



**2023 - 2024 MCC Governing Board
Programs & Outreach Committee
March 13, 2024 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; Sarah Schallern Treff, Performing Arts Director; Sabrina Anwah, PIO
- Guests:** None.

CONVENE MEETING

Chair Bartosiewicz convened a meeting of Programs & Outreach Committee of the Governing Board of the McLean Community Center on March 13, 2024, at 5:32 p.m. The meeting was open to the public attending in-person. An announcement was made about the meeting being audio-recorded. No changes were requested to the Agenda; it was adopted by acclamation.

OVERVIEW OF CUSTOMER FEEDBACK SURVEY **remarks by Mike Fisher, Sarah Schallern Treff and Betsy May-Salazar*

**PowerPoint presentation prepared for the March 20 board meeting and Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs.*

This PowerPoint presentation to be shown on March 20 will serve as an introduction of who MCC is... the vast number of responses that were received... and what we learned from the data. Rather than just a sequence of isolated comments from the public, this will provide a grounding as overall context for those attending the Public Hearing. Some of this information might be new to them and it gives a holistic view of what MCC does already and what we are aiming toward. Following the presentation, we will open it up to their individual public comments.

Presentation highlights:

- *Our community is very diverse in terms of languages. 27% speak a language other than English at home. At elementary schools in McLean – 34% of the households speak a 2nd language (Mandarin; Spanish; Korean). This will inform how we develop future programming (festivals; translation of printed materials).
 - *Age ranges: 26% are 17 and under; 52% are age 45+ (of which 19.5% are 65+) There is not a huge number of people between 18 and 44 in McLean (this fact helps to define our key audiences).
 - *Link to strategic plan – “Purpose & Vision” and “Mission” provide a backdrop to reflect the balance of what we currently provide. Importantly, MCC is a central civic space for local community organizations –a huge part of what we do.
 - *new diagram: MCC Programming Pyramid (from widest public benefit/broad reach... down to more individual benefits). This is a relative comparison of broad categories: 1. Largest public benefit and broadest reach = large-scale community events, family events; civic group meetings; 2. Key Target audiences/Community Need = OFC After School program; Seniors in Action program; summer camps; 3. Individual benefit = drop-in programs; programs topical lectures; classes
- Regarding comments about how costs are related to taxes: “Why am I paying this amount?” It was a board decision – we don’t subsidize class costs; we take the charge we receive from the contractor and add 20% . When someone is saying that the class is not saving me money – it’s because the priority is on putting our dollars into large-scale events for greatest overall public benefit, and having a facility that meets needs of local organizations.

*How to reflect McLean Project for the Arts in the pyramid?

MPA is a partnership. It could be shown in “Community organizations and civic group meetings” (MPA is an investment of in-kind space donation + ArtFest) or between Alden Theatre and the Key Target Audiences. This is helpful feedback to be considered and MPA will added to the pyramid for the public hearing presentation.

GOALS of survey:

1. Strengthen our feedback cycle with the public hearing and be able to receive data year-round and dive deeper into comments received in the public hearing.
2. Asking the public to prioritize the comments so we know where to prioritize our R&D
3. Confirming existing knowledge and assumptions that we are making about habits, patterns, desires of the public.
4. Overall satisfaction – broad reach: Are you satisfied with MCC as a whole? (to get that data point)
5. Gauging interest in possible future programs and activities.
6. Seeking additional program recommendations (which we are always open to hearing).

Design of the survey: focusing on tax district residents. Staff and Programs & Outreach Committee collaboration; internal research on best practices and latest findings, industry trends; choosing ideal software to administer the survey (that gave us the best analytics on the back-end). We also focused on accessibility (large-print; other languages- Spanish & Korean). We want it to be open and accessible to everyone – so having it already translated makes it available in the future.

Dissemination: broadest reach possible (weekly newsletters; direct mailing to tax district residents; iPads at events; paper version at Front Desk; kiosk in lobby. Direct mail through the MCC class registration system worked best in yielding the most respondents.

Various question types/styles: multiple choice; check all that apply; ranking options; open-ended reply comment.

Respondents: About 1,200 responses = EXCELLENT! Majority of respondents did live in the tax district – estimated at about 80% (some zip codes are both in district and out of district). 2/3 of the population are adults and kids.

