



**2024–2025 MCC Governing Board  
Programs & Outreach Committee  
September 18, 2024 5:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Committee members ALL present:** Anna Bartosiewicz – Chair; Ron Keesing; Peter Pin; Aaron Stark; Sonya Thott

**Other Board members present:** None.

**MCC Staff present:** Betsy May-Salazar, Executive Director; Holly Novak, Executive Assistant; Mike Fisher, General Programs Director; Erin Bieger, Instructional Programs Manager; Sarah Schallern Treff, Performing Arts Director; Sabrina Anwah, PIO; Mary Carter, Special Events Assistant 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 18, 2024, at 5:35 p.m. This meeting was open to the public attending in-person. A courtesy announcement was made about audio-recording. The agenda was adopted by acclamation.

**FALL SURVEY OVERVIEW** *\*remarks by Mike Fisher and Sarah Schallern Treff*

First iteration in fall 2023 yielded a lot of good information (explained at Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs in March) with 1. We received 1,200 responses (exceptional!). Special thanks to all board members for helping to get the word out and being present at events to solicit responses.

We used to have only one touchpoint annually with the public input in the spring. It was based on who showed up and who spoke (one voice saying one thing).

CYCLE: The purpose of this survey is to take a measure every fall, get results and be able to drill down. Top things being looked at now at are the things people were interested in. That is our loop – we are trying to have this cycle of direct input in the hearings and then seeking out specific information in the following fall.

GOALS: 1. get baseline satisfaction numbers; 2. understand the population we are dealing with (who is responding); 3. in-depth specific questions about programs that arose in previous comment periods and surveys. Beyond specific program feedback, this survey is also useful because we reach people who do not attend MCC programs. We added an option to respond: “Did not attend any events.” We can explore why they are not coming.

*Question: Do we have census data for the tax district? Do we know how the responses reflect the district demographics and who we are not serving?*

We have census data for the county but do not ask demographic questions in the survey other than age in the household. We may consider demographics questions for the future.

STANDARDIZED questions: We identified standardized questions that we plan to continue (info. about respondents – where they live, which programs they are attending; age of people in their household).

*Do you have baseline questions that repeat each year such as overall satisfaction?*

Yes –we have developed 6 standardized survey questions for all surveys. We track the responses across every MCC program - as baseline data.

NEW questions about MCC’s role in the community:

What is having MCC/Alden/OFC in your community mean to you? What is MCC/Alden/OFC role in the community? What do you think it should be?

**KNOWLEDGE TESTS:** (Be Visible - strategic goal) Questions to test advertising strength and resident knowledge of programs. Did you know OFC offers trips on teacher workdays? Did you know we offer free foreign language movies? Links to program descriptions on MCC website are included in these questions so it acts as effective marketing as well as information-gathering.

**NEW questions on popular topics to get more details:** We received specific ideas about what the public wants us to offer. Some questions have rankings; some 'check all that apply.' Also asking about ages and formats that people desire.

- Language learning was popular. Questions on: specific languages; goals, format and audience; age group preferences; learning preference & target audience age group
- Outdoor concerts – What prevents you from attending? Reasons being explored: Weather, Not interested in performer, Lack of seating? We are planning now for summer 2024 – we will offer concerts on Thursday evenings. Next year we will be able to incorporate more of the survey feedback.
- Walking club – participant led. Destination? Where do you want to meet?
- Gardening – What types of gardening workshops would interest you? Pollinator? Vegetables? (getting more specific about next steps)

**PROMOTION PLAN:** Survey is available in English, Spanish and Korean and soon Mandarin. Links to other languages will be incorporated in the introductory paragraph of the English version. Website banner; QR code in Fall Program Guide; postcard to all residents for this flier (with QR code). E-mail to MCC program participants through our registration system. Kiosk in lobby; in MCC newsletter; posted on social media; iPad, QR codes, paper surveys at events. The board will help to advocate and promote this survey to help us get more responses. Board members will have an opportunity to interact with the public and asking folks to take a survey; conversations with the public. The “Be Visible” event list is a reminder for board members to attend events and encourage the public to participate in the survey,

#### **SIA – CURRENT PROGRAM AND FUTURE OUTLOOK** *\*remarks by Erin Bieger*

SIA is a membership-based program: 140 registrants; 40 on waiting list. The purpose is to build interpersonal connections. It has transformed and is still growing > from exercise classes, offering lectures, workshops, arts & crafts, to now include field trips, games. Samah Habayeb is wonderful at building and maintaining connections with people! SIA was a glimmer of hope two years ago - we had 15 people giving public comments back then advocating for the program!

