

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

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Rosemary Barger (virtual), Jane Borrelli, April Davies, Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Joanne Mickle, Haileab Samuel, Rebecca Sokol, Christine Witkowski and Eric Trahan, Director.

**EXCUSED:** Mary Salluzzo, Mary VanPatten

**GUESTS:** Mary Carrier, Sharon O'Brien, Kate Clingan

**Call to Order** President Jane Borrelli called the meeting to order at 9:34am. Our first order of business is welcoming Haileab Samuel, our new trustee from Schenectady County.

**MOTION:** To appoint Haileab Samuel to a seat on the board for a term ending Dec 31, 2025.

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

**Staff Update** Mary Carrier attended the meeting to brief the board on some exciting new things going on with our libraries digitally. Using ARPA funding, CDLC hired consultants to develop new websites for libraries. The goal is for everyone to have an accessible and easy-to-use website for screen readers, translation, etc. The first group of MVLS libraries to go live with their new websites are Sharon Springs, Fonda, and Northville. Mary worked with the libraries to customize their templates so that everyone's website reflects what their community looks for on their websites. Mary wants to emphasize that while she is always available to the members for support, these websites are their own projects that they can update and adjust as needed to reflect their own individuality. All the new websites have been tested for compatibility on mobile devices. Several of our libraries decided to keep their original websites rather than transition to these new ones, although they have reported that learning about the new websites made a lot of them think about the changes and improvements they can make to their existing websites. Once Mary helps all the members who wish to transition, the MVLS website will be in line for a makeover as well.

**Budget Hearing** Eric presented the 2023 Proposed Budget. As he discussed in the Director's Report, the 2023 budget is largely a continuation of the budgets we've had for the past few years. JA fees were reduced because those are based on library use in 2021, which was down from previous years' use. We also have certain items like the \$5000 from the sale of the van or Mary's \$7000 Digital Literacy grant that were a one-time income line. A lot of what you see as reductions on the expense line is really a return back to normal operations without the exceptions and amendments from last year. Susan asked about emergency building issues. We have a building and equipment fund that covers emergency building repairs, which we will talk

more about later. Haileab asked if the reduction in JA fees will cause a problem with JA's budget, considering inflation. The reduction does not affect JA's budget, because it is just the MVLS share of JA's budget that was reduced, not JA's total budget. Kim asked if we know there are repairs coming up that might affect things. We had some expensive repairs in 2022, so we hope that we won't also have them in 2023.

**MOTION** To accept the proposed 2023 MVLS Budget.  
Samuel/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**Consideration of Minutes:** Minutes from the September board meeting and the Annual Meeting in October were presented.

**MOTION:** To accept the minutes from September 15 and October 27, 2022 as presented.  
Witkowski/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The **Director's Report** for September and October was distributed before the meeting. In keeping with the past few months, Eric wanted to update the Board on where MVLS stands with the goals that were set during our plan of service process:

1. Empower Libraries with the Vision & Knowledge for Secure Futures – Wade is currently working with Gloversville and Schoharie to prepare for new budget votes.
2. Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, and Resources for Serving All and 4. Empower Libraries with Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story – Eric referred back to Mary's updates on the new websites and also drew the board's attention to the posters Heather made for the Annual Meeting. Those posters went to the libraries so that community members can see what they are up to, and she hung copies in the board room for MVLS visitors to see.
3. Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services – Eric wanted to note the Summer Reading Program infographic in the board packets as an example of how successful our libraries can be when they collaborate. Susan asks if we have a comparison of how the number of participants in summer reading programs compare to the populations of the areas. Eric says he doesn't have those numbers readily available, but he can say that libraries are very successful at reaching preschool-aged patrons, but less successful at reaching older age groups. Susan also asks about the hiatus of the Tech Savvy programs and if we have a way to assess how successful it's been. The program started about 3 years ago, coordinated by Jennie Mosher in Schoharie. Earlier this year, Mary took over running the program, so MVLS has been coordinating it since then. These programs were always designed to be targeted to smaller audiences, but in many ways the digital literacy programs have taken over that audience. Katherine asked about headway with the Schoharie County Sherriff and her disappointment that we

haven't been able to get an answer out of them. Susan says she's going to contact them as a Schoharie County taxpayer and invites any other Schoharie County board members to join her. Eric says that this could be very helpful – Heather has been trying to get us in the door, but we need someone to open the door.

**Directors Council Report** Kim reports that she and Michael Burnett have been talking about how to get these directors council meetings back in the rotation. As of this morning, Michael has resigned as the chair of the directors council. Kim thinks this will be a great opportunity for newer directors to take on more of a role. Hopefully they'll be able to meet soon in person and select a new chair. Kim has been meeting with the Schoharie County directors about how they can work together on things like programming and grant applications. She also noted that Cobleskill trustees recently took a trip to Gloversville to talk with them about renovation and how they went about asking the community for more money as that is a situation Cobleskill is running into. She reports that this meeting was very helpful.

