



**2023-2024 MCC Governing Board
Programs & Outreach Committee
August 28, 2023 6:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

Committee members ALL present: *in-person:* Eleanor Ague; Sophia Bruno; Katie Gorka; Lisa Mariam
virtual: Anna Bartosiewicz (*1st time virtual - McLean, VA*)

Other Board members present: None.

MCC Staff present: Betsy May-Salazar, Executive Director; Danielle Van Hook, Director of Youth Programs; Holly Novak, Exec. Assistant; Mike Fisher, General Programs Director

Guests: None.

CONVENE MEETING

Chair Bartosiewicz delegated Lisa Mariam to convene a meeting of Programs & Outreach Committee of the Governing Board of the McLean Community Center on August 28, 2023, at 6:40 p.m. The meeting was open to the public attending in-person. A courtesy announcement was made about audio-recording. No changes were requested to the Agenda; it was adopted by acclamation.

UPCOMING ENENTS & NEW PROGRAMS IN FY24; FY25

Danielle Van Hook and Mike Fisher presented updates about future programming: what is continuing; consistency of programs; building forward on what was new this year; highlighting how most new focus for FY25 will be on 50th Anniversary.

Highlights – The Alden Theatre -FY24 (2023-2024 season)

- Lunar New Year will be a family friendly event anchored by a performance by Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company (in existence for 25 years), which blends traditional Chinese folkdance with contemporary movement – celebrating Year of the Dragon. This group will also help facilitate a Lunar New Year cultural festival at MCC on a Sunday (12 noon to 4 p.m. prior to the performance). Initial discussions with embassy of People’s Republic of China – assisting to connect us with local artisans, vendors, calligraphy demonstrations, food vendors.
- Foreign language film series (FREE program) is very popular and growing over the years! We are adding an evening screening for each film to broaden our reach into the community. We will continue to offer daytime screenings.
- McLean Day stage – re-envisioning McLean Day stage and how it best serves the community. We are exploring various options of where that best performance space is and what type of programming is best for the McLean Day event.
- FY24/FY25 outdoor concerts - McLean Central Park construction work begins in October, so we will not be able to use the gazebo as our normal concert venue for at least one year. Exploring other possible locations to determine the most feasible options which may include: intimate concerts on MCC plaza; other spaces on our campus; small lunchtime performances in downtown McLean/on Elm St.

FY25 theatre program vision - initial planning:

- Artist-led community involvement (starting initiatives for 50th Anniversary)

- MLK arts company from Memphis, TN (Collage Dance Collective) offering a performance choreographed to MLK speeches. In an extended residency, the artistic director will audition local dancers who learn the choreography, to be incorporated into the professional dance company performances.
- A dance theater piece (multi-generational) based on a book, “The Remember Balloons.” The story revolves around a grandfather slowly losing his memories and giving them to his grandson. This show is meant for children and families as they observe changing needs of their loved ones. Opportunities to extend into the community by offering balloons and participation experiences about cherishing family memories.

Summary by Executive Director May-Salazar: Performing Arts staff is doing a great job developing “multi-touch” experiences for the community. It’s great that young people in MCC’s dance program will have the opportunity to audition and perform onstage with a professional dance company. SIA and the OFC After School Program will be the first groups to receive these types of workshops - in trying to extend our programming. We are also pursuing other community paths.

Highlights - FY24 Programs:

- Fiesta Del Sol: continuation of this very successful debut program. Minor changes based on lessons learned from first effort (where to best position the bar; tables + seating)
- Earth Day will emphasize the opportunity for people to come in and be together- not just drop-off and drive away.
 - Changing the date of recycling event (week or two earlier) to improve availability of resources: recycling vendors
 - Better lecture/learning opportunities on actual Earth Day: lectures offered last year were poorly attended. We will offer more of these topics on Earth Day at more functional times to get wider audience presence.
 - Considering augmenting Earth Day with a recycled art project as a back-to-back option to generate interest.
- Touch A Truck (on Veterans Day – when kids are out-of-school but MCC is open) Over 1,000 attendees!!
 - Addition of “quiet hour” (first hour) responding to patron comments- based on participant feedback. No horns; no sirens blown (hopefully folks who are noise-sensitive will come during the first hour).
- Sensory Day
 - Will be expanded this year to include elements from the newly renovated Sensory Room.
 - Purpose of sensory day to provide participants with alternate sensory experiences and explore different ways of experiencing the world.
 - Sensory room is a therapeutic tool for individuals to explore sensory experiences.
 - Room will include floor resurfacing from carpet to rubberized tile; several touch screens and interactive features. We visited other sensory rooms in Fairfax County facilities to understand what elements they have and how utilized. This site-visit information will inform our planning.

