MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM
MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Friday, January 26, 2024

President Ramage called the meeting to order at 9:56am, MHLS Auditorium

1. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustees Present:	Stuart Auchincloss, Heather Blakely, Peter Carey, Kenneth Goldberg, Rajene Hardeman, Jill Leinung, Carla Taylor, Barry Ramage, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Mary Linda Todd
Trustees Absent:	George Joiner, Thomas Silvious, Mark Wilson
Directors Association Liaison:	Carol Fortier, Director, Beekman Library
Staff Present:	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, James Coyle, Laura Crisci, Laurie Shedrick, Ashley Teal

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In his report, President Ramage:

President's report presented

- Reported on the sudden and unexpected passing of MHLS Board member, Debra Klein. Rajene Hardman moved, and Stuart Auchincloss seconded a resolution in honor of Debra authored by Mark Wilson. The resolution passed unanimously:

Resolution to honor Debra Klein approved

WHEREAS, the Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) staff and Board of Trustees mourn the sudden and unexpected passing of Board member Debbie Klein on December 28, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Debbie served her first five-year term on the MHLS Board from 2016 to 202o, and was in service on the Board during her second five-year term starting in 2021; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 Debbie accepted her appointment as Chair of the Board's Standing Committee on Bylaws, Policies and Procedures; and

WHEREAS, Debbie's excellent leadership and organizational skills contributed to the long-term success of that Committee's work, up to the day of her passing; and

WHEREAS, Debbie agreed to serve as an inaugural member of the Board's EDI Working Group, formed in July 2020; and

WHEREAS, the direction and scope of the Working Group was greatly aided by Debbie's contributions, insights and active involvement in presentations to the full Board; and

WHEREAS, Debbie also served on the Board of the Catskill Public Library from July 2018 to July 2020, working collaboratively with other Board members and library staff; and

WHEREAS, by volunteering her time and talent to additional local cultural attractions and environmental causes, Debbie exemplified extraordinary commitment to her community; and

WHEREAS, Debbie's calm demeanor, thoughtful responses, professional background, extensive knowledge and care for the human condition was present throughout her life;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Mid-Hudson Library System

Recognizes the many invaluable contributions of Debra "Debbie" Wilcox Klein during her seven years of service on the MHLS Board of Trustee;

Remembers Debbie for her grace, kindness and generosity of her time and talent; and

Offers its most sincere condolences to her family, friends, colleagues and neighbors who were an integral part of Debbie's community.

- Presented the 2024 Board Priorities (Doc. 2.B) *Board Priorities Presented*
- Presented the 2024 Board Committee Rosters (Doc. 2.C)
- Discussed the importance of state-level advocacy by MHLS Board Members, encouraging everyone to do what they can to help educate legislators about the need for an increase in state aid to the System.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Richard Swierat moved, and Heather Blakely seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the December Board Meeting. **The motion carried unanimously.** *Minutes approved*

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Stuart Auchincloss, reported that he reviewed the Treasurer's Report for November (Doc 4.A) and December 2023 (Doc 4.B) and found it acceptable. Kenneth Goldberg moved and Peter Carey seconded the motion to receive the November and December financial reports as *Financial Reports received*

presented. **The motion carried unanimously.**

5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS

Warrants received

Rajene Hardeman reported that she reviewed the warrants for August 2023 and found them acceptable (Doc. 5.A). Carla Taylor reported that she reviewed the warrants for November 2023 and found them acceptable (Doc. 5.B). Janet Schnitzer reported that she reviewed the warrants for December 2023 and found them acceptable. Carla Taylor moved, and Peter Carey seconded that the warrant reports for August, November, and December be received. **The motion carried unanimously.**

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In addition to her written report (Doc.6) Executive Director Aldrich:

- Provided an update on the state of the Governor's proposed state aid for MHLS operations, construction aid, and NOVELny;
- Noted that the Town of Union Vale has submitted a charter application to create their own library and that the Town Supervisor has reached out to discuss reinstating a contract in order to lift the restrictions on Union Vale residents. A group of the impacted library directors and Dutchess County representatives on the MHLS Board will meet on January 29th to discuss the Town Supervisor's request.

Delivery Services Contract Extension Approved

Richard Swierat moved, and Vice President Rajene Hardeman seconded approving the Valley Courier Contract Extension (Doc. 6.A). **The motion passed unanimously.**

7. DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT

Report from Directors Association

Carol Fortier, Director of the Beekman Library, thanked the Board for their support of the proposed Memo of Understanding; noted the value of the Salary & Benefits Survey conducted by MHLS Library Sustainability Coordinator Laura Crisci; and noted the significance of the reduction in the number of petition signatures necessary for municipal ballot votes (414 votes) to her library. Fortier provided a firsthand account of the impact of the Union Vale situation on her library.

8. Board Development Committee Report

Chair Kenneth Goldberg reported that based on feedback from attendees of the 2023 Annual Membership Meeting, the committee recommends that the annual meeting be held in person at The Wallace Center of the FDR Presidential Library and Museum if finances allow for it in 2024. Goldberg welcomed suggestions for additional questions to the board self-evaluation process.

9. Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Working Group Report

Co-Chair Rajene Hardeman reported that the working group plans to recommend a transition of the group to a broader advisory group that considers all core values of the organization.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

11. NEW BUSINESS

- Board Members were reminded of their responsibility to sign and submit the MHLS Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement (Doc. 11.B) and Ethics Policy (Doc. 11.C)

- President Barry Ramage moved, and Richard Swierat seconded a motion to approve the annual Fiscal Designation form (Doc. 11.D). **The motion passed unanimously.**

Fiscal Designation approved

- Stuart Auchincloss moved, and Carla Taylor seconded a motion to name the Poughkeepsie Journal as the organization's newspaper of record. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Newspaper of Record Named

- With regrets, President Barry Ramage moved, and Jill Leinung seconded a motion to accept the resignation of George Joiner from the MHLS Board. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resignation of George Joiner Accepted with Regret

12. ORIENTATION

Executive Director Aldrich provided an explanation of the new Memo of Understanding with Member Libraries. Richard Swierat suggested that an online forum be held to help explain the document to member library boards.

Memo of Understanding Reviewed

13. COMMUNICATION

- President Ramage encouraged each county's representatives on the board to coordinate their responses to requests for visits to member libraries and reminded board members to inform the Executive Director when planning to attend a member library board meeting to aid in the tracking of our visit coverage.

- Laurie Shedrick, MHLS Assistant Director and Technology Operations Manager reported on usage statistics of the new MHLS Training on Demand Platform.

- Laura Crisci, MHLS Library Sustainability Coordinator, reported on an upcoming program for members that will discuss the intersection of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) and information literacy.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:48am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jill Leinung, Secretary

Approved on March 16, 2024 by the MHLS Board of Trustees