**Privilege of the Floor** Becky reports that St Johnsville received money for children's aid that they plan to use to create an outdoor children's reading area with gardens. Becky also wanted to share that she recently had a book published.

Chris shared that the Whitney Book Corner is participating in the 2022 Schenectady Illuminocity window decorating contest. This weekend is the big reveal! She'll send the link to vote out.

They also came in as an Honorable Mention in the Daily Gazette Best of the Best contest.

Katherine wants to mention that about a month ago Don from Cobleskill put on a presentation about banned books. He handed out the ALA's Freedom to Read Statement and the Library Bill of Rights. She thinks everyone should receive a copy of this when they join the Board. A copy of it can be found in the Trustee Handbook.

**Treasurer's Report** Eric presented the statements of Financial Position and Payment Schedules for September and October 2022.

**Statements of Financial Position:**

**MOTION:** To accept for audit the Statements of Financial Position for September and October 2022.

Wirkowski/Sokol. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**Payment Schedules:**

**MOTION:** To approve Payment Schedules #9 for \$118,837.68 and 10 for \$296,880.62. Davies/Zimmer. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**AUDIT AND FINANCE** We had some repairs done to our HVAC system and will need to adjust the Building Repairs budget to reflect that. We also need to move money from the Building & Equipment Fund to the regular MVLS budget to pay for the repairs we had done to the back wall over the summer as well as the new MVLS building sign.

**MOTION:** To increase the 2022 Building Repair budget line from \$9,000 to \$12,000 Hawkins/Mickle. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**MOTION:** To move \$8141 from the Building and Equipment Fund to pay for this summer’s building repairs and the new sign. Samuel/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays - None

**AWARDS** Awards were given out at the Annual Meeting. The committee also discussed making a couple of changes to the application process in the future. Next year, libraries will be part of the decision-making process by adding representatives from this year’s award-winners (who are ineligible next year) to the committee. The committee will also allow libraries to make a presentation for why they feel they deserve the award. Chris reports that Sylvia Curley was interviewed by the Daily Gazette about her Volunteer Service Award.

**NOMINATING** On behalf of the nominating committee, Chris presented the slate of nominees for Board Officers for 2023:

President	Mary VanPatten
Vice President	Katherine Hawkins
Treasurer	Sally Rappa
Secretary	Joanne Mickle
Internal Auditor	Rosemary Barger

**MOTION:** To accept the slate as presented. London/Davies. Ayes – 8. Nays – None. Abstentions – 1 (Hawkins).

Katherine would like to thank Jane for her leadership as President. We are going to miss her very much!

**PERSONNEL** In the Board packets, there are some changes to the Personnel Manual that the staff has requested. These largely consist of making moves to combine personal and vacation leave, as well as a few language changes to better reflect system practices.

**MOTION** To accept these changes to the Personnel Manual. Mickle/Samuel. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**JOINT AUTOMATION COUNCIL** In the Board packets, there are proposed JA Budget Amendments. The JA Council and SALS Board have already approved them.

**MOTION:** To approve the September 2022 Proposed JA Budget Amendments.  
Davies/Zimmer. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**FOUNDATION UPDATE** The Foundation's Annual Appeal is going on now and they will be announcing the year-end advocacy grants in January.

### **REORGANIZATIONAL BUSINESS**

**MOTION:** To approve NBT as the official bank of the Mohawk Valley Library System and the Daily Gazette as the official newspaper of the Mohawk Valley Library System.  
London/Sokol. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**MOTION:** To approve annual cash exposure limits: \$500,000 for MVLS and \$250,000 for the MVLS/SALS Joint Automation Project.  
Hawkins/Davies. Ayes - All. Nays – None.

**2023 MEETING SCHEDULE** The schedule is available at: <https://www.mvls.info/board-of-trustees/meeting-schedule/>

It reflects an every-other-month meeting schedule, with a tentative date for the Annual Meeting in the first week of October and a tentative Board Retreat in late April.

**MOTION:** To accept the schedule of meetings for 2023 as presented.  
Samuel/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**MOTION:** To move into Executive Session at 11:25am  
Witkowski/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The Business Meeting resumed at 11:40am

**MOTION:** To approve a 4.5% salary increase for all employees effective January 2023.  
London/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The Annual meeting was briefly discussed. We spent about \$1200 on it, and 64 people attended. Most people seemed happy with the informal format, and people seemed to especially like having it at a member library. Ideally, we'd move to a new member library every year, so we'd like to encourage folks to think about how it could work in their libraries.

**ADJOURNMENT** With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:42am.

### **Next Regular Board Meeting:**

Thursday, January 19, 2023

MVLS Service Center