MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM

MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Wednesday, July 14, 2021

President Swierat called the meeting to order at 10:02am.

1. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustees Present:	Stuart Auchincloss, Priscilla Goldfarb, Rajene Hardeman, Debra Klein, Jill Leinung, Michele Ment, Barry Ramage, Lynne Ridgeway, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Mark Wilson
Trustees Excused/Absent:	Lisa Baker Brill (excused); Ken Goldberg (excused); Mary Linda Todd (excused)
Directors Association Liaison:	AnnaLee Dragon, Director, Kinderhook Memorial Library
Staff Present:	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Saran Camara, Casey Conlin, Laurie Shedrick
Guest:	Linda Hannigan, CPA, Director, RBT CPAs, LLP

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- A written President's Report is attached to the minutes. *President's report presented*
- Mr. Swierat answered questions from board members about the MHLS Trustees Videoconference Participation in MHLS Board Meetings Policy

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Ms. Klein moved, and Ms. Goldfarb seconded, the approval of the May 2021 minutes (Doc. 3.A). The motion passed unanimously. *Minutes approved*

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

- Mr. Wilson reported that the finances of the system are in good order and reviewed the presentation of reserve fund information in the reports. Mr. Wilson pointed out the receipt of the Paycheck Protection Plan forgivable loan and discussed its impact on the finances of the System. Ms. Schnitzer moved, and Ms. Leinung seconded, that the April and May 2021 financial report (Docs. 4.A and 4.B) be received. The motion passed unanimously. *Financial Reports received*

5. AUDIT COMMITTEE

- Mr. Ramage reported on the committee's work to review the audit report and board report from RBT CPAs, and recommended the receipt of the reports by the full board. Ms. Hannigan

of RBT CPAs provided a detailed review of their findings through the audit which were summarized as a "clean opinion." There were no findings/problems found through their internal controls and compliance review of MHLS financial procedures. Mr. Ramage moved, and Ms. Klein seconded, a resolution to accept the audit. The motion carried unanimously. Ms. Hannigan reviewed the management letter to the board. Mr. Ramage moved, and Ms. Klein seconded the acceptance of the management letter. The motion carried unanimously. The management letter has been provided to all board members.

2020 Audit received

- Mr. Ramage thanked Ms. Camara for her work to respond to requests from the audit firm to conduct the 2020 audit.
- Mr. Ramage provided an update on the RFP process for future audits.

6. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS

- Ms. Ment reported that she reviewed the warrants for May (Doc. 6.A) and found them acceptable. Mr. Ramage reported that he reviewed the warrants for June (Doc. 6.B) and found them acceptable. Mr. Wilson moved, and Ms. Goldfarb seconded that the warrant reports for May and June 2021 be received. The motion passed unanimously.

Warrants received

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- In addition to her written report (Doc. 7), Executive Director Aldrich reported that:
  - A new collaboration with the Public Library System Directors Organization of NYS (PULISDO), the New York State Library, the Library Trustee Association of NYS, and the Public Library Section of the New York Library Association will result in the pilot of a new online program in the fourth quarter that will help trustees, statewide, access training based on the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State.

Trustee Handbook Book Club

  - An event is planned for August 19th, 2021 with Dr. Nicole Cooke to launch MHLS effort to support member libraries with governance, management and service/program design issues related to the board's focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion issues.

EDI event and resources to launch

  - MHLS staff is supporting a dozen municipal ballot votes this year, a record number due to the legislation that allowed for a reduced number of signatures to get on the ballot due to the pandemic.

Municipal Ballot Vote Support

  - Circulation numbers at member libraries have bounced back from this time last year when there was a steep decline in circulation of library materials due to the pandemic.

Pandemic-era circ and delivery data

- Delivery services data indicate that while a significant recovery of member library usage is evident, it has not completely recovered from the decline in usage due to the pandemic. Data analysis of this service continues quarterly but at this time the route structure is meeting the needs of libraries and patrons.

8. DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION (DA) LIAISON REPORT

DA Liaison Report

- Ms. Dragon reported on the unanimous passage of the 2022 tentative Members' Assessment which includes a 1% increase and commended the MHLS staff and the board for their financial management of the System.
- Ms. Dragon reported on the unanimous endorsement of the 2022-2026 Plan of Service documentation by the DA and thanked MHLS staff for their efforts to reach out to directors and interview them about their opportunities and challenges as part of the document development process.
- At the board's request, Ms. Dragon provided a first-hand account of managing her library in the current environment created by the pandemic and the guidance from the state and federal governments.

9. CENTRAL LIBRARY PROGRAM

MHLS Board certified 2020 CLDA/CBA funds and approves 2021 CLDA/CBA Budget

- Ms. Aldrich provided an overview of the Central Library Program, a mandated state aid program, which is overseen by the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee of the DA.
- The Certificate of Expenditure of 2020 CLDA/CBA State Aid Program Funds (Doc. 9.A) was presented. Ms. Schnitzer moved, and Ms. Goldfarb seconded, a motion to accept the 2020 Certificate of Expenditure of 2020 CLDA/CBA State Aid Program Funds. The motion passed unanimously.
- The 2021 CLDA/CBA Budget, crafted by the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee, was presented. Mr. Wilson moved, and Ms. Schnitzer seconded, the approval of the CLDA/CBA budget for 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

10. NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

N&E Committee charge amended

- Mr. Ramage moved, and Ms. Klein seconded, a motion to amend the Nominations & Elections Committee charge to clarify that officers are elected at the December meeting rather than the slate being voted on in December as per the language in Doc. A. The motion passed unanimously.
- Mr. Wilson reported on the timeline for officer nominations and encouraged nominations by the deadline of July 21, 2021.
- Ms. Aldrich reported on the inclusion of a diversity statement in the call for nominations to the MHLS Board and provided an update on nomination efforts in three counties with upcoming vacancies on the MHLS Board.

11. PERSONNEL & PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

P&P Committee charge amended

- Mr. Ramage moved, and Ms. Ment seconded, a motion to amend the committee charge to include the opening line: "The Committee, consistent with MHLS's vision, mission and values, including but not limited to equity, diversity and inclusion..." The motion passed unanimously. (Doc. 11.A).

2022-2026 Plan of Service documents approved

- Ms. Aldrich provided a report on the process to develop the proposed 2022-2026 Plan of Service documents mandated by New York State which included focus groups with member library trustees, a service ranking survey, and the development of a complementary Action Plan. Mr. Ramage moved, and Ms. Ment seconded, a motion to approve all three items: the System Plan of Service, the Central Library Plan of Service, and the Direct Access Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Salary adjustment approved

- Ms. Aldrich reported on the recent promotion of Kerstin Cruger to the position of MHLS Outreach & Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Specialist. Mr. Ramage moved, and Ms. Klein seconded, a motion to approve a salary adjustment for the Outreach & EDI Specialist to $63,463. The motion passed unanimously.
- Mr. Ramage reported on the CSEA negotiating team designated by the committee as per their committee charge.

Cell Phone Policy amended

- Ms. Aldrich presented an updated Cell Phone Policy (Doc. 11. A). Mr. Wilson moved, and Ms. Schnitzer seconded, a motion to approve the Cell Phone Policy as presented. The

motion passed unanimously.

12. EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (EDI) WORKING GROUP REPORT

- Mr. Swierat commented on the 1-year anniversary of this working group and expressed gratitude to its members for their focus on how to improve the MHLS board's authentic focus on improving itself in this area. (DOC. 12.A)
- A new Policy and Procedure Analysis Framework, developed by working group members with MHLS staff, will be introduced to those MHLS board committees tasked with policy making.
- An orientation on the topics of "implicit bias" and "privilege" will be provided by working group members at the September board meeting.

EDI Policy and Procedure Analysis Framework introduced

13. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- There was no unfinished business to address.

14. NEW BUSINESS

- There was no new business introduced.

