

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, November 2, 2020, to meet with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System.

Mayor Byrd started the meeting at 8:00 pm. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Present were Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Emmett V. Jordan, Leta M. Mach, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Colin A. Byrd. Councilmember Silke I. Pope was unable to attend.

Staff members present were: Nicole Ard, City Manager; David Moran, Assistant City Manager; and Bonita Anderson, Clerk.

Also present were: PGCMLS North Area Manager Luis Labra, Konrad Herling, Bill Orleans, and Molly Lester.

Mr. Luis Labra manages the Greenbelt, Laurel, and Bowie area libraries. Mayor Byrd inquired about Mr. Labra's tenure in the northern area. Mr. Labra indicated he was relatively new in the position but not in the area.

Mr. Labra noted that the PGCMLS developed online programs, which were now robust. He encouraged visiting its website. Mr. Labra pointed out that the outreach with its online programs had increased to hundreds of thousands of participants. Mr. Labra indicated that they may go into Phase 2 in January 2021.

Mr. Labra said that he wished it hadn't take a pandemic to learn these new lessons and that they'd taken full advantage of the opportunity. He indicated that in the past, while in-person children's programs might expect 35 to 40 attendees, the virtual ones hosted 300 to 400, with pre-recorded programs receiving thousands of watchers. Mr. Jordan pointed out that recently, the Greenbelt Library celebrated its 50th anniversary and that the City would like to celebrate when it reopens.

Ms. Davis inquired if they are maintaining full staff. Mr. Labra indicated that full staff had returned to library branches. An alternate schedule was being worked on due to social distancing, with staff using their off-site days to prepare recorded programs.

Mr. Labra highlighted the system's new strategic plan for 2021 to 2024, which included virtual and on-site programming. He explained that one could expect diversity programs, such as one hosted by the Prince George's County Heritage Project, which will celebrate the diversity of cultures in the County. In addition, Mr. Labra would like to see the Greenbelt Library offer a gallery for local artists. Ms. Davis suggested that Mr. Labra use the City's art community to aid in this endeavor.

Ms. Davis inquired about the status and future of the Tugwell Room. There was a discussion about the importance of maintaining the Library's Tugwell Room, which houses documents and resources concerning the City's history. Mr. Labra noted that the Tugwell Room was closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He stated that the system had hoped to hire an archivist to

oversee it before the pandemic. Mr. Labra indicated that the plan was on hold, but they would continue to maintain the collection. Ms. Mach pointed out that everything in the Tugwell Room was significant and encouraged the Library to work with the City's museum director to maintain the collection.

Mr. Labra expressed that the PGCMLS was a national leader in this new virtual programming. He stated that a Phase 2 limited reopening would probably occur in the near future.

Several informational items were discussed.

The meeting ended at 9:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonita Anderson
City Clerk