

**2023–2024 MCC Governing Board  
Regular Meeting and Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs  
March 20, 2024 – 6:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

- Board Members Present:** *in-person:* Anna Bartosiewicz; Lisa Mariam; Rasheq Rahman; Eleanor Ague; Katie Gorka; Gloria Marrero Chambers; Kathleen Cooney Porter; Matt Colsia; Sophia Bruno *virtual:* Kristina Groennings (*Los Angeles, CA*)
- Board Members Absent:** Ari Ghasemian
- MCC Staff Present:** Betsy May-Salazar, Executive Director; Holly Novak, Executive Assistant; Matthew Hockensmith, Comptroller; Mike Fisher, General Programs Director; Sarah Schallern Treff, Performing Arts Director; Erin Bieger, Instructional Programs Manager; Sabrina Anwah, PIO
- Guests:** Dranesville Supervisor Jimmy Bierman; Deb Bissen (MPA); Tarek Atia; Michael Monroe; Jim Lawless (MCA; Friends of MCC); Luke Understein; Mr. Understein; Karen Veltri (McLean Community Players); Jane Bohlin; Ben Wiles (Supervisor Bierman’s office)

**CONVENE MEETING**

On March 20, 2024 at 6:36 p.m. Chair Rasheq Rahman convened a Regular Meeting of the Governing Board of McLean Community Center. This was also the annual Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs. He announced the meeting was being audio-recorded. He explained the opportunity for public comments about *future* programming during the Public Hearing, and for public comments of general nature to occur later in the meeting during “Public Comment” segment. No changes to the agenda were requested; it was adopted by acclamation.

**CONVENE PUBLIC HEARING ON FY2026 PROGRAMS**

Programs & Outreach Committee Chair Anna Bartosiewicz convened a Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs. She explained this is an annual forum to look forward to the future, as an opportunity for tax district residents to provide significant input to the trajectory of meaningful programming at MCC two years from now - in FY2026. She is excited to see everyone present.

*\*remarks by Exec. Director Betsy May-Salazar, General Programs Director Mike Fisher and Performing Arts Director Sarah Schallern Treff*

Overview of Customer Feedback Survey (1,246 respondents)

This fall, in an effort to broaden our reach and get more public input on programming, we launched an extensive Customer Satisfaction Survey. Our intention is to establish multiple means of input from the community. The idea is for this to be come cyclical, with a fall survey with a broad reach that will provide community input that can be shared at the annual public hearing on programs each Spring. The survey results are an important grounding framework to provide context for singular incoming public comments which we receive all year, as well as input expressed by tax district residents at the annual Public Hearing on Programs.

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 previous and current comments so we know where to prioritize our R&D
3. Confirming existing assumptions that we are making about residents’ preferences, 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); open-ended question.

\***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.

\***Demographics:** 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 2<sup>nd</sup> language (predominately Mandarin; Spanish; Korean). This will inform how we develop future programming and translations of printed materials. Age ranges: 26% are 17 and under; 52% are age 45+ (of which 19.5% are 65+) These findings help to define our key audiences. Responses to this survey were about 1/3 in each age category, which reflects our tax district demographics.

\***new pyramid graphic about MCC budget priorities:** looking at our programming on a spectrum from the widest public benefit and broadest reach – up to the more individualized benefit. When considering programming with this lens it helps to share where resources are focused and how fees are considered. **Largest Public Benefit and Broad Reach:** large scale community events and family events; community or civic group meetings; Alden Theatre performances & outdoor concerts in the park; McLean Project for the Arts; **Key Target Audiences & Filling a Community Need:** Old Firehouse After School Program & Seniors in Action Program; Summer Camps; **More Individualized Benefit:** Drop-in Programs, Topical Lectures, Classes. This is useful in evaluating where our dollars are going and priority of funding and human resources (staff time & focus). Much is going to free community-wide events that have a very broad reach. At the ‘top’ of pyramid – we offer classes at MCC “at cost” (not a discounted rate). Often, we receive comments that pricing of classes should be subsidized. We’ve found that the greatest value of tax dollars goes into MCC offerings with broader community reach.

\***have attended/plan to attend:** A very significant finding is the comparison of activities people have attended in the last year to what they intend to participate in in the future. The top four categories that respondents say they attend or will attend are: Large Scale Community Events; Alden Performances; Classes, and Outdoor Concerts. The ‘plan to attend...’ response level is even higher than the actual having attended something at MCC and is for the same top four categories. This is a hopeful sign – that after having experienced an MCC event or class, people really want to come back. The “plan to attend...” responses also may include current non-users who view MCC favorably from a distance now but who do plan to attend events in the future. It’s indicative of an aspirational response that more respondents plan to attend programming in the future. People are attributing a positive impression of MCC even if they have never set foot in the door by expressing intention to visit in the future. They understand the value MCC provides in the community (adds to their ‘quality of life’).

\***Feedback from non-users** is beneficial because it is different from “after-event” data - which is basically an echo chamber of feedback only from those who attended something at MCC.