**Adjustments being planned:** refining the registration method; offering SAIL (Stay Active Independent for Life) exercise classes on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday; expanding the most popular exercise offerings; improving Program Guide format to show a simplified, easy-to-understand schedule of all programs; future pricing: \$125/\$75 MCC District resident (yearly membership pricing). Once an individual is locked-in for the year, they can attend anything.

**CAPACITY CHALLENGES:** We hope to serve the whole community of McLean; we are monitoring to see if we can offer it to a larger pool of senior citizens than currently. Because of immense popularity of the program, we have started to reach capacity in our rooms. The biggest constraint is having only two exercise spaces and a limit on how many people can be in each room (requires chairs and safe egress for fire code). It's also the balance with other MCC programming – SIA occupying a room means that space isn't available for other groups.

**NEW OPPORTUNITIES:** Excellent partnerships with The Alden (choreographers working with the seniors). Another idea is to have seniors go to OFC to help the After School program. The seniors are excited to relate to young people.

**BENEFIT:** SIA is a new program – we are trying, learning, testing and adjusting as we go. The popularity is heart-warming: the fact that there was a need voiced by a few seniors and now they see this as a 'home' for them – participating in potlucks, clubs, activities. MCC is really filling a niche. Many people had dealt with isolation: deaths in family; moving to a smaller house; creating friendships is important. They are very welcoming and open to change as long as it is transparent.



## **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM – FY24 ANALYSIS & INSTRUCTOR RFP PROCESS** *\*remarks by Erin Bieger*

Infant – seniors 243 courses; Camps held: 29 (toddler to teen); Attendees reached: 22,792 (all ages)

\*Summary of active offerings: Art In Motion; Body Moves Fitness; Funfit; Emily Weeks; Sports; Fencing.

\*Summary of educational offerings: Music Together; Mad Science; Magnus Chess; Joel Olsen (culinary); Dog Solve; CPR

\*Lecture-based options: financial literacy; de-cluttering.

Average costs: Pricing is based on our contract pricing with the county vendors.

A few questions centered on whether room capacity is an issue and what types of new classes are being envisioned?

Room capacity is mostly an issue of timing: many vendors want the same time frame (most exercise classes run 8am -12 noon or 4 – 8 pm). As to new classes, a new category we are exploring is robotics. An area MCC added was STEM science. We also hope to build more offerings of lecture-based options in the future.

*Question: Of the people who teach, how many come out of the community vs. other places? There is so much talent in McLean.*

Many of our vendors and instructors have been with us for 10 years. Specific instructors are in the local area.

### RFP PROCESS (how the county selects qualified vendors):

Every 6 to 9 months, the county opens its RFP process. Any contractor may provide a proposal. A team of county programmers (schools and FCPA; NCS; including Mike Fisher) is led by Fairfax Co. Dept. of Procurement. It is contract negotiations. Mike Fisher is at Program Director level and is a legacy member of this contract team.

In a given submission, the team will have 6-10 companies to evaluate. Perhaps one company could be offering 5-20 different classes (with details on each class). They evaluate submissions on several criteria: instructional philosophy; lesson plans; safety/emergency plans; staff qualifications; background checks.

Once finished with first phase of evaluation, those that meet minimum qualifications move onto the next phase: What do you charge the public? What are you going to charge the county? What do you need from us? What do participants need to bring? **Benefit:** The advantage of having a county contract is that any agency or school across the county can go to you with a contract in place -we agree that we can meet each other's needs. The rate we receive is the county rate – then we mark it up by 20% (MCC's margin).

Once an applicant is successful, they go into face-to-face interactions with county pricing team and then are awarded a contract. The county is awarding 10-year contracts. We are lucky to be a part of this process – and to have a say on who is coming in. It also puts MCC on the forefront of advance knowledge about who is successful and emerging.

*Clarification by Executive Director May-Salazar:* It makes sense that MCC has a presence on the selection team because a lot of the other entities are Rec. centers. Anything that goes through the county is a similar process: evaluated by staff experts, negotiated pricing. It saves a lot of time for us in not having to do all this contracting ourselves.