Publicity and registration processes: The Program Guide is what the community loves (proven by the data): 56% prefer to learn from Program Guide; 48% e-newsletter; 47% website; 22% social media. This relates to the “Be Visible” strategic goal as to how people are looking for us and where to put MCC’s resources. 78% prefer to register online; 8% in person. It’s good information moving forward to make sure we are focusing on how to engage people.

Preferred class format? 44% one-time lecture; 44% weekly classes. This relates to “Invite Discovery” strategic goal and level of participation in our programs.

Preferred class time of day? 41% 5 p.m. – 8 p.m.; 37% 10 a.m. to noon; 26% noon to 2 p.m. (mostly parents with kids) Being able to offer these options makes us accessible > strategic goal: Welcoming McLean and its Global Community.

Participation in MCC Programs: People are planning to participate in a lot more! Top four areas of participation are: Large scale community events, Alden Performances, Classes, Outdoor Concerts. Significant interest in indoor as well as outdoor activities (indicates moving beyond COVID-19 hesitancy about gathering in public places). Clear synergy in what people DID attend at MCC... and what they PLAN to attend. Participation rates coincide with where we are putting our resources in the public benefit pyramid.

Overall satisfaction: 70% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied! The neutral rating in each one is 20%; negative is approximately 10%. These rankings are indicative of the broad reach of our survey and it means we are reaching people who don’t attend and finding opinions about why they are not coming. After-event surveys tend to be much higher but they are an echo chamber – only capture responses from those who attended.

Better quality of life: 75% of respondents agree or strongly agree that MCC improves their overall quality of life! More positive findings = the slight difference in satisfaction vs. quality of life suggests that MCC has value to our residents even if they don’t attend here. They understand it is a benefit for the community (also reflected in comments).



Many lovely comments were received about OFC making a huge impact in kids' lives. Many folks grew up coming here and are now passing it on generationally to their children and grandchildren.

What potential new MCC programs would you attend? (prioritizing most common responses)

50% performances by local performing artists. We need to drill down to find out what "local" means to you? McLean?

DMV? Eastern seaboard? We will inquire to find out what their expectations are.

37% adult trips and tours. We are actively exploring to find the right company.

32% want topical issues dealing with current issues/concerns (Safe Community Coalition). We have started to seek out new disciplines to focus on, such as retirement; retirement finances.

31% gardening workshops We have tested this out with SIA (resounding success – everyone loved them!) We will find a way to incorporate this into our regular programming.

Give us your ideas for new programs? What don't we do that you would like to see MCC offer?

Categorization process to evaluate comments: divided in categories such as: we already do that; we already do that but the request is for a different time; specific to MPA (comments were shared with them); facility issue: we don't own the tennis courts, basketball courts; WE don't offer swim lessons because we don't have a pool. Or...the proposed suggestion directly competes with what is offered at another nearby Fairfax Co. facility.

500 responses fell into category of "viable suggestions": 26% topical lectures; 17% adult trips; 16% dance; 12% languages; 12% knitting, sewing, crochet; 9% photography; 5% self defense; 3% each - gardening, chess, environmental, genealogy, gymnastics, maker, writing

Format: 44% classes; 21% lectures; 13% clubs; 10% tours; 8% meet ups

Participant led clubs: 35% would participate in a walking club. 32 people said they were interested in leading a walking club > cultivates a stronger sense of community (offering programming without admin. requirements)

Other club ideas – 3% (32 respondents) said they would be interested in sharing their talent/passion in some way. Book club was most common, followed by lectures with topics such as travelogues, senior topics, languages. We have a community with people of immense experience!

Summary remarks by Executive Director May-Salazar:

1. Value of the survey: The survey responses exceeded our expectations. It reinforced things we have been working on and talking about. If, at the public hearing, people give comments about specific things and they fit into these categories, we now have a context for decision-making.
2. Increased survey participation compared to previous years: 1,200 respondents is double the amount of 570 responses (from Strategic Plan survey). That is an impressive achievement!
3. 70% attributing "Better quality of life" to MCC is significant. Knowing that many people who answered don't even participate here > receiving that rating is encouraging! Non-user data is more impressive; we got significant and useful information from 'non-users.'

