

Mohawk Valley Library System

Director's Report

September 2021

Administration & Governance

Glenn Winter from T.M. Byxbee will be at our October board meeting to present his findings on the 2020 financial statement reviews for MVLS and the JA Consortium. He will also review the IRS 990 form. All of these draft documents will be on the MVLS website in the meeting materials section.

Rosemary and I met in September to review the long range financial forecast and to go over plans for the 2022 draft budget. That budget will be presented at the November board meeting. The expectation is that we will present a budget with both income and expenditures at about \$1.73 million.

As a part of that budget planning, we continue to work on the procedures and expectations for determining the Salary and Benefits line now that we no longer have a union, which used to set that process and outcome. Staff has been discussing options, which we will discuss in Executive Session at the meeting. We can also discuss developing a role for the Personnel Committee.

We continue to work on filling the Technology and Growth Consultant position. I will provide an update on the search at our October meeting.

Those attending the meeting in-person will notice that we had the parking lot sealed and re-stripped since the last meeting. This has been on the to-do list for a couple of years, so it is good to get it done.

The planning process continues. Thirty-five individuals attended the four listening sessions with Elissa Kane, and Elissa did follow-up sessions with the two libraries who were not able to participate. We continue to have staff discussions and sessions with Elissa to turn all of the input from the survey and listening sessions into an action plan for refining and improving how MVLS implements its mission for member libraries and the residents of our four counties.

Of course, one aspect of that is the Plan of Service that we develop for the state. At the September meeting we discussed the Free Direct Access Plan, and the board approved that document. At the October meeting we will review and address the Central Library Plan and the goals and intended results for the state's plan of service. Those documents will be included with the meeting materials. Both, like the Free Direct Access Plan, are little changed from the previous versions; and like the Free Direct Access Plan, are written to conform to the state's requirements.

The documents we submit to the state fulfil the state's purposes. To get a truly impactful result from our planning activities, we will go beyond the state plan to develop strategic goals and objectives that will change the way MVLS operates over the next several years. We will be discussing those over the next few months. The purpose of those strategic goals and objectives is to describe in more detail the ways in which the MVLS mission is accomplished. Here are the draft goals that we are working with at this point:

- MVLS residents cherish community libraries with sustainable futures as community builders, anchors and treasures (Objectives and actions address library collections & programs, funding, and communications)

- MVLS residents enjoy outstanding library service that is informed and enhanced through collaboration among the member libraries, MVLS and other agencies & organizations (Objectives and actions address collaboration concerning library services, governance & management, and peer based advice)
- MVLS residents effectively use the technology available through MVLS libraries to meet their information, education and entertainment needs and to better understand and cherish their libraries (Objectives and actions address various virtual services, and communications – websites, social media, etc.)
- The MVLS Library Community understands and values the education, empowerment, support, shared services and collaboration that MVLS fosters (Objectives and actions address how MVLS interacts with and supports member libraries)

Automation and Resource Sharing

As mentioned last month, the JA Council and the SALS board have already approved the JA Project budget for 2022. The MVLS board will address that at the October meeting. The proposed budget is for about \$1 million, and shows a \$30,000 surplus. The JA will be reviewing that surplus, and changes to the way telecommunications and fees are charged to members. We will discuss that at the board meeting.

The project is currently seeking for a new staff member to work on helping libraries with technology challenges with their computers and Polaris.

Outreach, Adult and Youth Services

Heather is having good success with the Youth Services meetups. Two are scheduled for October. These informal meetings give MVLS staff a chance to keep front-line library staff current on what's happening here and to provide the very important opportunity for connection between staff in different locations. This quarter's Tri-System program Swap was well attended by MVLS; six of our 14 libraries participated.

The Adult and Family Literacy projects are going forward. The final reports for the 2020-2021 projects have been accepted, and the current projects are progressing. The Adult Literacy Tech Savvy programs now include seven member libraries. MVLS is hosting a meeting at the end of October to brainstorm and plan sessions for the rest of the grant cycle.

