MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM

MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

President Swierat called the meeting to order at 10:05am.

1. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustees Present:	Stuart Auchincloss, Peter Carey, Priscilla Goldfarb, Rajene Hardeman, Debra Klein, Jill Leinung, Barry Ramage, Lynne Ridgeway, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Carla Taylor, Mark Wilson
Directors Association Liaison:	Jesse Chance, Director, Hyde Park Public Library
Staff Present:	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Saran Camara, Laura Crisci, Farah Faizi, Laurie Shedrick

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President's Report

- President Swierat noted that this will be his last meeting as president and thanked the board for their support and hard work during his tenure as president.
- New trustees Heather Blakely and George Joiner were welcomed and congratulated on their recent election to the board.
- The Executive Committee moved the following motion: WHEREAS Priscilla Goldfarb has been a trustee of the Mid-Hudson Library System for five years; and WHEREAS recently she has served as the Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee of the Board while at the same time serving on the Audit, Board Development and Personnel & Planning Committees along with both the Board Working Groups—Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) and COVID-19 Response & Recovery/Government & Community Relations; and WHEREAS in both board and committee meetings Ms. Goldfarb's participation has been both wise and authentic, setting an example of high service to the System; and WHEREAS Ms. Goldfarb has enriched the work of the EDI Working Group and the Board as a whole with her concurrent participation in the EDI team at the Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison; and WHEREAS Ms. Goldfarb has participated in leading the Board training in EDI and served as a presenter in the recent symposium on the subject presented online to the System and the world; and WHEREAS Ms. Goldfarb has continuously brought her deep professional experience to bear on the issues of the System, both with acute questions and sage advice; and WHEREAS Ms. Goldfarb has often enriched meetings of the board with baked goods she has made for the occasion; NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Mid-Hudson Library System express our gratitude to Priscilla Goldfarb for her many contributions to the governance of

Resolution recognizing the service of Priscilla Goldfarb passed

the Mid-Hudson Library System and to Board congeniality. The motion passed unanimously

- The Executive Committee moved the following motion: WHEREAS Lynne Ridgeway has been a trustee of the Mid-Hudson Library System for ten years, during which time she has served continually on the Finance and Facilities Committees, serving as chair of the Facilities Committee for the last five years; and WHEREAS it is an important policy of the System for trustees to be engaged with the member libraries and the county associations of libraries that make up the system; and WHEREAS for all of the time Ms. Ridgeway has been a trustee and for years before becoming a trustee she has been a leader of the Ulster County Library Association, including holding offices in the organization; and WHEREAS for many years the System has pursued the goal of decreasing its adverse impact on the environment; and WHEREAS as chair of the Facilities Committee, and in pursuit of the Sustainable Library Certification, Ms. Ridgeway has led the System to install electric vehicle charging stations available to the System and the public; and WHEREAS Ms. Ridgeway has kept roof-top solar panels high on the building priority list during the annual review of capital improvements; NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Mid-Hudson Library System express our gratitude to Lynne Ridgeway for all she has done to maintain close relations with all the libraries of Ulster County; and THEREFOR BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Mid-Hudson Library System thank her for her contribution to our goal of becoming the first public library system to complete the Sustainable Library Certification Program by the care she has had for our facilities. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution recognizing Lynne Ridgeway passed

- Barry Ramage introduced the following motion from The Executive Committee: WHEREAS Richard (Ric) Swierat has served with distinction as president of the Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees since January 2020; and WHEREAS during his term of office the entire world was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic; and WHEREAS the pandemic caused extreme challenges to the budget and operations of the System as a result of the State withholding a significant part of the funds that had been budgeted for library operations; and WHEREAS President Swierat created and led a task force of Board members to look for financial resources in addition to the traditional sources of funding on which the system has relied, and this task force has made progress in identifying and pursuing the pathway to such

Resolution recognizing Richard Swierat passed

sources, to the long-term benefit of the System; and WHEREAS President Swierat worked closely with the Executive Director and the Board to bring the System through the financial crisis, maintaining almost all critical services during the emergency, and adding regular communication about the ever-changing regulatory landscape for libraries; and WHEREAS after the murder of George Floyd the issue of racial justice and the larger issues of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion became issues for society to confront; and WHEREAS President Swierat appointed and personally led a task force of Trustees to work with the executive director and staff of the System to address how the System approaches these questions, which task force has begun to change how the Board addresses these issues and how they are incorporated into the operations of the System; and WHEREAS President Swierat has tirelessly represented the System at local library functions throughout the System: NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Mid-Hudson Library System express our deep appreciation for President Swierat's leadership during his term as president and recognize that he has caused lasting improvements to the System. The motion passed unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes Approved

- Priscilla Goldfarb moved, and Peter Carey seconded, the approval of the September 2022 minutes (Doc. 3.A). The motion passed unanimously.
- Lynne Ridgeway moved, and Mark Wilson seconded, the approval of the 2022 Annual Membership Meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Reports Received

- Treasurer Mark Wilson reported on the financial position of the organization as of September and October 2022, noting that budget projections are proving to be accurate and cash flow is healthy given the receipt of all state aid at this point in the fiscal year. Wilson moved, and Debra Klein seconded, that the reports for September (Doc. 4.A) and October (Doc. 4.B) be received. The motion passed unanimously.

