

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, October 21, 2021

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rosemary Barger, Jane Borrelli, April Davies, Deb Escobar (left early), Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Joanne Mickle, Mary Salluzzo, Rebecca Sokol, Helen Thomas, Christine Witkowski and Eric Trahan, Director.

EXCUSED: None

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

Call to Order President Jane Borrelli called the meeting to order at 9:32am.

Financial Review: Glenn Winter from T.M Byxbee attended the meeting to present the 2020 MVLS Review Report, and the 2020 MVLS/SALS Joint Automation Project Review Report. Draft reports were reviewed by the trustees. Glenn stated that there were no material modifications to note. As MVLS reports on the cash basis of accounting, increases or decreases in operating lines from one year to the next are largely due to the timing of receipts and disbursements, as well as the disruption caused in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic. 2020 saw a decrease in revenue as compared to 2019, largely due to the timing of 2020 State Aid. We also can see a reduction in spending (for example on the JA reimbursements line), likely due to COVID. We received much of the 2020 State Aid in 2021, so we'll see this again on the 2021 Review Report. Glenn also wanted to commend Joe Sherry on the excellent work he does every year.

Consideration of Minutes: Minutes from the September 16, 2021 meeting were distributed.

MOTION: To accept the minutes from the September meeting as presented.
London/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The **Director's Report** for September was distributed before the meeting. The library trustee education initiative requiring library trustees to have 2 hours of trustee education a year has been signed by the governor. It will go into effect in January 2023. Trustee training will become a larger part of what MVLS does. Katherine asks if there is a chance that this will discourage folks from becoming library trustees. There is some concern that it might, but the time commitment is minimal and we have over a year before it takes effect.

Directors Council Report Helen Thomas presented. The directors met on October 7th. Pandemic issues and questions continue to persist. There was discussion about the budget for e-resources and rotating collections, as well as the future of NYSCA programming. Sharon and Heather also encouraged library staff to take some time to do diversity audits of their collections, starting with children's and holiday books. This initiative has been well-received.

Privilege of the Floor Katherine reports that she and Susan attended the Middleburgh Board of Trustees meeting to thank them for their work during the pandemic and to ask about the kinds of things they might be looking for from MVLS. Susan says that Middleburgh is interested in more digital resources, perhaps services like Ancestry.com, Universal Class, Hoopla, etc. Schenectady currently has Hoopla but other libraries in the system do not. Sharon notes that a lot of these services are restrictive (Ancestry's Library Edition can only be used by patrons in the library) and/or cost-prohibitive (Universal Class costs \$5000 per year), and most do not offer consortium pricing. Each library would have to have the budget to fund it, and it can be hard to estimate these costs as, for example, Hoopla charges the library each time a user borrows an item. Libraries can allocate a certain number of borrows per person, but it does add up quickly. April notes that that in her experience, these services increased their costs yearly, and ate up a larger and larger portion of the budget.

Eric says it's hard to implement these things system-wide because different libraries have different wants and needs. When we talk about the e-resources budget each year, certain libraries want increases, others want decreases and we need to come to a compromise. We'll always be too quick for some and too slow for others.

Chris reports that the Friends of the Schenectady Public Library are looking for a new location for one of their two bookstores. The current building is being sold. They have a few possibilities, but it's possible that they may have to make do with just the one location for a time. She hopes to have more information to share next month.

Treasurer's Report Eric presented the Statements of Financial Position and Payment Schedule for September 2021. The income side reflects the forgiveness of our PPP loan in 2021. The budget amendments that the Board approved last month have also been incorporated.

Statements of Financial Position:

MOTION: To accept for audit the Statements of Financial Position for September 2021. Escobar/Witkowski. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Payment Schedules: Libraries who applied for Dream & Do Grants from the Foundation received them in September.

MOTION: To approve Payment Schedule #9 for \$90,209.67. Davies/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT AND FINANCE The committee met in September. Rosemary reports they discussed the five-year projection, which was in last month's board packets. The 2022 proposed budget should be ready for review and action at the November meeting.

AWARDS The dates for awards nominations will be adjusted to coincide with the new Annual Meeting timeline. Eric suggests adding an award to recognize library staff members, an idea that came out of our Plan of Service listening sessions.

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT The MVLS parking lot was resealed.

COMMUNICATIONS Katherine was wondering if Wade could present more regularly at the Board meetings to keep the Board up to date on communications activities. Eric suggested perhaps other MVLS staff members might present as well so the Board is up to date with all of their projects.

LIBRARY SERVICES Nothing to report.

NOMINATING There are vacancies in Fulton and Schenectady Counties. The Gloversville and Schenectady libraries are looking for folks to fill these positions.

At this point in the meeting (10:21am), Deb Escobar had to leave.

PERSONNEL Previously the MVLS staff salary & benefits package was done through the union. Now that there is no longer a union, discussion ensued about whether the Personnel Committee should have more of a role in the development of this package. The committee will meet to discuss a 2022 Salary & Benefits package before bringing it to the rest of the Board for approval.

JOINT AUTOMATION COUNCIL The Joint Automation 2022 Proposed Budget is in the board packets. The JA Council and the SALS Board of Trustees have approved this budget already.

MOTION: To accept the Proposed 2022 JA Budget.
Hawkins/Thomas. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Eric notes that we will likely see a change in fees coming up over the next year when JA moves telecommunications bills back to the libraries.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2020 MVLS/JA FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MOTION To accept the financial statements as presented.
Witkowski/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

REOPENING UPDATE Libraries are still dealing with pandemic issues. MVLS is trying to empower libraries to make their own rules. Joanne asks about library staff vaccination rates, which has not been something libraries have discussed, although Schenectady has a vaccine mandate for county employees.

FOUNDATION UPDATE The Foundation is getting ready for their year-end appeal. They'll be doing their Stay Home & Read campaign again, the date this year is Friday, November 12th.

PLAN OF SERVICE UPDATE MVLS's Plan of Service for the State is posted on our website. From the State's requirements, we develop our own strategic goals and objectives. These documents are designed to communicate to our members what we heard from them in our surveys/listening sessions and what we intend to do about that. This process is still ongoing, and the final version will come to the Board early next year. There are two documents that need to be approved for the State: the Central Library Plan of Service and MVLS's Plan of Service. For each of these we report to the State a goal statement, the intended result, and an evaluation method. Chris asks if we had good participation in these listening sessions. We did, about 35 folks participated and Elissa followed up with directors from the two libraries that weren't able to make it to any of the listening sessions.

Susan noted the Educational & Cultural Programming section of the Central Library Plan of Service, and asked if that means their online programming is available to all MVLS libraries. It is, and one positive change we've seen during COVID is more collaboration, with libraries working together to create and host virtual programs.

Chris asked how the staffing shortages that the Schenectady Library is currently facing will affect the implementation of this plan. It will undoubtedly have its challenges, but this is a very aspirational document and most of the service requirements come from New York State.

MOTION To approve the MVLS Plan of Service and the Central Library Plan of Service.
Thomas/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

TECHNOLOGY & GROWTH CONSULTANT MVLS is still in the process of interviewing to fill this position.

NEW BUSINESS

HOLIDAYS 2021 & 2022 More about this will be discussed in Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session at 10:57am
Hawkins/Davies. Ayes - All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To return to the business meeting at 11:18am
Hawkins/London. Ayes - All. Nays – None.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20am.

Next Board Meeting:

Thursday, November 18, 2021

MVLS Service Center