Comment by Executive Director May-Salazar: Many After School Program participants and those who attend activities at OFC come for such benefits of sensory spaces. It will be a huge asset to MCC’s day-to-day operations. SPARC has expressed interest in using the space for therapy with therapeutic professionals that they coordinate. OFC Sensory Room will remain dual-purpose with a computer lab – so it functions fully for the After School program as well as other users.
- OFC After School Program – the hallmark of OFC; but after COVID-19, the program has struggled for attendance. Some shift in family patterns with more parents working from home. Also, more competition: now ALL middle and elementary schools have robust after school programs at the school, expanded to at least 4 days per week. Last year, we broadened to ages 5th grade to 10th grade. Current marketing efforts to make a strong push for new members: OFC staff attending back-to-school nights, open houses, parent/teacher nights. We will discuss alternative A.S.P.

ideas if membership goals are not met: What is next if the need is no longer there? What other need can we fill out of the OFC building for that youth population?

Summary by Executive Director May-Salazar: Our marketing efforts are starting to pay off (more than 20 kids now registered). We view this as a year to study this program and determine if we need to make a shift to do something differently. There are other program models to consider. OFC Friday night activities, dances, game nights: all fully-subscribed! Camps (for breaks and summer) – those are sold-out consistently. We are meeting the demand in many places – it’s just a matter of assessing the niche for After School Program. What is the new need now that things have apparently shifted in family lifestyle and schedule? 35-40 kids per day is our target (or trying to get closer back to pre-COVID). And then explore it again next year to see if the need still exists.

- SIA – Seniors in Action This program has exploded faster than we expected! Now we are focusing on how to manage growth and making sure we are meeting the needs and goals that our members want, and offering all the opportunities they are looking for.
 - New coordinator starts on 9/11/23 (Samah Habayeb)
 - Implementing and solidifying program schedules (week-to-week; month-to-month) so as not to have gaps and offering enough spaces for all participants. We want to provide more opportunities for members.
 - Discussion of planning for future growth/philosophy/direction of program. Drop-in? Use of particular rooms for ½ of each day?
- Classes – evaluating class catalogue as a whole for balance of program opportunities and to ensure goals are met
 - Continuing trials of new programs/instructors: Kids yoga (new instructor is being guided through the county contract process so it can become week-over-week classes). Fairfax County rules prohibit us from spending more than \$XX to a person who is not on an official contract with the county. Parent/child Zumba; Mad Science – expanding our science class offerings (Lego robotics camps sold-out this summer).
- Youth Ambassadors - continue developing the program and goals under guidance of our new youth board members.
 - Started last year by the previous youth board members: to help MCC reach and market successfully to high school age group. GOALS: 1. focus group; 2. cheerleaders; 3. envisioning fun events! FOCUS GROUP: Danielle Van Hook spent time exploring their interests in theater activities. Erin Bieger explored their interest in classes; Aaron Greene met with them to talk about what OFC can offer. We received solid candid responses (very beneficial).
 - PROMOTION OF MCC: They utilized their social media networks to help promote and push out our information – McLean Day flier and other information relevant to youth. It was very successful – with tangible increases to our reach on social media when Youth Ambassadors were active.
 - 3. FUN EVENTS! Youth Ambassadors and youth board members planned a high school event: “AP’s Out Party” – similar to an all-night party; catered Chick-fil-A, bouncy house, dancing, video games.

FY25 – focusing on MCC’s 50th Anniversary. Large community picnic with long tables – food trucks or catered; live music – a feature event that brings everyone together. Commemorative planting of a tree; time capsule; art pieces. *Clarification by Executive Director May-Salazar:* Three projects: 1. Artist-commissioned piece on MCC campus (sculptural/branding; permanent – using MCC letters); 2. OFC exterior mural – to allow community input (call for participation) - What is your memory of McLean? What is your iconic image of McLean? Everything about the anniversary (other than picnic) is to create things that have a lasting impact. 3. Video – professional videographer to focus on key events in 2025 and get a sense of the whole year (individual memories; on the website; can be shown in various places). The budget has been tightened – it’s all coming together. EVERYTHING we do in year 2025 will be looking at it with the lens of the 50th Anniversary



(branding; expanding our annual programming in every way). All major MCC events will have opportunity to tie into the anniversary.

