                       | Full refund less 10% |
| 13 days or less   | N/A  | N/A          | Full refund less \$15 | Full refund less 20% (only if spot filled) | No refund            |
| <b>Trips</b>  |  |              |                       |  |                      |
|   | MCC Current                                | MCC Proposed | FCPA                  | RCC  | FC City              |
| More than 14 days   | Full refund                                | Full refund  | Full refund           | Full refund less 50%                       | Full refund          |
| 13 days or less   | No refund                                  | No refund    | No refund             | No refund                                  | No refund            |

### MCC Proposed Updated Refund Policy

The Center issues refunds when the Center cancels a class, activity or camp. The Center also issues refunds when the Center changes a class, activity or camp and the change makes it impossible for a patron to continue with the class. Please note that the Center cancels a class, activities and camps two weeks prior to the start date if the class does not meet the minimum enrollment. **All refunds requests must be submitted in writing to [refunds@mcleancenter.org](mailto:refunds@mcleancenter.org).**

#### Class/Activity Refunds

**Requests made 14 days or more** ahead of the start date for the class/activity will receive a full refund less a 10% administrative fee.

**Requests made 13 days or less** before the start date of the class/activity will not be granted.

#### Trips & Tour Refunds

**Requests made 14 days or more** ahead of the start date for the trip or tour will receive a full refund less a 10% administrative fee.

**Requests made 13 days or less** before the start date of the trip/tour will not be granted.

#### Camps

Request made **BEFORE First Friday in April:**

-Patron will receive a full refund.

Request made **AFTER First Friday in April but MORE THAN 21 days ahead of the camp start date:**

-Patron will receive a full refund less a 20% administrative fee.

Request made **LESS THAN 21 days before the start of the camp:**

-Refund will only be granted if the vacant spot is filled and then patron will receive a full refund less a 20% administrative fee.

After a class or activity is in session or the June refund deadline for camps has passed, refunds may be granted for medical reasons or extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the General Programs Director and the Registrar. Refund requests made for medical reasons must be accompanied by a doctor's note to be considered.

*Details of proposed changes to the refund policy were explained, with all questions from board members being addressed.*

*Summary:* MCC wants to be accommodating to the public but we also want to ensure that people are signing up for camps with the intention to attend, and if there are cancellations that they are received in enough time that we can still fill the camp slot. Our camps were full within two weeks; that's what people hear and then they go elsewhere. Then if people drop-out, we are in an inopportune situation when people aren't looking anymore because they've already made other plans. We have chosen key dates to be "first Friday in June;" and "first Friday in April" for clarity of communication and transaction processing, and to allow for evergreen materials. We would like to move forward on this solution.

*Board member comments:* It seems reasonable. Be clear and transparent about the changes and the deadlines. First week of June is a good across-the-board date that everyone can remember as the start date for refunds.

*Question:* When people request the refund, could we ask them "Why?" in order to understand better?

We could potentially do that. They are required to submit their request for refund in writing via email or delivered in person at the Front Desk.

**NEXT STEPS:** MCC will implement approved changes to the refund policy with the next program guide cycles. We hope this change in policy will streamline MCC registration.

## **REVIEW OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SURVEY**

Chair Bartosiewicz explained ongoing efforts during summer 2023 to design a Community Feedback Survey which is now ready to be widely distributed for public engagement.

*\*Example survey was shown; all edits recommended at 8/28 Programs & Outreach Comm. meeting are incorporated into this latest version.*

**Background:** At the annual Public Hearing on Programs held in March people come before the Governing Board to give their statements about: What they love... What they don't like... What they want to see at MCC. MCC staff takes all this information and analyzes it, along with other survey data about programs throughout the year.

**Now:** We want another touchpoint - to focus on larger categories of programming, as well as refine and qualify some recommendations from the March meeting. This survey is developed to be released in fall timing, with the goal of testing some theories provided back in March – to see which of the myriad of ideas MCC should continue to pursue and to understand the directions we need to go in.

**Survey has 3 sections:** 1. user profile; 2. satisfaction; 3. specific drill-down questions from previous surveys, public hearings, and things MCC programmers want to find out about. A lot of MCC programs in this section of questions came directly from what was brought up by members of the public at previous public hearings.

