

**MOHAWK VALLEY LIBRARY SYSTEM  
VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING**

May 19, 2021

**MVLS Trustees:** Jane Borrelli, Deb Escobar, Joanne Mickle, Eleanor Spencer, Felicia Spivey, Helen Thomas, Christine Witkowski

**MVLS Staff:** Wade Abbott, Kate Clingan, Heather Dickerson, Sharon O'Brien, Sally Rappa, Eric Trahan

**Library Trustees, Library Directors and Staff, and Friends:** Karen Bradley, Cheryl Cufari, Randy Fine, Bridey Finegan, Letah Graff, Jackie Hadam, Devon Hedges, Sharon Jordan, Don LaPlant, Bill Levering, Jennifer Mosher, Judi Steiger, Erica Wing, Kim Zimmer

Eric Trahan, Executive Director, welcomed everyone to the sixty-second annual meeting of the Mohawk Valley Library System, our second held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Eric invited everyone to take a look at the 2020 Annual Report, which is available on the MVLS website. 2020 was a very different year for all of us, with library use down everywhere. Still, there were lots of ways in which our libraries stepped up and met the needs of their communities. Libraries pivoted to virtual or outdoor programs, and we saw an increase in the use of e-resources. Eric encouraged everyone to read the member libraries section of the Annual Report to see all the ways in which our libraries are having impacts in their communities. He congratulated the libraries that had budget propositions approved by the voters this week, noting that this shows that the public supports what libraries are doing. During this past year, many of our libraries took advantage of MVLS advocacy grants to go out into their communities and we can see that paying off.

**Business Meeting:**

President Jane Borrelli called the meeting to order at 4:07pm. Jane called on Deb Escobar from the MVLS Nominating Committee to present the trustees up for election to the MVLS Board. Deb reported that we have three trustee terms coming to an end in June 2021. Mary Salluzzo (Fulton County) and Rebecca Sokol (Montgomery County) are running for re-election this year. Eleanor Spencer (Schoharie County) has chosen not to run for another term. Jane asked for a **MOTION** to accept the slate as presented. Helen Thomas motioned, Deb Escobar seconded. Ayes – All. Nays – None. Jane asked for nominations from the floor. As there were none, the slate was accepted. Eric thanked Eleanor for her time and efforts on the MVLS Board. He noted that there are still three vacancies on the MVLS Board, two in Schoharie County and one in Fulton County.

**Staff Recognition:**

Eric wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the MVLS staff members who left in 2020. Lois Gordon retired as the MVLS Outreach and Adult Services Specialist at the end of 2019, after 23 years of service. In September 2020, Sue Rokos retired after 30 years as the MVLS Youth Services Specialist. Eric wanted to take a moment to recognize this tremendous length of service at MVLS and all the work that Sue put in over those years. Kathy Insero, the MVLS Administrative Associate, retired in December 2020. During our usual in-person annual meetings, Kathy was everywhere, making sure everything was running up to her high standards. Everyone at MVLS would like to congratulate Lois, Sue, and Kathy on their retirements, and recognize them for all the work they did.

Eric also wanted to mention the new staff members brought on in 2021, Kate Clingan as Administrative

Associate and Heather Dickerson as Public Services Consultant. We are also excited to be adding another new staff member later on this year.

**MVLS Foundation:**

MVLS Foundation Trustees represent our different counties and serve three-year terms. One-third of the Foundation Trustees are elected at the MVLS annual meeting. As there are three open seats this year, we will be voting to fill one of them. Eric nominated Bill Leitch for the Foundation Board and Helen Thomas seconded. Ayes – all, Nays – none.

There were no other nominations. Eric noted that the Foundation Board still has vacancies in Fulton County and Schoharie County.

**Awards Presentation:**

To present the awards this year, Eric introduced Joanne Mickle from the awards committee. Due to technical problems, Eric presented the awards.

Eric announced that this year, the Harold & Junice Wusterbarth Volunteer Service Award goes to Sharon Jordan from Schenectady. Randy Fine from the SCPL Board said that Sharon is an outstanding trustee who is dedicated to making sure that the facilities of SCPL are safe and clean. She is also one of the library's best fundraisers. Cheryl Cufari congratulated Sharon for her tireless work as the SCPL Facilities Chair for 10 years. Her professional expertise and knowledge have resulted in construction projects for every branch, and she worked to raise money for each of these projects. Karen Bradley thanked the community for the recognition. Trustees play such an important role at each of our libraries, and Sharon has been a part of so many things at SCPL. Congratulations to Sharon and to the Schenectady County Public Library. It is both humbling and honoring for us to be able to recognize her work. The library will be awarded \$200 in her honor, and Sharon will receive a framed certificate.

Eric announced that this year, the Library Recognition Award goes to the Schoharie Free Library for their Tech Savvy Adult Literacy Program. Don LaPlant, Schoharie's Director, introduced Jennie Mosher to talk about the work she has done in this program. Jennie thanked MVLS for the award. She said that after noticing the need for computer skills and education in the community, she worked with Cathy Caiazzo and Terry Pavoldi to put together a wishlist of programs that they would like to see. Programs started in October 2019, and then when the pandemic hit, the need for digital literacy became more urgent than ever. Schoharie began hosting programs online, including *How To Use Zoom* and *Social Media Marketing*, and the online format has allowed people from all over the world to join. In 2020, Kim Zimmer from Cobleskill joined. All the libraries work together to share ideas, as well as to share promotion and program supplies, and Jennie is deeply appreciative of the support from her fellow libraries and from MVLS. Congratulations to Jennie Mosher and the Schoharie Free Library. The library will be awarded \$500 and a framed certificate.

Eric then discussed the planning process for the MVLS Plan of Service:

1. Community Engagement: MVLS recently sent surveys out to our member libraries to gather information about what they are looking for from MVLS. Our next step will be gathering folks virtually to talk with an independent consultant about how MVLS is serving your library and how we could improve. Community engagement is important because it can be eye-opening to learn what the community is looking for in their libraries, or what they may not know about their libraries

2. Developing Goals and Dreams: We will take input from the community engagement to explore what people are really looking for from their library and how we can better serve our communities
3. Identifying Impediments: We will identify what is keeping us from these goals, challenges such as a lack of money, expertise, or space in libraries, and determine how to help people recognize what the library does for them.
4. Objectives and Tasks: We will tie it all together to develop the Plan of Service.

What is a plan of service? New York State requires all Public Library Systems to submit their Five-Year Plan of Service. It consists of three parts - Service Elements, Free Direct Access Plan, and Central Library Plan - all of which are available to view on the MVLS website.

Eric thanked everyone for their participation. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:42pm.