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH *update about fall marketing efforts underway presented by Executive Director May-Salazar

*Newly-formatted Fall Program Guide (three-columns, shorter descriptions and fewer photos) produced by a new printer in Midwest; changed the paper weight (this saved \$10K). This showcases stewardship and sustainability. After not mailing two issues and hearing negative feedback, we returned to printed Program Guides being sent out by mail to all tax district residents. We will save and be sustainable with new format so that we can resume the mailing of Program Guides as our standard method – which is effective and well-received.

*Fall marketing efforts underway for all events; announcements and required ads about the Public Hearing on FY25 Budget

*Alden season brochure

*Staff is working on redesigning and updating the OFC logo to work better with the overall MCC brand and be optimal for a new lighted sign at the Old Firehouse > to be visible at night! We will unveil the new logo at OFC Block Party on September 16.

*MCC LinkedIn profile has been established and we starting to populate that with MCC items (including MCC job openings). Program updates are shown. Professional relationships in LinkedIn reach a different audience.

*Website redesign was with a new contractor (at end of September). We plan to work with a different company to maintain the website due to some struggles with the current company on responsiveness. We are in conversations with a company that effectively maintained our earlier website but were not able to do the redesign.

*Julia Jones (AA) – though she was not here very long, she transformed the PIO office and did a great job! Julia has moved on to a new full-time job. We were sad to see her go; the job opening will be announced soon.

UPDATE: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY *A working DRAFT of the fall survey was shown.

Background: The annual Public Hearing on Programs in March features people expressing to the Governing Board their individual preferences: What they love... What they don't like... What they want to see at MCC. MCC staff analyzes that information along with other survey data about programs throughout the year. Now we want another touchpoint to refine and rank various recommendations from the March meeting. To be released in fall timing, the idea is to test some theories that were provided in March and understand the directions we need to go in.

Research goals for this study:

1. Delivering on a promise to the Governing Board and expanding our feedback loop.
2. Getting specific responses from residents/users to further explore community recommendations from the Public Hearing on FY25 Programs and other surveys. Timed in fall to respond to results given from the ideas coming to us in the spring.
3. Creating 'buckets' and categories (not just one person's point of view). We are trying to create less specific requests of programs. What types of things are you looking for? Programs for 5th graders that deal with science? Are you looking for writing classes? The purpose is to get more of a sense... rather than a list of 15 disparate ideas that the staff may not know how to deal with. Also a sense of: How do you want the program to be organized (When? Duration? What is the best time of day? Time of week?)
4. Gathering information on what people are currently doing (to put it all into context)
5. Measurements that can move forward into Fairfax County metrics and MCC's annual report.

Still in development, the various types of questions were shown in detail:

Section 1 – functional user profile (Who are you? What have you been doing already? What have you attended this past year? What are you planning to attend?)

Section 2 – general satisfaction (How satisfied are you with programs?) – this will roll-up into county reporting.



Section 3 – more specific program questions (following up on staff recommendations, probing feedback we have received throughout the year); choices on these questions are tied to feedback that has come in previously. What would you rather see? (cross-reference demographic information). How can OFC best serve the McLean community? Some questions deal with how MCC enhances your ‘quality of life’ and what does MCC’s presence in the community mean to you?

There was a request to broaden the question about offering topical speakers to possibly include well-known, recommended talent in McLean and not just be limited to civic partners. Several ideas for additional survey questions were mentioned in discussion, and so noted. We can develop future questions to go more in-depth as we return to this survey each fall. That’s the concept of a cyclical survey - to refine it with new questions, always gathering information and reporting it back out. We continually receive impressions from people after the public hearing on programs: “What happened to my idea?” When will you implement it? We will report back and show what we learned in these cyclical surveys.

Distribution of the survey – as widely as possible, to include: QR code at every event, at every Info. Table; on the website, on social media, in e-newsletters (7,000 - 10,000 recipients of our e-newsletters). Likely also a postcard to all households in 22101, 22102 (with a QR code). We will have iPads at programs. Also, a paper survey available for those who are uncomfortable with electronic format. Youth Ambassadors can post it on social media to try to gain youth response. We can also seek presence at Farmers Market; outside of Giant Food.

NEXT STEPS: We will bring this back to the Sept. 13 Programs & Outreach Committee meeting. If you have more ideas about the survey, please communicate to Mike Fisher. The hope is to roll this out in early October.

OLD /NEW BUSINESS

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

A future topic of discussion will be MCC’s refund policy for programs: discussing how generous the refund policy should be for people pulling out of programs at the last minute, and the administrative and financial impact of current policies. The pattern is that sometimes MCC programs can be perceived as a ‘fallback’ option for folks.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bartosiewicz thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Holly Novak, Executive Assistant