\***The survey included a list of potential new programs.** Respondents were most interested in the following programs: 50% performances by local performing artists; 37% adult trips & tours; 32% topical lectures dealing with current community issues/concerns (i.e. collaborations with Safe Community Coalition and MCA); 31% Gardening Workshops. Staff is working on all these initiatives to include in future programming.

*Summary by Executive Director May-Salazar:*

1. Value of the survey: The survey responses exceeded our expectations. It reinforced things staff has been working on and envisioning. 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. 75% attributing “Better quality of life” to MCC is significant. With 18% neutral. Knowing that some people who answered aren’t currently participating at MCC > receiving that rating is encouraging! Non-user data is useful and significant so we can learn what people who are not engaged with MCC would be interested in.

**NEXT STEPS:** *Question: Is there a framework for how those questions will be evaluated and rolled-out in the future?*

Yes – a lot of the top responses we are already working on. We will look at feasibility; and the next fall survey will help us prioritize – to narrow down our resources (time; money). It’s nice to see that people want to lead clubs; the Bridge group at OFC was participant-led. (One public attendee tonight indicated that they had taken the survey.) This research can

morph into an annual feedback mechanism (similar survey every year with new questions substituted). A summary report will be produced that will be shared to the public and used in versatile ways. **The benefit to MCC staff's analysis process is that any public comment that comes in now will be understood in the context of this broad survey response.**

Opportunity for public comments by tax district residents:

Written comments – **No written comments were received in advance. During this meeting, no written comments were submitted for the record.**

Verbal comments – Those attending were invited to express their comments (first stating aloud their residential address to verify if they are a tax district resident). **No one attending requested to speak.**

### **ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC HEARING ON FY2026 PROGRAMS**

Programs & Outreach Committee Chair Bartosiewicz thanked members of the public for being present for this special focus on MCC future programming. She then stated that the Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs was concluded.

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Board Chair Rahman proceeded to conduct remaining topics of the Regular Meeting agenda.

### **APPROVE MINUTES**

Minutes of February 28, 2024, Regular Meeting were reviewed. No changes were requested; accepted as written.

**MOTION:** To approve Minutes of February 28, 2024, Regular Meeting.

**Approved by a vote of ten:** Rasheq Rahman; Lisa Mariam; Katie Gorka; Gloria Marrero Chambers; Matt Colsia; Anna Bartosiewicz; Eleanor Ague; Kathleen Cooney Porter; Kristina Groennings; Sophia Bruno – all voting “AYE.”

Ari Ghasemian was absent.

### **INTRODUCTION OF DRANESVILLE DISTRICT SUPERVISOR JIMMY BIERMAN**

Chair Rahman introduced Dranesville District Supervisor Jimmy Bierman and welcomed him to speak.

Supervisor Bierman thanked the Governing Board for the opportunity to participate in this meeting. His comments touched on the following topics: McLean Downtown Revitalization; new developments of commercial and residential properties; coming enhancements to streetscapes of existing commercial enterprises; FCDOT pilot study of pedestrian and walkability in downtown McLean (focus on improving the walkability and livability of downtown McLean). Fairfax County is conducting an energy study of MCC facility; considerations about EV parking; addressing recent increases in car break-ins; focusing with Fairfax County Police on keeping things safe and traffic enforcement.

Thank you for everything that you do. This place is really awesome! I'm here a lot (attended a book talk several weeks ago). I took my son to see “Anamaniacs” in concert – he enjoyed it!). I can't wait to bring him to more events!

### Q & A:

Supervisor Bierman opened an opportunity for questions from the public in attendance, and from board members and staff.

*Deb Bissen – MPA:* Thank you for being at MPA events. And for including us in your newsletter.

My young son loved the McLean and Langley pyramid art shows! You start with art from kindergarten children all the way up to seniors in high school.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

*\*remarks by Board Chair Rasheq Rahman*

It has been a very busy 1Q 2024. I attended candidate orientation (11 adults; 5 youth members); this is a broad field. I enjoyed hearing about their backgrounds and how they plan to contribute by being on the board. I also saw many community organizations at “I Love McLean” event. It's nice to showcase our local community organizations and businesses to many attendees who aren't from McLean. Now we march on toward McLean Day – join us for that! The election will have youth candidates at Friday Night Rides (campaign tents). Saturday will feature adult candidates at campaign tents. It will be a very exciting election season. ENC Chair Kristina Groennings will be able to answer any questions that arise.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**    *\*remarks by Executive Director Betsy May-Salazar*

Good news about recent honorary recognitions of our wonderful MCC staff!