**The committee asked detailed questions and made suggestions for every aspect of the survey:**

\* Recommendation to ask respondents which specific social media platforms they regularly use

\* General rule of thumb is to keep the survey short in length (ideally, about 10 questions); it should take 5 minutes or less to complete.

*Remarks by Executive Director May-Salazar:* We are trying to go a little bit deeper (18 total questions). If we find that it's running long, we could trim it. We don't want people to give-up halfway through and submit a partial response.

*Recommendation by Lisa Mariam:* You can structure it to answer a few basic questions (prioritize the absolute must-haves) and then ask before proceeding: Do you have time for a few more questions? Maybe we could prioritize by shifting the order of questions to make sure to absolutely hit the very important points we must have.

\* The question about topical lectures was improved by excellent recommendations by board members at Programs & Outreach Committee on 8/28 and it makes a lot more sense now. *Comment by board member:* I think that one came out really nice. (general agreement - they like how it is now worded based on the direct feedback by the committee).

\* Youth board members will have key opportunity to help shape future programming at OFC by seeking responses from the youth demographic about what OFC could be in the future.



- \* By the nature of the questions, we are hoping for volunteers from the community to step forward if they have a passion and are willing to share that passion with the community. Are you interested in sharing your talent generally and would be interested in leading a group? If “Yes”, what is your talent?
- \* The survey will help illuminate peoples’ preferences to register in-person vs. online. This information will be useful in allocating resources and restructuring MCC’s Front Desk administrative functions.
- \* Survey Monkey will be the online method; it offers the advantage of translating the survey into many different languages – with the results compiled in English. This will allow us to reach the many languages of people in McLean – coinciding with our strategic plan, in making MCC a welcoming place for all global communities.
- \* The open-ended questions serve an important purpose of revealing peoples’ notion of what MCC means to them and gaining quotes from actual users – direct responses in their own words.
- \* Partial survey responses will still be compiled if people happen to skip particular questions or don’t complete the survey.
- \* Some people might not understand the definition of the term “placemaking.” Alternate suggested wording: “community events” or “community-building events”

Overall marketing pitch for survey: This is why you should do this survey: to meet the needs of the community! We are basically saying that we want to find out from our customers: How are we doing? What do you want? Tell us what the future will look like? How can MCC provide better services to meet your needs? How can we better serve you? How can we better serve the community?

#### **Marketing Plan - MCC Community Feedback Survey**    *\*remarks presented by Sabrina Anwah*

October 2023-January 2024

Goal: to receive 500-700 responses; it might start October 1 (through mid-January). The strategic plan survey yielded about 700 responses; so it’s within the range of what we have been able to accomplish previously.

#### **Marketing outreach efforts will include:**

- Create a dedicated QR code to take people directly to the survey
- Create poster and flyers with QR codes to display in MCC & OFC lobby and at events
- Mail postcards to MCC tax district residents: 1. dedicated smaller postcard AND 2. displayed on fall events postcard – QR code to take survey
- Send flier to stakeholder distribution lists (faith organizations; civic groups who meet at MCC; schools list – guidance counselors; PTA presidents, principals, school lunchroom aids). We have all those lists!
- Have paper copies available at MCC front desk
- Announce at events, encourage people attending to please take the survey (poster displayed with QR codes)
- Make large print copies available
- Have survey translated into Spanish and Korean and send to community contacts; Survey Monkey will offer other languages
- Include postcards in McLean 5K gift bags
- Include in future fall Program Guide – to include comments coming in from program participants
- March 2024 Public Hearing on Programs will have preliminary survey results to present to the public to provide some context

\*FUTURE questions in Section 3 may change as we get ongoing results: perhaps we will have new questions that further drill down on the answers we are receiving in this survey and future public hearings. We hope questions in Sections 1 & 2 will stay fairly the same because we will want to always ask about satisfaction and What does MCC mean to you? We always want to develop some kind of user profile. But Section 3 will be the one that probably changes dramatically.

