MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM
MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Wednesday, March 18, 2026

President Stuart Auchincloss called the meeting to order at 10:01am in the MHLS Auditorium.

1. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustees Present:	Stuart Auchincloss, Peter Carey, Mary De Bellis, Kevin Finnegan, Leslie Gerber, Charles Kutcher, David Lavallee, Jill Leinung, Jenny Post, Janet Schnitzer, Thomas Silvious, Barbara Swanson, Carla Taylor, Mark Williams
Trustees Absent:	Ken Goldberg
Directors Association Liaison:	Matt Pavloff, Kinderhook Memorial Library
Staff Present:	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, James Coyle, Laura Crisci, Jennifer Montalbano, Laurie Shedrick

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President's report

President Auchincloss encouraged the board members to donate to the Mid-Hudson Library System to show the Board's support of the Mid-Hudson Library System to potential donors and grant makers. The MHLS website has a "Support Your Library System" page with donation links for ease of giving. Mr. Auchincloss challenged the Board to achieve 100 percent participation.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes approved

Mary De Bellis moved, and Leslie Gerber seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the January Board Meeting (Doc. 3.A). **The motion carried unanimously.**

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Report received

Treasurer Kevin Finnegan provided an overview of the January financial reports (Doc.4A). Charles Kutcher moved, and Carla Taylor seconded a motion to receive January financial reports. **The motion carried unanimously.**

5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS

Warrants received

Peter Carey reported that he reviewed the warrants for January and found them acceptable. Peter Carey moved, and Barbara Swanson seconded a motion to receive the January warrants. **The motion carried unanimously.**

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director's Report

In addition to her written report, Executive Director Aldrich encouraged trustees to attend local office hours of legislators to advocate for the libraries, particularly for the state budget appropriation.

7. DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT

Matt Pavloff, Director of the Kinderhook Memorial Library, Chair of the System Services Advisory Committee, and Directors Association Liaison for this meeting reported the participation of directors in the MHLS Plan of Service Focus Groups; current discussions surrounding the 2027 Members Assessment amount; the impact the delayed release of the annual report to the state software is having on directors; the systemwide patron data clean-up project; discussions around the renewal of our language learning product, Transparent Language; and the recent experience of Resource Sharing Standards Violation process undertaken by the Resource Sharing Advisory Committee.

Report from the Directors Association

8. BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

In addition to the committee's submitted report, Chair Barbara Swanson:

2026 Annual Meeting Planning

- Reported that the location of the 2026 Annual Membership Meeting has been confirmed for The Wallace Center at the FDR Presidential Library & Museum on Friday, October 23. Executive Director Aldrich announced that the annual speaker will be Jennie Rose Halperin, the Executive Director of Library Futures, an organization providing librarians, policymakers, and community leaders with the tools, knowledge, and resources necessary to protect, advocate for, and advance a fair digital future for libraries and the communities they serve.
- The Board members discussed the invitations they have received to visit member library boards and best practices during those visits. It was noted that no invitations from Greene County libraries have been received and how to address this.
- The Board was reminded of the timelines for both the board self-evaluation survey and the mandated Sexual Harassment Prevention Training.

9. BYLAWS, POLICIES & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

Chair Mark Williams introduced the committee's recommendation to pass a law enforcement inquiry. The Board voted unanimously to approve the law enforcement inquiry policy (Doc.9B).

Law Enforcement Inquiry Policy approved

10. INCENTIVES COMMITTEE

Chair Carla Taylor introduced the committee's recommendations to update the board's funding priorities for the State Aid for Library Construction program. The Board voted unanimously to approve the 2026 funding priorities as presented (Doc. 10.B).

Funding Priorities for the State Aid for Library Construction (SALC) Approved

The Board unanimously approved the Committee's recommendation to keep the same definition for an "economically disadvantaged community" as was used in 2025 for the purposes of administering the State Aid for Library Construction program.

The Board unanimously approved the Committee's recommendation to once again offer the New York Library Association Conference Scholarship, funding permitting for 2026. It was clarified that if state aid to MHLS is cut, this program will be suspended.

NYLA Conference Scholarship approved

11. NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Chair Janet Schnitzer reported on the status of upcoming vacancies on the board and the incumbents' status in order to inform outreach to the impacted county library associations.

12. GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS WORKING GROUP

Chair Jill Leinung reported on a new project to create a "story bank" that will collect shareable testimonials from library patrons about their library and from member library stakeholders about MHLS. Leining noted the working group's goal to have 100 percent participation in Board giving. The working group continues its research to create an Endowment Fund and investigate fundraising options that will not compete with member library fundraising efforts.

13. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

14. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

15. ORIENTATION

Executive Director Aldrich provided the background and an explanation of the current MHLS Members' Assessment.

16. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jill Leinung, Secretary

Approved on May 22, 2026 by the MHLS Board of Trustees