MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM

MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

President Barry Ramage called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

1. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustees Present:	Stuart Auchincloss, Heather Blakely, Kenneth Goldberg, Rajene Hardeman, George Joiner, Debra Klein, Barry Ramage, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Carla Taylor, Mary Linda Todd, Mark Wilson
Trustees Absent (excused):	Peter Carey, Jill Leinung
Trustees Absent (unexcused)	
Directors Association Liaison:	Jesse Chance, Director, Hyde Park Library District
Staff Present:	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, James Coyle, Laura Crisci, Laurie Shedrick

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- President Barry Ramage reminded board members of the board-adopted requirement to attend at least two hours of trustee education annually and pointed out upcoming events that would satisfy that requirement.

President's Report

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Janet Schnitzer moved, and Debra Klein seconded, the approval of the May 2023 minutes. Voting Yes: Heather Blakely, Rajene Hardeman, George Joiner, Debra Klein, Barry Ramage, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Mary Linda Todd; Voting No: N/A; Abstentions: Kenneth Goldberg and Mark Wilson. The motion passed.

Minutes Approved

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

- Treasurer Richard Swierat reported on the financial position of the organization as of the first half of 2023 noting that the System's financial position is matching earlier projections for the year. He reported that staff continue to be conservative in their spending and that the mid-year financial adjustments are in progress and will be presented to the Finance Committee next month. It was noted that upon the dissolution of the Foundation for Hudson Valley Libraries, all assets, save those necessary to finish closing out the Foundation, have been donated to the Mid-Hudson Library System for specified purposed outlined in the

Financial Report Received

Government & Community Relations Working Group Report (Doc. 12). Treasurer Swierat noted that the MHLS Directors Association approved a 2% increase to the Members Assessment for 2024. Kenneth Goldberg inquired as to the certificate of deposit strategy in light of increased interest rates which Treasurer Swierat explained. Treasurer Swierat moved, and Mark Wilson seconded, a motion to receive the financial reports as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS

Warrants Received

- A report from Peter Carey was provided which noted their acceptability (Doc. 5.A). Barry Ramage moved, and Richard Swierat seconded that the warrant report for May 2023 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:
    - While the municipal ballot petition signature reduction bill has passed both legislative houses, the bill has not yet been delivered to the Governor for her signature.
    - James Coyle has been appointed to the Finance Manager & Personnel Officer position.
    - The pollinator garden project is scheduled for September 2023.
    - MHLS hosted a visit from Dennis Nagle of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS); State Librarian, Lauren Moore; NYS Library Development Specialists Amy Heebner and Lauren Cardinal; Tessa Killian, Executive Director of the Southeastern Library Resources Council; and Grace Riario, Executive Director of the Ramapo Catskill Library System. During the visit, the contingent traveled to the Kingston Library, Hudson Area Association Library, and the Mountain Top Library in Tannersville in order to learn more about the impact of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds which were used for the Beyond the Library Wi-Fi project and the Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley Project.
    - The Eleanor Roosevelt Historic Site at Val-Kill has reached out to discuss the potential of co-hosting a regional "Banned Book Club."

Executive Director's Report

  - The national research project team she has been involved with presented their initial findings on the role of libraries in disaster preparedness and community resilience at the 2023 Annual Conference of the American Library Association in Chicago, IL in June.

- Richard Swierat moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded, the approval of all proposed personnel actions as presented in Doc.6.A. The motion passed unanimously.
- Laurie Shedrick, MHLS Assistant Director and Technology Operations Manager noted that the new Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that is now available to all MHLS Staff has been well received and personally useful.

7. DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT

- Jesse Chance, Director, Hyde Park Library District reported on the recent vote to increase the Members Assessment for 2024; a debate at the last Directors Association meeting regarding the name of the Resource Sharing Standards and whether or not the name should be changed to Resource Sharing Policies & Procedures, the DA voted to keep the name as is; and the work to craft a new memo of understanding between the member libraries and the Mid-Hudson Library System.

8. AUDIT COMMITTEE

- Chair Stuart Auchincloss introduced Victor Churchill of RBT who presented a detailed report of their audit findings which were summarized as a "clean opinion" with no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies identified. Chair Auchincloss moved, and Richard Swierat seconded a motion to accept the independent accountant's audit report. Voting Yes: Stuart Auchincloss, Heather Blakely, Kenneth Goldberg, George Joiner, Debra Klein, Barry Ramage, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Carla Taylor, Mary Linda Todd, and Mark Wilson; Voting No: N/A; Abstention: Rajene Hardeman. The motion passed. Richard Swierat moved, and George Joiner seconded, a motion to accept the 2023 Report to the Board from the RBT, CPA which was provided in print at the board meeting (Doc. 8.C). The motion passed unanimously.
- Chair Auchincloss requested that Mr. Churchill work to respect the agreed upon timeline for the production of the audit reports to give the board more time to review them in 2024. Mr. Churchill agreed that the reports should have arrived at the beginning of June to give the

board more time to review them and agreed to respect that timeline in the future.

9. BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Chair Kenneth Goldberg reminded board members to please fill out the self-evaluation survey and that the mandated sexual harassment prevention training forms are due back to MHLS by the end of September.
- Chair Goldberg discussed the planning for the first in-person Annual Membership Meeting since the pandemic and announced the keynote speaker: Deborah Caldwell Stone, Director, American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom & Executive Director of the Freedom to Read Foundation.

10. BYLAWS, POLICIES and PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

- Chair Debra Klein reported that the committee agreed to elongate the timeline to present the approved bylaw amendments to the membership in order to give the lawyer more time to review them. The Committee plans to aim for a presentation of the amendments at the 2024 Annual Membership Meeting.

11. NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

- Chair Richard Swierat reminded board members that nominations for the 2024 Executive Committee are due today.

12. GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS WORKING GROUP

- Chair Richard Swierat reported that all dissolution paperwork for the Foundation for Hudson Valley Libraries has been submitted to New York State.
- A draft purpose statement was presented (Doc. 12.A). Richard Swierat moved, and Debra Klein seconded a motion to approve the working group's purpose statement. The motion passed unanimously.

13. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- There was no unfinished business.

14. NEW BUSINESS

- Richard Swierat moved, Stuart Auchincloss seconded, the approval of the State Aid for Library Construction Program Application Assurances Form. The motion passed unanimously.

15. ORIENTATION

- Due to time constraints the board agreed this orientation presentation on the State Aid for Library Construction would be recorded and sent to trustees after the meeting.

16. COMMUNICATION

- Carla Taylor reported on a recent Board-to-Board visit she and Peter Carey made to the Kent Public Library. Carla also reported on a new policy at the Reed Memorial Library in Carmel to manage potential protests that may be staged in front of the library. It was noted that MHLS is working on a similar policy to address potential protests at MHLS events. These policies are in response to behavioral trends at school board meetings and library board meetings across the country closely tied to censorship efforts of library materials.
- Laurie Shedrick, MHLS Assistant Director and Technology Operations Manager reported on the launch of a new language learning e-resource: Transparent Language.

17. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:57am, Barry Ramage declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stuart Auchincloss

Stuart Auchincloss, Secretary

Approved on September 12, 2023 by the MHLS Board of Trustees