MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM

MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Tuesday, September 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, Peter Carey, Rajene Hardeman, George Joiner, Debra Klein, Jill Leinung, Barry Ramage, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Carla Taylor, Mary Linda Todd, Mark Wilson
Trustees Absent (excused):	Kenneth Goldberg
Trustees Absent (unexcused)	
Directors Association Liaison:	Michele Capozzella, Director, Mahopac Library
Staff Present:	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, James Coyle, Laura Crisci, Laurie Shedrick, Ashley Teal

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President's Report

- President Barry Ramage introduced a resolution in support of the Mid-Hudson Library System's continued membership in the American Library Association, noting the recent news coverage of three state libraries' withdrawal from the association. Richard Swierat moved, and Carla Taylor seconded the following resolution:

  "The Mid-Hudson Library System states its support for The American Library Association (ALA) in light of the benefits of the work of the association on behalf of MHLS, our member libraries, and the residents of the Hudson Valley including:

  1. Its national advocacy and policy work that has changed the course of public support for libraries for the better for more than 100 years,
  2. Its professional development that has enhanced library services in the profession, and
  3. The provision of a platform for the debate of important ideas that have led to standards that call upon libraries to uphold the basic rights of a functioning democracy, including the defense of First Amendment rights.

  For these reasons the Mid-Hudson Library System reaffirms our membership in the American Library Association and our support for its mission to "...to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."

  The motion passed unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- George Joiner moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded, the approval of the July 2023 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes Approved

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

- Treasurer Richard Swierat reported that all state aid has been received as of July 2023 and that all reserve fund goals and expenditure projections are being met. Peter Carey moved, and Mark Wilson seconded, a motion to receive the financial reports as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports Received

5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS

- A report from Kenneth Goldberg was provided which noted the acceptability of the June warrants (Doc. 5.A). Rajene Hardeman reported her recommendation of approval for the July warrants (Doc. 5.B). Rajene Hardeman moved, and Stuart Auchincloss seconded that the warrant reports for June and July 2023 be received. The motion passed unanimously.

Warrants Received

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- In addition to providing highlights from the written report (Doc. 6), Executive Director Aldrich reported that:
    - She will be interviewed on the program, Capitol Press Room, about the bill to lower the number of signatures necessary for libraries to use the municipal ballot (414) option.
    - This fall, a new contract with Visions Human Resources, LLC will result in a compliance review of our personnel policies and practices. This firm is also assisting to expedite the search for a new finance assistant.
    - An opportunity to work with the Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Partnership has emerged and as a result an event is planned for Sunday, December 3rd at The Wallace Center of the FDR Presidential Library and Museum to highlight the impacts of attempts to censor books in libraries.
    - The Town of Union Vale has hired a staff person to lead the creation of a physical library.

Executive Director's Report

- Treasurer Richard Swierat moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded, the approval of all proposed personnel actions as presented in Doc. 6.A. The motion passed unanimously.

- President Barry Ramage moved, and Peter Carey seconded approval for the Executive Director to sign an Open Trespass Affidavit (Doc. 6. B) with the City of Poughkeepsie Policy. Voting Yes: Stuart Auchincloss, Heather Blakely, Peter Carey, George Joiner, Debra Klein, Jill Leinung, Barry Ramage, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Carla Taylor, Mary Linda Todd, Mark Wilson; Voting No: N/A; Abstained: Rajene Hardeman.

- Laurie Shedrick, MHLS Assistant Director and Technology Operations Manager, reported on the rollout of Vega, our new online catalog and praised the work of Kathryn Brew, MHLS ILS and Technology Operations Specialist, in the development of the new catalog, training for member library staff and the creation of a "launch kit" to help libraries connect their patrons with this new resource.

7. DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT

- Michele Capozzella, Director of the Mahopac Library and 2023 Chair of the MHLS Directors Association (DA), reported on the progress made in the fourth draft of the Memo of Understanding proposed between MHLS and member libraries. The draft has once again been shared with all five county directors' groups and will be provided to the MHLS Executive Committee for further review. Capozzella shared the progress being made to update the DA bylaws, noting that MHLS procured the services of a professional parliamentarian to advise on voting in the online environment.

8. NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

- Chair Richard Swierat reported that all vacant positions have candidates nominated for election at the MHLS Annual Membership Meeting as shown in Doc. 8.A. The slate of officers was presented:

  President: Barry Ramage (D)

  Vice President: Rajene Hardeman (D)

  Treasurer: Stuart Auchincloss (U)

  Secretary: Jill Leinung (C)

Member-at-Large (immediate past-president): Richard Swierat

No nominations from the floor were offered. The slate will be voted on at the December board meeting.

9. FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Chair Richard Swierat moved, and Mark Wilson seconded a motion to approve the mid-year budget adjustments as presented (Doc. 9.B). The motion passed unanimously.
- Chair Swierat moved, and George Joiner seconded, a motion to authorize a transfer of up to $35,000 from the MHLS Operating Contingency Reserve Fund for the Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley program pending further negotiation with the Southeastern Library Resources Council regarding project costs. The motion passed unanimously.
- Chair Swierat reported on the committee's discussions related to 2024 budget planning assumptions, investment strategy and the upcoming areas of work for the Government & Community Relations Working Group.

10. INCENTIVES COMMITTEE

- Chair Stuart Auchincloss reviewed the process to prioritize applications received through the State Aid for Library Construction program and to ensure libraries that serve economically disadvantaged communities are given special consideration.
- Chair Auchincloss moved, and Richard Swierat seconded, a motion to approve a recommended award for the Mid-Hudson Library System's roof replacement and solar installation project as cited in Doc. 10.B. It was noted that the final amount will likely be less once state and federal incentives are secured. The motion passed unanimously.
- Chair Auchincloss moved, and George Joiner seconded, a motion to approve the recommended award amounts for 2023 applications to the State Aid for Library Construction as presented (Doc. 10.B). The motion passed unanimously.
- President Barry Ramage thanked the committee for the work as well as MHLS Library Sustainability Coordinator, Laura Crisci, for her efforts in her first year of service to manage this process.

11. BYLAWS, POLICIES and PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

- Chair Debra Klein reported on the results of the board survey conducted to identify commonly available days and times for board meetings in the coming year. Based on that input, a draft 2024 Board Meeting Schedule (Doc. 11.B) was presented. Chair Klein moved, and Carla Taylor seconded, the approval of the proposed 2024 meeting dates. The motion passed unanimously.

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Executive Director Aldrich reported that the final 2023 audit reports were received (Doc. 12.A).

13. NEW BUSINESS

- There was no new business to address.

14. ORIENTATION

- Rajene Hardeman, Debra Klein, and Mark Wilson, in their capacity as members of the MHLS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group, provided a presentation on interactions with people with both visible and invisible disabilities.

15. COMMUNICATION

- Janet Schnitzer and Mark Wilson reported on their attendance at a meeting of the Columbia County Government Committee along with other members of the Columbia County Library Association to request additional county funds for libraries in the coming fiscal year.
- Laurie Shedrick, MHLS Assistant Director and Technology Operations Manager reported on item 5.b in the Director's Report (Doc. 6), noting 25% increase in the number of tech support tickets received since 2022. Shedrick reported that 82% of tickets are resolved within 1 hour and 96% are resolved the same day they are received.
- Laura Crisci, MHLS Library Sustainability Coordinator, reported on the awarding of the 2023 Outreach Mini-Grants and the recent partnership with the New York National Guard to bring the Citizen Preparedness Corps training to the Hudson Valley through six of The Library of Local library locations.
- Janet Schnitzer was commended for the recent award she received, the inaugural "Lions of the Library" Award from the Hudson Area Library. This award acknowledged Janet's long-

time service to this library on their board, the many years of service as their board president, and her representation of Columbia County libraries on the Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees.

16. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:42am, Barry Ramage declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stuart Auchincloss

Stuart Auchincloss, Secretary

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