

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
September 16, 2021

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rosemary Barger, Jane Borrelli, April Davies, Deb Escobar (joined late), Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Joanne Mickle, Mary Salluzzo, Rebecca Sokol, and Eric Trahan, Director.

EXCUSED: Christine Witkowski, Helen Thomas

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

Call to Order President Jane Borrelli called the meeting to order at 9:30am
The first order of business is to discuss whether we would like to authorize hybrid meetings through mid-January as allowed under the current changes to Open Meetings Law. This would allow trustees to attend the meetings virtually if they weren't comfortable meeting in-person. Discussion ensued about how much easier it could be to recruit members to the board if we could permanently have these hybrid meetings.

MOTION: To authorize hybrid virtual/in-person meetings through mid-January.
Davies/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Consideration of Minutes: Minutes from the July 15, 2021 meeting were distributed.

MOTION: To accept the minutes from the July meeting as presented.
Hawkins/London. Ayes – 7. Nays - None. Abstentions – 1 (Davies).

The **Director's Report** for July and August 2021 was distributed before the meeting. Eric wanted to talk about the new temporary funding from the American Rescue Plan Act to help libraries deal with the financial impacts of the pandemic. This money will be allocated to 3Rs Councils, in our case that would be CDLC. In the next month we will be working with CDLC and the other Capital District library systems to figure out the timetable for this money and how much we can expect.

Directors Council Report Eric reported that the Directors are continuing to have virtual monthly meetings.

Privilege of the Floor Nothing shared.

Treasurer's Report Eric presented the Statements of Financial Position and Payment Schedules for July and August 2021. We received state aid in August, including the last of the 2020 aid. Joanne asked about the Money Market accounts on the Treasurer's Report. At NBT we have

money in a variety of different places, mostly to try and take advantage of the best interest rates.

Statements of Financial Position:

MOTION: To accept for audit the Statements of Financial Position for July and August 2021. Mickle/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Payment Schedules:

MOTION: To approve Payment Schedules #7 for \$104,019.94 and #8 for \$169,072.90. Hawkins/Sokol. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT AND FINANCE The committee will be meeting today (Sept 16) after the board meeting to discuss the long-term financial forecast. This document is in the board packets. This gives us a sense of what our long-term financial health is. The majority of our state aid comes in all at once mid-year (as we can see on the financial statements from July and August), but our fiscal year is the calendar year. This can leave the impression that we end the year with a surplus, but in actuality that money needs to last us through the majority of the following year. Our finances currently appear to be stable. April asked about the forecasted deficit, Eric says this mostly just an attempt to be conservative about what we expect with regards to state aid.

AWARDS Usually in October/November we send out a note to member libraries to get them thinking about what they've done this year that might qualify for an award. Joanne notes that we might change the dates of the award applications if we move our Annual Meeting.

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT Nothing to report.

COMMUNICATIONS Nothing to report.

LIBRARY SERVICES - PUBLIC LIBRARY AND CONSTRUCTION GRANT APPROVALS The committee had a meeting on September 13 to discuss the 6 applications for Library Construction Grants. We had \$899,993 available and the applications asked for a total of \$903,985 (an average of \$3,992). Amsterdam is looking to repair their main sewer line, replace ancient pipes, and build a new addition, as well as put updated bathrooms and office space in their basement. Five branches of the Schenectady County Public Library (Rotterdam, Niskayuna, Quaker Street, Scotia, and Glenville) submitted lighting and energy efficiency proposals. The Rotterdam, Niskayuna, and Quaker Street branches also included upgrades to their HVAC systems. The committee determined that all of the proposals were necessary and much-needed. They reduced the 75% system match to 74.669% so that each library would be able to receive funding for their projects (Amsterdam \$645,746, Rotterdam \$39,255, Niskayuna \$173,210, Quaker Street \$19,212, Scotia \$11,421, Glenville \$11,149).

MOTION: To accept the committee's recommendation for these reductions and approve the Construction Grants for \$899,993.
Barger/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

NOMINATING The Board has vacancies in Fulton and Schenectady Counties. We've asked libraries in these counties (Schenectady and Gloversville) to look for recommendations.