5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS

Warrants Received

- Richard Swierat reported on the review of the September warrants (Doc. 5.A) on behalf of Mary Linda Todd; Carla Taylor reported on the review of the October warrants (Doc. 5.B), and Stuart Auchincloss reported on the review of the November warrants (Doc. 5.C). All noted

their acceptability. Priscilla Goldfarb moved, and Lynne Ridgeway seconded that the warrant reports for September, October, and November 2022 be received. The motion passed unanimously.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- In addition to providing highlights from the written report (Doc. 6), Executive Director Aldrich reported that:
  - The Board of Regents has not matched the New York Library Association's target goal of $69.3 million for State Aid for Library Construction, instead putting forth a goal of $45 million.
  - The Amenia Free Library has celebrated their grand opening/re-opening and have renamed the original library facility after former director, Miriam Devine.

Executive Director's Report

7. DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT

- Jesse Chance, Director, Hyde Park Public Library reported on recent conversations at the System Services Advisory Committee and Directors Association regarding the plans for a new library to be created in the Town of Union Vale (Doc. 7.A).
- Stuart Auchincloss moved, and Lynne Ridgeway seconded a motion to approve the 2021 Central Library Expenditure Report (Doc. 7.B). The motion passed unanimously.

Central Library Expenditure Report Approved

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- President Swierat reported on the receipt of a $15,000 grant from the Dyson Foundation to underwrite the cost of hiring a public relations firm to assist the system with messaging and raising the profile of the system in the Hudson Valley. President Swierat moved, and Barry Ramage seconded, a motion to endorse the Executive Committee's action of authorizing the Executive Director to accept this grant (Doc. 8.A). The motion passed unanimously.

Dyson Foundation Grant Accepted

- At 10:48am, Barry Ramage moved, and Peter Carey seconded, a motion to go into executive session to discuss the results of the executive director's performance appraisal. The motion passed unanimously. The Executive Director was invited to stay for executive session. At 10:56am Debra Klein moved, and Stuart Auchincloss seconded, a motion to end executive session. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Performance Appraisal Discussed

9. FACILITIES COMMITTEE

- Chair Ridgeway reported on the staff's progress with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) checklist to assess our facilities and noted we are waiting to hear about the outcome of a grant application for a pollinator garden.
- Chair Ridgeway moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded, a motion to approve the MHLS Facilities Plan, prioritizing the replacement of the office building roof and installation of rooftop solar panels on the office building for 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

2023 Facilities Plan Approved

10. BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- This report was tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

11. BYLAWS, POLICY & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

- Chair Debra Klein moved, and Stuart Auchincloss seconded, a motion to amend the Board's Rules and Procedures (Doc. 11.B) to clarify that the bound minutes should have an index of resolutions. The motion passed unanimously.

Rules and Procedures Updated for 2023

- Chair Klein moved, and Janet Schnitzer seconded a motion to set the 2023 MHLS Board Meeting dates as presented (Doc. 11.A). The motion passed unanimously.

2023 Meeting Dates Set

12. FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Chair Mark Wilson presented the work of Saran Camara, MHLS Finance Manager & Personnel Officer, to redesign the chart of accounts to ensure transparent reporting to New York State, the MHLS Board and MHLS staff (Doc. 12.A).

Chart of Accounts Redesigned

- Chair Wilson moved, and Stuart Auchincloss seconded, a motion to authorize the Executive Director to sign a 1-year extension of the contract with Valley Courier. Voting Yea: Stuart Auchincloss, Priscilla Goldfarb, Rajene Hardeman, Debra Klein, Jill Leinung, Barry Ramage, Lynne Ridgeway, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Carla Taylor, Mark Wilson; Voting Nay: None; Abstentions: Peter Carey

Delivery Contract Renewal Approved

- Chair Wilson moved, and Debra Klein seconded, a motion to authorize the transfer up to $50,000 into the MHLS Capital Fund for 2023. The motion passed unanimously.
- Chair Wilson moved, and Lynne Ridgeway seconded, a motion to authorize the transfer of up to $22,000 to the Employee Accrued Benefit Liability Fund for 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

Reserve Fund Transfers Approved

- Chair Wilson moved, and Barry Ramage seconded, a motion to approve the 2023 Salary Schedule (Doc. 12.E). The motion passed unanimously. *Salary Schedule Approved*
- Chair Wilson presented the draft budget for 2023 (Doc. 12.F), noting the projections assume no new revenue; respect the board's reserve funds; and that there are no unassigned funds. Priscilla Goldfarb moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded, a motion to approve the 2023 Budget. The motion passed unanimously. *2023 Budget Approved*
- Chair Wilson presented the Finance Committee's endorsement of the Government & Community Relations Working Group's recommendation to authorize the Executive Director to sign a contract with Impact PR & Communications for $20,000 that will be underwritten with a grant from the Dyson Foundation and funds donated by MHLS Trustees. Jill Leinung moved, and Barry Ramage seconded, a motion to authorize the Executive Director to sign the proposed contract with Impact PR & Communications, noting the desire for a presentation of the work of this consultant to the board upon completion. The motion passed unanimously. *PR Contract Approved*

13. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

- President Swierat noted a report on the future of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group will be provided in January 2023. *Working Group reports provided*

14. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Nominations & Elections Committee Chair Mark Wilson reviewed the proposed slate of officers for 2023 (Doc. 14.A). Peter Carey moved, and Debra Klein seconded, a motion to approve the slate as presented. The motion passed unanimously. 2023 Board President Barry Ramage noted that committee assignments are in the works and will be presented in January. *2023 Officers Elected*

15. NEW BUSINESS

- President Richard Swierat presented the Executive Committee's endorsement of Executive Director Aldrich's recommendation that the Mid-Hudson Library System become a partner of Unite Against Book Bans, a national coalition of organizations working to protect the right to read. Aldrich noted there is no financial commitment necessary, just an endorsement of the right to intellectual freedom and to allow parents to choose what their children borrow from the library without censorship. Richard *Unite Against Book Bans Partnership Approved*

Swierat moved, and Carla Taylor seconded, a motion to endorse entering into a partnership with Unite Against Book Bans. The motion passed unanimously.

16. PUBLIC HEARING

- At 11:31am President Richard Swierat convened a public hearing to hear public testimony in regard to two policies recommended for adoption by the board, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)-Compliant Internet Access Policy and the Procedures for MHLS Board Member Videoconferencing. No public being present to provide testimony, President Swierat made a motion to close the public hearing which was seconded by Stuart Auchincloss. The motion passed unanimously. President Swierat invited comments from the Board on these two items.

Public Hearing Held

- Peter Carey moved, and Debra Klein seconded, a motion to approve the CIPA-Compliant Internet Access Policy as presented (Doc. 16.A). The motion passed unanimously.

CIPA-Compliant Internet Access Policy Approved

- Barry Ramage moved, and Mark Wilson seconded, the following motion: WHEREAS, by passing Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2022 ("Chapter 56"), the New York State Legislature amended Section 103 of the Open Meetings Law; and WHEREAS, Chapter 56 adds Section 103-a of the Open Meetings Law, permitting the Mid-Hudson Library System to authorize its members to attend meetings by videoconferencing under extraordinary circumstances; and WHEREAS, Section 103-a(2)(a) requires the Mid-Hudson Library System to adopt a resolution following a public hearing authorizing the limited use of videoconferencing under such circumstances; and WHEREAS, Section 103-a(2) allows for hybrid meetings by requiring "that a minimum number of members are present to fulfill the public body's quorum requirement in the same physical location or locations where the public can attend"; and WHEREAS, Section 103-a(2)(c) requires that members be physically present at any such meeting "unless such member is unable to be physically present at any such meeting location due to extraordinary circumstances . . . including disability, illness, caregiving responsibilities, or any other significant or unexpected factor or event which precludes the member's physical attendance at such meeting"; and WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 103-a(2)(d), any members attending by videoconference must, excerpt during executive session, be "heard, seen and identified, while the meeting is being conducted, including but not limited to any motions, proposals, resolutions, and any other matter formally discussed or voted upon"; and

Procedures for MHLS Board Member Videoconferencing Approved.

WHEREAS, Section 103-a(2)(g) requires that any meeting where a member attends by videoconference be recorded, posted to the Mid-Hudson Library System's web site within five business days, and transcribed upon request; and WHEREAS, Section 103-a(2)(h) requires that members of the public be permitted to attend and participate, if authorized, in any meeting by videoconference when a member attends by videoconference. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mid-Hudson Library System authorizes its members who experience an extraordinary circumstance, as described above and further defined by any rules or written procedures later adopted, to attend meetings by videoconference: (i) as long as a quorum of the members attend in-person at one or more locations open to the public; (ii) as long as the member can be seen, heard, and identified while the open portion of the meeting is being conducted; and (iii) as otherwise permitted under Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2022; and be it further RESOLVED, that the Mid-Hudson Library System shall create written procedures further governing its use of videoconferencing by its members in compliance with Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

17. BOARD ORIENTATION: Sustainable Library Certification Program

- Executive Director Aldrich provided an overview of the work done in the organization to become the first public library system to be certified under the Sustainable Libraries Initiative's Sustainable Library Certification Program (Doc 17.A).

Sustainable Library Certification Achieved

18. COMMUNICATION

- No verbal reports were provided.

19. ADJOURNMENT

At 12:06pm, Janet Schnitzer moved, and Peter Carey seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stuart Auchincloss

Stuart Auchincloss, Secretary

Approved on February 6, 2023 by the MHLS Board of Trustees