## **EXPANDED THEATER FIELD TRIPS WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS** *\*remarks by Sarah Schallern Treff*

Several years ago, MCC received an endowment for arts education. With that, we have been bringing in students from the tax district schools to see shows (endowment paid for artist fees and buses to bring the students). This is a fun and energetic program. The kids are so excited to experience a professional theater environment - screaming and laughing! With that enthusiasm, we decided to add more performances: now offering 9 performances, primarily to elementary schools. It is more cost-effective to add school shows to our existing artist contracts.

Upcoming performances: “360 Allstars”. “The Remember Balloons” – contemporary dance based on a book for youth and families about memory loss and memory issues (intergenerational focus). 1/3 of the population will be touch by someone with memory loss. “Sugar Skull” – two performances (bi-lingual) “Collage Dance Company – “Rise” – MLK celebration. The actual recording of MLK’s last speech given in Memphis. “Magician Bill Blagg – The Science of Magic “Underneath the Magic Moon” – Peter Pan story told from Wendy’s perspective

**BENEFIT:** This program is a lovely way to give back to the community and for MCC to maximize our reach. If you have kids or siblings in the schools, talk to the principals if you would like them to attend these special performances. We have



increased our offerings this year and are in discussion with schools on how best to facilitate. Our goal is to maximize the reach of performances we are bring to the Alden, with the addition of multiple school offerings. Our hope is to reach more schools. Kids will tell their parents about it and may choose to attend again.

### **COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH**    *\*remarks by Sabrina Anwah, PIO*

Over the summer we have been very busy promoting fall class and activity registration:

- \* Fall Program Guide - placing the printed program guides in local libraries
- \* Weekly e-newsletter and promotions. Attending fall events (Info. Tables; taking surveys for the Fall Survey).
- \*Fall Customer Feedback Survey: DRAFT of the survey postcard; we are also showing fall programs on the front.
- \*smaller postcard for the McLean 5K backpacks
- \*Promoting The Alden 2024-2025 season: beautiful brochure with season offerings was mailed to all tax district residents. We sent out a news release and continue to promote them through fall previews (*Washington Post; Falls Church News Press*).
- \*promoting Public Hearing on FY2026 Budget through news release, e-news, social media. We are also pushing the fact that people can submit written comments by e-mail.
- \* 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration: video production (first DRAFT early next week). The last filming for that is this Saturday at OFC Block Party. B-roll production is underway. Target date January 1. Historical timeline – Kyle and Sabrina are working on it (going through old newsclips, photos!) Digital historical timeline target date Jan. 1.
- “My MCC Memories” – exploring software for website. This is a way for people to say what happened with their experiences at MCC. We want to encourage all board members to put up memories about what happened years ago and how MCC events make McLean such a special place (citizen comments). Hoping to populate with comments for board members in time for the January 2025 start date for the community.
- \*Public art projects: helping to promote that. We are also working with Mary on supporting upcoming events.
- \*New contract for website maintenance and design. Bids went out and our current contact was not the lowest bidder. We hope to get that started by October 15.

### **YOUTH AMBASSADORS – UPDATE**    *\*remarks by Mike Fisher, Sonya Thott and Aaron Stark*

Our current youth board members (Aaron Stark and Sonya Thott) are amazing! We have opened solicitation process for new Youth Ambassadors – deadline October 31 for applications. Sonya and Aaron will evaluate and decide who will represent each school district. In the past two years, the culminating activity has been a party event for high schoolers. It’s significant that Aaron and Sonya are recommending different ideas: 1. Teen-focused tutoring of middle schoolers at OFC; 2. Environmental opportunities (park cleanup). We are very excited about your energy! Well done!

ACTION ITEM: They will present more about these ideas at the next Programs & Outreach Committee meeting.

*Question: Any thought about how to reach out to kids at private schools (T.J.? Basis Independent?) Can this be marketed to them?*

Yes – if they live in the tax district boundary they are eligible to be Youth Ambassadors. We are reaching out to the school counselors, but it would be great to increase the message frequency to those other private schools as well. We will make those efforts.

### **OLD /NEW BUSINESS**

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

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Bartosiewicz thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Holly Novak, Executive Assistant