

**WARD 3 DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE  
RESOLUTION  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC LIBRARY HOURS AND FACILITIES  
December 6, 2023**

**PASSED UNANIMOUSLY ON DECEMBER 6, 2023 BY THE WARD 3 DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE**

**Whereas,**

- the District of Columbia Public Library (DCPL) should endeavor to provide DC residents with excellent public library services,
- excellent public library services include having physical libraries open to patrons in the evenings as well as the day,
- many people living in the District of Columbia work during the day, and can only visit libraries at night and on weekends,
- DCPL branch libraries serve as community hubs for many DC communities,
- DCPL branch libraries provide free meeting room space for meetings of community groups when the library is open,
- the community centers and recreation centers run by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) often close at 9 pm on weeknights; access to libraries is at least as important to many DC residents as DPR's community centers and recreation centers,
- in June 2023, DCPL curtailed its libraries' evening hours, shutting the regular branch libraries at 8 pm Mondays through Thursdays, while those libraries and the central library continued to close between 5:00 pm and 6 pm on other days. At the same time, the libraries started opening an hour earlier on weekdays,
- the curtailment of evening hours results in no change in staffing needs and presumably no change in budget needs,
- such changes in evening hours have prevented library patrons, including students, from using DCPL libraries,
- such changes in evening hours have prevented community groups from using DCPL branch libraries for meetings, since in order to accommodate the new building hours, the meeting rooms now close at 7:30 pm,
- since the pandemic, many community groups have found it increasingly difficult to find free or low-cost meeting space,
- since the pandemic, many community organizations have sought to return to in-person meetings while also accommodating the preference of many DC residents for virtual meetings to enable continued protection from COVID; the ability to have hybrid meetings keeps organizations strong by permitting all members and interested parties to participate in meetings.
- DCPL appears to have abandoned plans announced last winter to offer "hybrid meeting rooms" capable of meetings that are both virtual and in-person,
- DCPL's Tenley-Friendship branch (and perhaps other branches) has movable walls that would allow for meetings to be held without access to the rest of the library, thus making it feasible for meetings to be held after the library closes.

**Be it resolved that the Ward 3 Democratic Committee urges the DCPL Board of Trustees to**

- reinstitute later evening hours at all DCPL libraries,
- go forward with plans to put in place technology that will allow for hybrid meetings that are both virtual and in-person,
- allow meetings to proceed after library closing for libraries that could shut off the rest of the library building.

**Be it further resolved that the Ward Democratic Committee urges the DC Council and the Mayor**

- to encourage DCPL Board of Trustees to take the above steps,
- to ensure there is appropriate funding for hours and for technology changes in meeting rooms.

**Be it further resolved that the Chair of the Ward 3 Democratic Committee** or the Chair's designees be authorized to transmit, testify to, publicize, and otherwise carry out this resolution.