

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 15, 2021

MINUTES

PRESENT: Jane Borrelli, Deb Escobar, Katherine Hawkins, Joanne Mickle, Rebecca Sokol, Eleanor Spencer, Mary Salluzzo, Felicia Spivey, Helen Thomas, and Eric Trahan, Director.

EXCUSED: Rosemary Barger, Christine Witkowski

GUESTS: Kim Zimmer (COB), Sharon O'Brien, Kate Clingan

Call to Order President Jane Borrelli called the meeting to order at 9:34am

Consideration of Minutes: Mary Salluzzo moved, Eleanor Spencer seconded approval of the minutes from the March 18th board meeting as presented.

Ayes – all. Nays – none.

The **Director's Report** for March was distributed before the meeting.

- Eric did trustee training for Schoharie at their (virtual) board meeting April 14th. The training was on planning and community engagement. Next month he will be going to Amsterdam for this same training.
- MVLS is moving forward with the Summer Reading mini grants using funding from the CARES Act. This is a program that was discontinued due to lack of funding and we are excited to restart it now. We are using these mini grants to encourage libraries to think outside the box, something that is particularly important this year. Libraries can do virtual or in-person programming with this money, and any library can apply, including branches. We are still receiving applications, the deadline is April 21st.
- Advocacy: NYLA has an advocacy center on their website where you can send out a thank you note to your legislators for their support.
- Katherine wanted to take a moment to commend Heather for building partnerships with area service organizations to get books to kids.
- Katherine also had questions about adult literacy programs and why over the past decade or so we have seen fewer and fewer of them. It is largely a funding issue, as libraries currently get much less money than we used to for these programs. This also leads to less awareness of the need for adult literacy because literacy programs (such as Literacy Volunteers) no longer have as much money for advocacy. Discussion ensued about ways to get the public and our legislators more invested in these services that there certainly is still a need for in our communities.

Directors Council Report Helen Thomas reports:

- The Directors Council met April 1st, the same day that public libraries had to submit their pandemic plans. Currently, libraries are most concerned with transitional COVID business, such as quarantining of books and cleaning. Libraries are trying to use the guidelines from the state to come up with appropriate procedures going forward.
- MVLS Plan of Service talked about county feedback meetings where board members from each county could provide feedback on the Plan of Service.

Privilege of the Floor Margaret Reaney Memorial Library in St Johnsville will be doing a Brooks BBQ drive through next month in place of their usual pancake breakfast.

Treasurer's Report Eric presented the statements of Financial Position and Payment Schedule for March 2021. He noted that we received some state aid from 2020 this month.

Statements of Financial Position:

MOTION: To accept for audit the Statements of Financial Position for March 2021. Hawkins/Spivey. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Payment Schedules:

MOTION: To approve Payment Schedule #3 for March 2021 in the amount of \$177,986.01 Escobar/Spencer. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT AND FINANCE Nothing to report

AWARDS Joanne reports: The Awards Committee met Tuesday April 12 at MVLS to discuss this year's Library Recognition and Harold and Junice Wusterbarth Volunteer Service Award nominees. The Awards Committee has made their decision and the recipients will be announced at this year's Annual Meeting.

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT Nothing to report

COMMUNICATIONS Nothing to report

LIBRARY SERVICES Nothing to report

NOMINATING Nothing to report

PERSONNEL Nothing to report

JOINT AUTOMATION COUNCIL There is a meeting of the JAC coming up on May 12.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

FOUNDATION UPDATE The Library Giving Day appeal went out and the Foundation is still receiving contributions. Currently there have been about 30 contributions, which is a respectable number, considering this is the first year we have participated in Library Giving Day.

STATE BUDGET UPDATE The State Budget has been released. Library operating aid has held steady from last year, which is better than expected but it is also somewhat disappointing that library aid continues to be held flat. We can expect significant federal aid from the CARES Act, and the American Rescue Plan also had library funding in it. There is also Bullet Aid included in the budget, so we will be sending out notices to libraries encouraging folks to contact their legislators to ask about Bullet Aid.

REOPENING STATUS MVLS and SALS libraries will be ending delivery quarantine on May 1st. This will free up both space and time in our libraries because they won't be storing books for two days and will be able to get more books back out onto shelves.

ANNUAL MEETING

- We are looking at May 19th or 20th for this year's virtual Annual Meeting. Eric will send out a survey to all the members to work out a time of day that works best for people.
- While on the subject of meeting times, Eric asked the board to consider whether our regular meeting time of 9:30 on a Thursday morning is the best time for the MVLS board to meet. Perhaps a different time of day would be more convenient and help us to attract new board members.
- On a related note, is May the best time for our annual meeting? May can be a busy month for people, as we approach the end of the school year locally. In addition to school events such as concerts and graduations, it's also the time a lot of other annual meetings take place. Eric asked the board to think about whether we might like to move the annual meeting to the fall. MVLS Bylaws would have to be amended, and trustee terms adjusted, but fall might turn out to be a better fit for us overall.

PLAN OF SERVICE As we work on the Plan of Service, we are looking to do a survey of the member libraries to gain more insight into how MVLS can better serve them. We will probably look into hiring a consultant to conduct these meetings with members because people tend to speak more freely to an outside contact. The result we are looking for with this Plan of Service is to create inspiration for our libraries. Ideas imposed from the top down do not tend to be successful, so we want ideas that come from our libraries. We want to introduce concepts and allow them to grow organically.

NEW BUSINESS

STATE ANNUAL REPORT The State Annual Report was distributed before the meeting. The board must review and accept it. We went through a lot of changes in the year 2020. On a

positive note, we did more continuing education activities and had more participation than usual. Virtual settings have made meeting up more convenient, as it is much easier for meetings to happen when people don't need to travel. In addition, the disruption created by COVID pushed libraries to work together to come up with solutions to new problems. We are hopeful that these trends will continue as we move into the future.

MOTION: To accept the State Annual Report
Thomas/Mickle. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Before **ADJOURNMENT**, Jane wanted to thank Eleanor Spencer for her service on the MVLS Board. Then, with no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:33am.

Next Regular Board Meeting:
Thursday, June 17, 2021
MVLS Service Center