

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 17, 2022

MINUTES

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

EXCUSED: Deb Escobar

GUESTS: Kim Zimmer (COB), Sharon O'Brien, Kate Clingan, Heather Dickerson, Mary Carrier, Wade Abbott

Call to Order President Jane Borrelli called the meeting to order at 9:31am.

Consideration of Minutes: Minutes from the January 20, 2022 meeting were distributed.

MOTION To accept the minutes from the January meeting as presented.
Mickle/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The **Director's Report** for January and February 2022 was distributed before the meeting. Joe Sherry is officially retiring.

MOTION To accept Joe Sherry's resignation for purposes of retirement, with great appreciation for his many years of wonderful work at MVLS.
Davies/Sokol. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION To appoint Joe Sherry to the position of Financial Manager effective April 1.
Davies/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Staff Update Heather Dickerson attended the meeting to brief the Board on her role as the Public Services Consultant at MVLS. Heather has been here a little over a year and she sees herself as a cheerleader for, and a convener of, our member library staff. Right now, library folks are concerned about getting families back in their libraries. She has been working to remind members about all of the great resources we have at MVLS, and she brought a few of those things to the meeting to demonstrate. Our Start With Science kits are kits that go out to libraries and can be checked out by patrons. Our STEM Kits and LEGO Kits can be borrowed by our member libraries for their programs. Mary Carrier has been helping out with some of the more coding-intensive and technology-based kits. Heather says that one of the great things about our kits is how they can be scaled for each of our libraries. Gloversville, with a full Youth Services staff, uses STEM Kits for their weekly programs for kids. Fonda, with a much smaller staff, has been borrowing some of our Start With Science Kits to put out in the library for

parents and kids to play with on their own time. There is a wide variety of items that our libraries can borrow in order to keep their collections fresh without having to purchase much themselves. Susan asked about time limits for libraries borrowing these – there is a 1-2 week loaning period, but we are able to be flexible as long as another library isn't waiting to borrow the same kit. April suggests that Heather brings these kits with her when she visits libraries. Heather announced that MVLS will once again be offering the summer programming mini grants that were started last year. These grants can be used to support virtual or in-person programs and to purchase materials for programs.

Katherine asks about Heather's outreach efforts with the jails and correctional facilities in the MVLS service area. She just got things up and running with Hale Creek, who recently filled their vacant Librarian position. Our next step is to start the conversation with the sheriff at the Schoharie County Jail to try and get materials there for incarcerated folks. Helen asks who decides what materials get sent to the correctional facilities. Heather says that while MVLS can make suggestions, the final decision is the facilities'. We want books to be in hands, so we tend to focus on popular, high-interest stuff that people want to read.

Next month, Mary will be sharing some of the other resources like trainings that we're making available to the member libraries.

Directors Council No Report.

Privilege of the Floor April suggests buying a proper microphone for this meeting (there have been a few technical difficulties). Sharon suggests it might be a GoTo Meeting issue and we might consider exploring other remote meeting options.

Becky reports that the Margaret Reaney Memorial Library is ordering saplings for the families who participate in their Toddlers To Go program again this year. Families will receive the plant as well as information about taking care of their new tree. It was a very successful initiative last year, and they are excited to do it again.

Susan and Katherine report that they attended a Schoharie Library Board meeting on February 9th. They asked for suggestions of what services SHO might be looking for from MVLS. Their president requested sexual harassment training and trustee training, and suggested the idea of having rotating substitute librarians to help out when a member library is short-staffed.

Katherine suggests that this comes down to increasing funding so that they could have enough staff on hand to be able to cover staff shortages in-house. She worries that this sort of substitute idea would prevent libraries from adequately addressing their own staffing needs.

April thinks that it would be difficult to have the in-house knowledge needed for each library if you were just a substitute. Sharon agrees that each individual library has its own set of rules and policies. Helen says it's difficult to explain to people that even within the same library system there is a lot of variation.

Katherine wanted to bring up an ad she found disturbing in the January 2022 issue of American Rifleman, which she picked up at the Cobleskill library. Helen mentions a quote that every good library contains something that will offend everyone. Eric thinks the libraries' role is to bring

people together and educate everyone.

April mentions that Cobleskill is having a session tonight on native pollinators.

Treasurer's Report Eric presented the Statements of Financial Position and Payment Schedules for January and February 2022. Eric noted the last of the 2021 LLSA payments going out. Rosemary mentioned the fuel surcharge on the delivery invoices. Eric says that's contractual.

Statements of Financial Position:

MOTION: To accept for audit the Statements of Financial Position for January and February 2022.

Mickle/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Payment Schedules:

MOTION: To approve Payment Schedules #1 for \$120,608.99 and #2 for \$128,159.57.

Barger/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT AND FINANCE No Report

AWARDS Joanne reports there was a meeting March 10th at MVLS. The committee suggests that every award be standardized at \$500. They also would like to create a new award to recognize library staff. Applications for this year's awards will be sent out in mid-July and due to MVLS on September 2nd. Awards will be presented at the Annual Meeting in October.

MOTION To standardize all three awards at \$500 each.

Mickle/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION To establish the new Outstanding Library Staff Award in addition to the current Library Recognition Award and Wusterbarth Volunteer Service Award.

Mickle/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT No Report

COMMUNICATIONS No Report

LIBRARY SERVICES No Report

NOMINATING No Report

PERSONNEL No Report

JOINT AUTOMATION COUNCIL Eric reports that the council met March 16. Our e-card registration is now live and over 100 people have signed up online for library cards. A lot of work by Sharon O'Brien and JA staff went into this. JA is also going to be starting the same planning process that MVLS and member libraries go through.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ADVOCACY REPORT Our Advocacy meetings went well. The Assembly and Senate have each released their one-house budgets, both with an increase in Library and Construction Aid. We are pleased to see that the Senate has budgeted the amounts we were asking for. There will be a final budget, negotiated between these two and the Governor's budget, so keep an eye out for more Advocacy opportunities as those negotiations happen.

FINE FREE LIBRARIES Now that the Schenectady Legislature has approved it, it looks like the SCP Board will vote to eliminate fines, which would make all of our libraries fine-free. This will be the culmination of years of consistent messaging from MVLS and we are very excited.

PLANNING UPDATE We are beginning the implementation stage of our planning process. One thing you should see before the next board meeting is a new MVLS newsletter. We want to start regularly recognizing library folks for the work that they're doing, shouting out things like the exceptional customer service that our frontline library staff is providing.

CENTRAL LIBRARY FUNDING CHANGE Central library funding used to be divided into Central Book Aid and Central Library Development Aid, but that funding is now combined into one stream. We are looking at how we might change the way we spend central library funding to better serve members.

FOUNDATION UPDATE Library Giving Day is April 6th, the Foundation will be sending out the same sort of appeal that they sent last year.

NEW BUSINESS

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY We are looking to adjust the Personnel Manual to add one more subsection "d" to part I.2. Travel Allowance, page 19, as follows: "d. mileage for trips to member libraries during business hours or to other regular destinations will be paid based on either the standard mileage from MVLS to those locations, or the miles actually driven, whichever is less. Other trips will be based on actual miles driven."

MOTION To approve the new Personnel Manual subsection above.

Davies/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MVLS VAN The MVLS Van has a value of approximately \$4839 - \$5639. It has about 65,000 miles and is a 2007 Honda Odyssey in quite good condition.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:24am.

Next Regular Board Meeting:

Thursday, April 21, 2022

MVLS Service Center