Heather and Sharon are working on the MVLS holiday books collection for accurate representation and evaluating picture book city for representation and inclusion. The initial communication with members on this project has been very positive.

The 2021 Summer Reading Final report was submitted to DLD. The program was active at 21 MVLS library sites. Libraries hosted 216 active/live (non-recorded) children's programs with 3,245 children and parents attending; and 66 recorded programs that have been viewed over 4,275 times. Libraries hosted 48 programs for teens with 321 teens attending; and held 132 self-directed programs enjoyed by 5633 children and teens

For libraries that tracked by number of minutes read, 875 kids read a collective 360,061 minutes, which is 6001 hours or 250 days...that's 8.2 months! 183 teens read 106,075 minutes, which is 1768 hours or 74 days.

Heather's September Field Visits - Niskayuna, Scotia, Glenville, Gloversville.

Member Services

The Frothingham Library in Fonda has a new Director. Linda Bell, who has been serving as interim director will be Assistant Director, and Mary Finch is Director. I visited to begin the orientation process in mid-September, and am scheduled to meet with their board to discuss future planning for a sustainable future.

MVLS is assisting several other libraries with ongoing projects. Sharon Springs has their effort to move funding to a school district vote. Amsterdam has their long-term building plans; and Wade continues to work with Cobleskill on strategic planning.

Advocacy & Awareness

I attended the annual NYLA/NYALS Advocacy Launch on September 21. The plan for 2022 is to keep the message the same as 2021, with an ask for \$123.1 million in library operating aid and a \$45 million ask for library construction aid. These are both in the range of a 30% increase, which is much more realistic than the doubling in aid that was requested (and not granted) a few years ago.

The Governor has signed into law the requirement for public library trustees to receive two hours of trustee training per year while they are serving as library trustees. There are still a lot of details to work out, but this is a very positive development for public libraries. This new requirement will go into effect in 2023. We remain hopeful that the Governor will sign the remaining library bills that still await her action.

The Foundation for Mohawk Valley Libraries is again holding a Stay at Home & READ virtual fundraiser. The event is scheduled for Friday, November 12. Please be on the watch for social media and other publicity, and promote this event as you can.

Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits

9/1/2021	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library MVLS Member Library Directors
9/2/2021	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Steve Bachman, Four County Library System MVLS Member Library Directors
9/4/2021	Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library Linda Bell Katherine Hawkins Foundation Board JA Council MVLS Board of Trustees
9/7/2021	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System Linda Bell Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library

9/8/2021	<p>Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery JA Council Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System</p>
9/9/2021	<p>Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library MVLS Member Library Directors Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library</p>
9/10/2021	<p>Foundation Board MVLS Library Services Committee</p>
9/13/2021	<p>Linda Bell Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council MVLS Library Services Committee MVLS Member Library Directors Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library</p>
9/14/2021	<p>PULISDO Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library</p>
9/15/2021	<p>Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council MVLS Member Library Directors Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library Edward Asselin, SUNY Cobleskill</p>
9/16/2021	<p>Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Valerie Acklin, Gloversville Public Library MVLS Audit & Finance Committee MVLS Board of Trustees MVLS Member Library Directors Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library Edward Asselin, SUNY Cobleskill</p>
9/17/2021	<p>John Naple Foundation Golf Tournament</p>
9/20/2021	<p>Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library</p>
9/21/2021	<p>MVLS Member Library Directors NYALS Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library</p>
9/22/2021	<p>Susan London John Naple Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library</p>
9/23/2021	<p>Linda Bell Mary Donohue Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council MVLS Member Library Directors Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library</p>
9/24/2021	<p>Linda Bell Mary Donohue Frank Reese, Division of Library Development MVLS Member Library Directors</p>

9/27/2021 Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library

9/28/2021 John Naple
Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery
Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
Mary Finch, Frothingham Free Library
Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library

9/29/2021 Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery
MVLS Staff
Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
Glenn Winter, T.M. Byxbee, CPA, PC

9/30/2021 Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library