PUBLIC HEARING ON FY2026 PROGRAMS – MARCH 20

We will start off with this same presentation at a faster pace. Then we will roll into asking for public comments. There has been widespread advance publicity through press releases; announcements.

Procedure for written comments: Any written comments that come in will not be read aloud – but will be reflected in the Minutes. Any written comments received by Sunday, March 17, from tax district residents will be compiled into a single list and put on the website as a 'pre-read.'

Holly Novak must vet everyone's address so as to only include comments from tax district residents. Written comment period remains open for 7 days after May 20 (to be included in the Minutes).

Verbal comments: People will have opportunity to get up and speak. It is not a conversational back-and-forth; rather, just a general 'thank you' acknowledgement from the board in-the-moment.



We hope the context of the presentation of survey results makes it more robust. There will be a summary piece put online to share the results with the public.

Summary by Chair Bartosiewicz: I like talking about the survey because it shows that we listen throughout the whole year and in addition, we take your input. This survey is the first touchpoint (and best way) to get feedback. Then we can enhance it and perhaps people will want to give a written comment after they hear the survey presentation.

Once the Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs concludes, the regular board meeting business will continue, to include introduction and remarks by Dranesville Supervisor Jimmy Bierman.

CHANGE IN INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY **remarks by Mike Fisher*

Background: In the last 5-6 years, FCPS has made early decisions on the weekends about snow closures. Our classes were tied to the schools – if schools closed, MCC classes got cancelled. With FCPS cancelling Saturdays on a whim, we’ve had to cancel even when there wasn’t snow on the ground. We then had to expand additional weeks to offer make-up classes. There was general confusion - classes cancelled quickly but rentals went forward; theater rehearsals went forward. It became a mixed message and unclear: if we cancelled classes yet the facility remained open, then staff is sitting here unnecessarily. We want to be in-sync with other county agencies in figuring out when to open MCC late, or not at all.

Re-examining our cancellation policy: We looked at NCS and other contemporary agencies. We will untether ourselves from the schools. If Fairfax County *government* closes, then we are closed. But other than that situation, Executive Director May-Salazar will have discretion: our senior management team will convene and make a decision; then communicate it out on the website. Our new policy - we follow the county; for all other situations, consult MCC website regarding independent closure. Benefit: By following the county, we will not be making a lot of discretionary decisions (only if power outage or localized storm; or if our parking lot is not plowed yet). As a result of this change, we will be making fewer refunds and changes in class schedules. We will roll this out on July 1 and in the fall Program Guide.

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH **remarks by PIO Sabrina Anwah*

Governing Board election promotion: (Call for Candidates phase just finished). 11 adults and 5 teen candidates. That was successful! Now we move on to the second phase - absentee voting information. We will update the website to add the online request form to obtain absentee ballots. Postcard to tax district residents; display ads; social media boosting; e-newsletter. We also will advertise the opportunity to vote in-person at Friday Night Rides and McLean Day.

Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs: display ads; Winter/Spring Program Guide; e-newsletter; boosted post on social media to get people to give comments.

Summer Program Guide: big current priority. It comes out in April. We are updating the website for summer camps.

NextDoor: We were granted a nextdoor account by the county. Previously nextdoor had only been used at the county level for emergency communications. Now they are permitting us to have a site! We have posted the “Call for candidates” and “Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs.” We need to build it up; they allow you to put in big events (Fiesta del Sol) but it is a manual process to build it up.

50th Anniversary video and timeline: Kyle Corwin is doing significant work on historical archival materials.

Spring performing arts previews for The Alden: There are a lot of promotions underway.

OLD /NEW BUSINESS

Chair Bartosiewicz opened the floor to any matters of old or new business.

Public comment submitted to a board member:

Question: What is the relationship with McLean Community Players and MCC? I’m curious because I got a complaint because they thought MCP was part of MCC. MCP is running auditions for “Heather” – which the resident is concerned about.



MCP is an independent organization. As a rental Category 5 (Community Arts Groups) – they get priority for booking shows. “Category 5” is defined as a rental group whose primary mission is to present performing arts. MCC does not get involved with their programming selections.

Response: Thank you. I will suggest to the people who reached out to me to reach out to the McLean Community Players directly.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bartosiewicz thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Holly Novak, Executive Assistant