PERSONNEL No report

JOINT AUTOMATION COUNCIL Eric reported the JAC had a meeting September 8. They approved a provisional 2022 budget, which we will look at during the October meeting. JA is down a staff member so they are beginning the process of filling that position. They also discussed member library telecommunications bills. Historically all telecom went through the JA Project, but over the past 10 years that has been changing. JA has worked out a solution which will allow us to move all telecom back to the libraries.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

HERO ACT POLICY Under the New York HERO Act, all private employers must have an Airborne Infective Disease Exposure Prevention Plan in place. The Department of Labor produced a template that we used to create our plan.

MOTION: To approve and implement the Airborne Infective Disease Exposure Prevention Plan.
London/Escobar. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

REOPENING UPDATE Virtual programs are still happening but we do have some libraries doing in-person programs where distancing is possible. Most of our libraries are requiring masks. April and Katherine attended the Cobleskill Board of Trustees meeting and heard that they are having difficulty with patrons being aggressive about their mask policy. The rate of infection in Schoharie County is currently quite high and there was some discussion about at what point they may need to go back to curbside only. Some libraries are getting more lax on the mask mandate in order to avoid these confrontations which is understandable but can make it harder for the ones who are enforcing it. Libraries are committed to public safety, but no one wants to antagonize the public because those are the people who fund us.

FOUNDATION UPDATE The Foundation invited all libraries to apply for the annual Dream & Do Grants. As of right now we have 9 applications for a total of \$5000.

MOTION: To approve the Dream & Do Grants to the libraries that applied.
Hawkins/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The Foundation's second golf tournament of the year is tomorrow (Sept 17). The first one was held on July 26th and was successful. The Foundation has also started to plan their year-end appeal, continuing with the Stay At Home & Read campaign they started last year.

PLAN OF SERVICE UPDATE Our Plan of Service will be submitted to the State next month. We've been trying to use the State's requirements as an opportunity to come up with a more detailed plan to meet our members' needs. Our fourth and final listening session was held last night (Sept 15). We've had participation from about 35 library staff members and trustees. Now our consultant, Elissa Kane, will be compiling the common themes she's found and MVLS staff will meet with her in a couple of weeks.

MVLS COMMITTEES Eric has shared the committee assignments discussed at July's meeting.

TECHNOLOGY & GROWTH CONSULTANT We have made some adjustments to the draft job description that was approved at the July meeting. We got a few applicants that we are continuing to look at. This position should fulfill a lot of the needs that we've been hearing about from member libraries. We're going to finish going through the planning process and we might decide to reopen the search. April offered to post the position on some of the SUNY sites that she has access to.

MOTION: To approve the updated Technology & Growth Consultant job description and reopen the search if necessary.
Davies/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

BYLAWS AMENDMENTS These were presented at the July meeting. The overall purpose of these amendments is to bring trustee terms in line with the calendar year and to change the timeframe of our annual meeting from May to the end of October. If we approve these bylaws changes, we would also need to adjust the trustee terms.

MOTION: To accept the bylaws amendments.
Mickles/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To add six months to all trustee terms, moving end dates from June to December.
Escobar/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

NEW BUSINESS

2021 BUDGET AMENDMENTS These amendments to the 2021 budget mostly address the state aid issues Eric discussed already (that we received 2020 state aid in 2021). CARES Act funding was changed from state aid to federal aid. Having another virtual Annual Meeting this year means all the budgeted money for an in-person meeting was saved.

MOTION: To accept these budget changes.
Barger/Sokol. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

FREE DIRECT ACCESS PLAN This is part of our Plan of Service and has changed only slightly from the Free Direct Access Plan we approved 5 years ago. Most libraries fully embrace the sharing concept that goes into the Free Direct Access Plan. There are locations within MVLS that don't have a library and some of those citizens use our libraries, but the level of use is not out of the ordinary. On a positive note, the changes made in this plan are because there are fewer unserved people in our service area than there were 5 years ago.

Margaret Reaney Memorial Library in St Johnsville is the only MVLS library whose service area doesn't correspond with who provides the funding, which has to do with their charter structure as a public library for the village of St Johnsville. In order to expand their service area, they would have to redo their charter to become a school district library. This is quite a big step for them, but the State doesn't allow for smaller steps.

MOTION: To accept the new Free Direct Access Plan
Davies/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:56am

Next Regular Board Meeting:

Thursday, October 21, 2021

MVLS Service Center