- Highlight on top banner on website homepage with link
- Post link on MCC/Alden/OFC social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram) – campaigns and boosting (including Google ads)
- Include an appeal in monthly events news releases
- Include an appeal in the weekly newsletter
- Include an appeal in Alden and OFC newsletters
- Included in quarterly stakeholders’ newsletter (local HOAs, nonprofits)
- Include in *Connection* biweekly display ads



- Have a kiosk in MCC lobby and at MCC events and activities – where people can walk up to take the survey  
\*ready for PetFest on October 15
- Use iPads at local outlets (Farmers Market, Giant, Lidl, Safeway)
- Ask civic group members and community partners to send out survey notice to their member lists
- Add to post-event, post-performance and class surveys and evaluations (after each Alden performance; after each class)
- Send dedicated email messages to all patrons through ACTIV and OvationTix
- Sign display on route 123 (“Take our Community Feedback survey!”); but the QR code doesn’t work on that sign because of positioning and distance from the car traffic
- Involve the Youth Ambassadors in collecting teen responses

#### **How MCC Governing Board Members can support the effort:**

- Encourage neighbors, friends and family members to complete the survey
- Post a yard sign with the QR code in your front yard
- Share MCC posts on the survey on your social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram)
- Volunteer to offer patrons the opportunity to take the survey at MCC events (at Info. booths)
- Volunteer to offer residents the opportunity to take the survey at local outlets (Farmers Market, Giant, Lidl, Safeway)

#### Other ideas for effective marketing:

\*Offer a prize for completing the survey.

- ACTION ITEM: We will give it some thought as to what this would look like online... OR... if we just want to leverage at some of the events = in-person responses could receive a prize.

\*iPad at OneLife Fitness in McLean – there are a lot of people in their lobby.

- > ACTION ITEM: Lisa Mariam will volunteer to bring an iPad to OneLife Fitness to get people to respond.

\*ads on TV screens at OneLife Fitness and McLean Raquet Club. MCC used to send ads to McLean Raquet Club.

- ACTION ITEM: McLean Raquet Club has a bulletin board and Executive Director May-Salazar can ask what the options are.

\*table stand with QR code at local McLean restaurants *Comment by Executive Director May-Salazar: Our strategic plan emphasizes that MCC develop partnerships with local businesses. This would be a good way to start it.*

\*Every Governing Board member encouraging people to fill out the survey!

- > ACTION ITEM: As soon as we go live, we should create a very specific Sign-up Genius to have board members sign-up for events. Staff will determine which MCC events will have the survey available.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH** *\*update presented by Sabrina Anwah, PIO*

**New sustainable fall Program Guide delivered.** Dave Craig was lauded for all the graphics he does for these publications!

New printer – saved \$10,000 (below last year’s fall Program Guide)

Working on Winter/Spring Guide

#### **Establishing new website maintenance vendor**

Changing website vendors: Kompleks did the website design which included one year of maintenance. We do not plan to continue with them for a maintenance only contract. FIONTA, who we worked with in the past, is going to be website vendor moving forward. We are looking forward to making that change and have met with new vendor and coordinating a smooth transition to the new website

Completed improvements: on Alden landing page (Behind-the-Scenes video) and OFC Block Party video landing pages; We will build a photo and video gallery; Instagram has replaced Twitter feed that was on our homepage

#### **Fall Event promotion, included:**

FY2025 Budget Public Hearing on September 27

Stakeholder newsletter in September (spotlight feature of Board Chair Rasheq Rahman)

Social media promotions for Fall class registration



Alden season brochure/The Alden also has an ad in Fall Arts Preview of *Washington Post*  
OFC Block Party; After School Program – Andrew Carter was interviewed on “County Conversation” podcast.  
The narrator was amazed at the cost-effective price of the After School program.  
Parking Lot Sale (ads in *Connection*)  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary video project  
Community Guide ads (*Connection* & *Sun Gazette*)

**Administrative Assistant part-time job in PIO office is now posted.**

**Thanks to our two teen board members for volunteering to help this Saturday at the Old Firehouse Block Party!!!**

**Reminder: Please sign up for the weekly newsletter if you haven't already.** If you don't open it on Wednesday, it will resend on Saturday. This newsletter is the best way to stay informed about what's going on. And you can share it with other people. Once you receive it, you have the wealth of all the MCC programming that's happening.

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

Announcements of upcoming events: Sunday, September 17 at 1:00 p.m. Usher Orientation at The Alden Theatre.  
3:00 p.m.- concert in the park with Calvin Earl (guitarist; music history specialist). Special program that he developed during COVID-19 is about 're-connecting.' Saturday, September 23: Buckets 'N Boards – final performance in McLean Central Park before the renovation construction. This group has appeared here previously and are well-received.

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

**ADJOURNMENT** Chair Bartosiewicz thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted – Holly Novak, Executive Assistant