- Holly Novak and Danielle Van Hook were recognized by Fairfax County for contributions in DEIA – in celebration of Women's History Month. It was really awesome!
- David Craig (Graphic Designer) and Danielle Van Hook received recognition from Fairfax County: OPA "Distinguished Service Award." Award ceremony will be held in May at Fairfax Government Center – presentation of a certificate + \$300 bonus + one day of paid leave. We are VERY proud of them receiving this achievement in recognition of all they accomplished this year! The staff put in a lot of effort into these staff award nominations. We encourage MCC staff to apply for applicable awards, industry recognition, and to nominate each other from mutual respect as a team. We are continuing to look at key opportunities for recognition at all staff levels (collaborative decisions about whom to nominate). This contributes to our "Showcase Excellence" strategic goal.

Update on OFC vans: Last month, the board approved the purchase of two vans. The county then looked at commercial lots (which didn't have vans with the design and safety specs we need). We have moved forward to purchase the vans through the county's normal ordering system – which will perhaps be 10-month timeframe. We are hopeful it will be shorter.

Fiesta del Sol: It's an awesome event; people dance all evening! Paella demonstration, crafts for sale; we are expanding to use outdoor areas of MCC facility if weather permits. Welcome remarks will be given by Dranesville Supervisor Bierman.

## **50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE**                      *\*remarks by Chair Lisa Mariam*

Last week's meeting had a lot of exciting updates as staff makes headway on all fronts. It's exciting to see all the plans leading into realization.

\*The timeline looks really good (utilizing previous historical materials). It will be amazing (on the website; interactive)!

\*Things are moving ahead nicely on the video; production crew has been hired. You will see them at MCC events filming community participants.

\*Community picnic: We considered the original concept of holding it in McLean Central Park and ideas around possibly moving it to MCC premises. More to come on this potential shift; great discussion about compromises and brainstorming.

## **PROGRAMS & OUTREACH COMMITTEE**    *\*remarks by Chair Anna Bartosiewicz*

The committee's conversation on March 13 focused mostly on preparing for tonight's survey presentation. We also discussed a change in MCC's inclement weather policy. As of now, we are tied to FCPS decisions about school closures for class cancellations – which typically do not coincide with the actual weather situation at MCC. FCPS-linked closure of MCC creates public confusion; it also negatively impacts our ongoing classes, rentals and events. Goal: to untether our decisions from FCPS by following Fairfax County Govt. decisions –only when county govt. is closed because of weather, then MCC will be closed. The Executive Director holds authority to make closure decisions outside of the County policies if circumstances require.

PIO Sabrina Anwah explained the promotion cycle for 2024 Governing Board election (local newspaper ads; postcards; news releases). We discussed details of online absentee ballot requests and highlighted promotion to introduce voting at Friday Night Rides (at McLean Day) – new this year. This will facilitate more high school students participating in voting. Friday Night Rides will have the opportunity for all voting (adult & youth ballots available). Summer Program Guide – it is underway. MCC is expanding into social media and promoting ourselves online.

## **MCLEAN PROJECT FOR THE ARTS**                      *\*remarks by Deb Bissen, MPA*

\*We are excited to have our youth art show (McLean pyramid) on display through the end of this month. There are many fun projects and the art teachers in this community do a great job. The students are happy to show off their work!

\*Trying something new: Emerson Gallery is open whenever MCC is open for the student shows. We are thankful for the cooperation of MCC Front Desk staff to help keep an eye on people going upstairs to the gallery. It is accessible for families and individuals who prefer to come to MCC in the evenings.

\*Spring Break Camp (minimum registration is almost reached) – this is timed for FCPS Spring Break.

\*Summer Camps registrations are underway; and also for Spring art classes (beginning of April).

\*We have a new trio of artists exhibiting - opening April 11 (the artists are new to this area).

\*ArtFest is not happening in McLean Central Park this year (due to construction). However, MPA is looking into possible alternative locations for a fall – nothing to announce yet, but we are hopeful.

#### **OLD /NEW BUSINESS**

Chair Rahman opened the floor to any matters of old or new business. Nothing was mentioned as a further topic for discussion this evening.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**In-person comments:** Chair Rahman invited the public to introduce themselves and give verbal remarks if they wished. They must first state aloud their residential address to verify that they are a Small District 1A-Dranesville resident. Each person was allotted three minutes to speak.

**There had been no advance requests to speak.**

**No members of the public who were present chose to speak.**

**Written comments:** Any individuals submitting written comments to be shown in these Minutes were pre-verified as being a Small District 1A-Dranesville resident.

**No written comments were submitted in advance of this meeting, nor during the meeting.**

To conclude this Public Comment segment, Chair Rahman stated aloud:

We thank members of the public for contributing their feedback this evening. The MCC Governing Board takes your suggestions very seriously. You are welcome to attend our meetings. All MCC Governing Board meetings are open to the public. You can view the board schedule on MCC's website: [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org).

We have very strict county regulations and stringent oversight of our operations in all areas, and we work hard to meet these needs in being responsible to our taxpayers. We are committed to transparency and making the process open to the public. We welcome you back to future events at the McLean Community Center to see the value of your tax dollars at work.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Rahman stated that all business matters were now concluded. He thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Holly Novak - Executive Assistant