15. ORIENTATION

- Ms. Aldrich and Mr. Conlin provided a review of the State Aid for Library Construction Program and noted the board's responsibilities related to this program. (Doc. 15.A)

State Aid for Library Construction Program Overview

16. COMMUNICATION

- Ms. Shedrick reported on the inclusion of the New York Heritage collection into the MHLS online catalog: items such as digitized postcards, oral history audio files, and local history primary documents are now findable through the search interface of the catalog; and reported on the development timeline for the new online catalog, Vega, which is set to launch in 2022.

Local History materials added to online catalog

- Mr. Conlin reported on a variety of projects spearheaded by the MHLS Library Sustainability Team with particular focus on the upcoming Great Give Back program, The Library of Local Project, Reimagining Library Services webinar series, and the Adult &

Library Sustainability Team report

Family Literacy Grant programs. Mr. Conlin also reported on on-going efforts to grow the online professional development programs provided to member libraries.

- Ms. Camara reported on efforts to simplify the Members' Assessment formula through a collaborative effort with Ms. Aldrich, Ms. Shedrick and members of the DA's System Services Advisory Committee and provided an update on the process to fill the four open positions on the staff.

Members' Assessment to be updated

- Ms. Aldrich highlighted the Reed Memorial Library's request for MHLS to participate in their "Community Puzzle Project," which resulted in Ms. Shedrick hand-painting a literal puzzle piece that is part of a community art project at the Reed Memorial Library to demonstrate the various stakeholders that work together to help make their library a success.

Community Puzzle Project

17. ADJOURNMENT

At 12:15pm, Mr. Auchincloss moved, and Ms. Klein seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:
Stuart Auchincloss, Secretary

Approved on September 14, 2021 by the MHLS Board of Trustees

ATTACHMENT

President's Report | July 2021

- Welcome back to our first face to face meeting since January 2020. Despite the change in our meeting style, due to rescinding the Governor's order, each of us should consider our personal comfort and care. Feel free to use masks or not; keep a reasonable distance; ask to be included in meeting virtually understanding the requirements and conditions that are imposed on us by the public meeting regulations.

- We will be initiating the evaluation of our Executive Director through the use of the online tool used over the past few years. The link to the tool will be sent on Thursday July 15 to all of the MHLS Board to be completed by July 30th.

- The Board completed its first self-evaluation with 100% participation. The results of the evaluations will be summarized and reported back to us by the Board Development committee later this year.

- The Pawling Library had an important anniversary this year, 100 years, that was marked through an event on Saturday May 22nd with a Dixieland style concert and picnic in the park. This event also launched the public announcement for fundraising to build a new children's wing onto the current library. I was honored to attend this event and witness our County Executive, Mark Molinaro, announce a contribution of $200,000 through the county community development grants.

- On July 22, Assemblywoman Didi Barrett will participate in a public meeting at the Clinton Community Library during which she will announce grants through NYS for libraries in her district. I will be attending along with Rebekkah and other members of the library community to thank Didi for her ongoing support and dedication to our library mission.

- The Dutchess County legislature announced grant funds provided through the America Rescue Plan Act for each of the Dutchess County Libraries, up to $50,000 for youth programs and services.

- We will be beginning negotiations for the next contract with the CSEA Union which represents approximately 50% of our employees. You will be hearing more about this at our September meeting.

- We have many collaborations that are occurring thanks to the work of our MHLS staff and especially Rebekkah, including:
    - The opportunity for our professional library staff to enroll in post graduate studies through LIU – Palmer School of library sciences
    - Four libraries participating in programs and services related to sustainability and resilience through Partners for Climate Action of the Hudson Valley and the New World Foundation
    - Leadership of a new ALA taskforce on sustainability that Rebekkah has been named chair
    - And a new relationship to continue our work on equity, diversity and inclusion by using a self-assessment tool from the Michigan Nonprofit Association through a collaboration with the Community Foundation of the Hudson Valley. This tool will be provided to each of us to complete in September.