

MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM
MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Saturday, January 31, 2026

President Stuart Auchincloss called the meeting to order at 10:00am in the MHLS Auditorium.

1. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustees Present: Stuart Auchincloss, Mary De Bellis, Kevin Finnegan, Charles Kutcher, David Lavallee, Jill Leinung, Janet Schnitzer, Barbara Swanson, Carla Taylor, Mark Williams

Trustees Absent: Peter Carey, Leslie Gerber, Jenny Post, Kenneth Goldberg, Thomas Silvius

Directors Association Liaison: Catherine Benson, Heermance Memorial Library (Coxsackie)

Staff Present: Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, James Coyle, Laura Crisci, Jennifer Montalbano, Laurie Shedrick

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mark Williams moved, and David Lavallee seconded, a motion to approve the appointment of Mary De Bellis to the Board of Trustees to fill the Dutchess County vacancy. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Mary De Bellis
appointed to the
MHLS Board*

Carla Taylor moved, and Jill Leinung seconded, a motion to approve the Board priorities. (Doc. 2.A) **The motion carried unanimously.** Charles Kutcher moved, and David Lavallee seconded, a motion to approve the core values in the stated Board priorities. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Board Priorities
approved*

President Auchincloss discussed the Committee Rosters (Doc. 2. B) and recommended that Charles Kutcher take the position of the Vice Chair of the audit committee. Mark Williams moved, and Carla Taylor seconded, a motion to approve the resolution to adopt the committee assignments. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*2026 Board
Committees set*

Janet Schnitzer moved, and Mary De Bellis seconded, a motion to approve the dedication of the Pollinator Garden to former Board President Barry Ramage. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Pollinator Garden
dedicated in honor of
former Board
President*

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Barbara Swanson moved, and David Lavallee seconded, a motion to approve the December minutes (Doc. 3.A) with the noted correction of Thea Schoep's name. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Minutes approved

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Carla Taylor moved, and Barbara Swanson seconded, a motion to receive the November (Doc. 4.A) and December (Doc. 4.B) financial reports. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Financial Report
received*

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5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS

Charles Kutchner reviewed the warrants for November and found them acceptable (Doc. 5.A). James Coyle reported that Jenny Post reviewed the warrants for December and provided a written report, finding them acceptable (Doc. 5.B). Barbara Swanson moved, and Mark Williams seconded, a motion to receive the November and December warrants. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Warrants received

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Kevin Finnegan moved, and Carla Taylor seconded, a motion to approve the presented personnel actions (Doc. 6.A). **The motion carried unanimously.**

Executive Director's Report

In addition to her written report, Executive Director Aldrich:

- discussed the state budget advocacy strategy;
- encouraged support of a new bill at the federal level to protect the right of association libraries to be U.S. Passport Acceptance Facility (H.R. 6997). This would impact four MHLS member libraries: Beekman, Cold Spring, LaGrange, and New Paltz who have been notified by the federal government that they may no longer serve as passport acceptance facilities given their legal standing as association libraries;
- Noted that new software for the Annual Report to the State has been procured by the State Library; and
- Shared the Central Hudson Community Geothermal Draft Customer Agreement (Doc 6.D) and discussed its implications for MHLS.

7. DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT

Catherine Benson, Director of the Heermance Memorial Library in Coxsackie and Chair of the MHLS Directors Association (DA) reported on their approval of the Members Capital Fund Policy; updates to the Resource Sharing Standards; the enactment of the Procedures for Resource Sharing Standards Violation for 19 libraries in regard to OverDrive spending; the elimination of group log-ins in Sierra to increase cybersecurity; and recommended changes to online registration for library cards to ensure libraries can control access to digital resources.

Report from the Directors Association

Mary De Bellis moved, and Barbara Swanson seconded, a motion to approve the amendments to the Members Capital Fund (Doc. 7.B) as presented. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Members Capital Fund Policy amendments approved

8. GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS WORKING GROUP

Chair Jill Leining provided the report, providing an update on the MHLS Advocacy Ambassadors Program; a new project to create a story bank for advocacy purposes; emphasizing the importance of MHLS trustees building relationships with our state legislators; and an update on research to create an endowment fund for MHLS.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Charles Kutcher moved, and Mark Williams seconded, a motion to approve the Poughkeepsie Journal as the newspaper of record for the Mid-Hudson Library System. **The motion carried unanimously.**

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Carla Taylor moved, and Janet Schnitzer seconded, a motion to approve the designation of bank of business as TDBank; New York Cooperative Liquid Assets Securities System (NYCLASS) as the investment fund to handle the System's funds; and authorization for designated officers, staff, or other individuals to sign checks, access the safe deposit box, and transfer funds (Doc. 10. E). **The motion carried unanimously.**

11. ORIENTATION

Executive Director Aldrich provided an explanation of State Aid provided to the Mid-Hudson Library System and the stipulations for remaining in good standing to receive such aid.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

16. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59am.