

Mohawk Valley Library System  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
July 21, 2022

**MINUTES**

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

**EXCUSED:** Mary Salluzzo, Rebecca Sokol, Mary VanPatten

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

**Call to Order** President Jane Borrelli called the meeting to order at 9:30am

**Consideration of Minutes:** Minutes from the June 16, 2022 meeting were distributed.

**MOTION:** To accept the minutes from the June meeting as presented.  
Hawkins/Witkowski. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The **Director's Report** for June 2022 was distributed before the meeting. Eric wanted to update the Board on where MVLS stands with the goals that were set during our plan of service process. With respect to our first two goals, empowering libraries with the vision and knowledge for secure futures and empowering libraries with the skills, tools, and resources for serving all, he talked about the ARPA funding that went to CDLC and the Love Your Library funding that MVLS received. CDLC used some ARPA funds to hire consultants to help with library website accessibility. At MVLS, we used the New York State Love Your Library funding to purchase big-ticket items that can be loaned out to member libraries. For example, Heather bought giant foam dinosaur bones and Mary bought tablets and robots. Our third goal is to encourage collaboration between libraries, and this summer we are very excited about the Library Treasure Hunt that Nicole and Sarah at the Amsterdam Free Library organized. Nine of our libraries (Amsterdam, Fort Hunter, Fort Plain, Fonda, Gloversville, Johnstown, Middleburgh, Schenectady, and Schoharie) are involved, and patrons are encouraged to visit each participating library. So far, it sounds like it's been very successful – Heather has reported seeing several families with their treasure maps at different libraries. Our fourth goal, fostering communication between libraries and their communities, brings us back to CDLC and the ARPA funding – a portion of those funds have been used to advertise libraries throughout the MVLS, SALS, and UHLS service areas. Katherine has noticed more library promotion lately, and wonders why that is. Eric thinks it's the opportunity provided by these extra funding streams from ARPA and Love Your Library.

Deb asks why no one applied for the Foundation's advocacy grants this summer. Eric says that this can be the case some years. Libraries aren't always thinking about advocacy in the summer with so much else going on.

**Staff Update** The staff update this month is from myself, Kate Clingan, the Administrative Associate here at MVLS. In addition to taking the minutes and prepping the board packets for the board meetings, I deal with a lot of the day-to-day office administrative tasks, such as paying the bills for both MVLS and JA. I also take care of invoicing members for things like their monthly JA fees, as well as equipment and supplies ordered for them by JA or MVLS. I'm responsible for our semi-monthly payroll, as well as submitting our payroll information to the New York State Retirement system every month. I receive any checks that we get through delivery or the mail, and deposit them. I work closely with our finance manager, Joe Sherry, to keep track of things like bills, checks, invoices, and payroll in QuickBooks.

I also try to make myself available to help out any MVLS/member library staff that needs an extra set of hands or eyes, so I'll do things like use the die-cutter to cut out hundreds of fish for Schenectady, or test drive one of Mary's technology tutorials to make sure it is easy to understand and follow. Last summer, Heather and I went to Schoharie to help out with their summer reading program since they were short-staffed, and this year we've been trying to spread the love around to as many of our libraries as we can get to. This allows us to put in some much-needed facetime with a lot of the support staff at our libraries, and to get a real feel for the way our libraries function day-to-day. This year so far, we've helped out at Schoharie for their wildlife expert and fused glass programs, attended 2 cooking classes at Gloversville, and a wind-chime-making class in Johnstown.

**Directors Council Report** MVLS is working on re-starting the Directors Council. In many systems, the directors have a separate organization where they run their own meetings. We're trying to encourage this model.

**Privilege of the Floor** Deb mentioned an incident at SCP – an altercation between a patron and someone recording video in the library, which escalated to the point where police had to be called. The Schenectady Board has been discussing how to handle this moving forward, if certain areas should be designated as places video can or cannot be used. Eric says this relates to two competing things that libraries need to manage: a library is a public building where people have the right to record video, but library patrons have the right to privacy and to not be recorded while they are conducting business. The SCP Board is looking at the situation and trying to adjust their guidelines and bylaws. April suggests that whatever policy they come up with includes response guidelines for staff and training on de-escalation.

Katherine recommended a TED talk by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson called How to Find Joy in Climate Action. Katherine asks what MVLS is doing about climate action and what ideas the Board has for supporting that. Susan suggested delivery using electric vehicles, as well as tying environmental concerns into summer reading programs. Katherine suggested solar panels or planting trees. Speaking of trees, Rosemary has been contacting the Dept of Public Works about the dead tree on the adjacent property, but has yet to receive a response.

Sharon wanted to mention that Johnstown Public Library was a featured site on last week's episode of Who Do You Think You Are, NBC's genealogy show.

**Treasurer's Report** Eric presented the statements of Financial Position and Payment Schedule for June 2022. Rosemary asked about the different sources of funding that MVLS receives. Eric says we get four different types of aid: basic aid, outreach grants, local services support aid, and supplemental system aid.

**Statements of Financial Position:**

**MOTION:** To accept for audit the Statements of Financial Position for June 2022  
Barger/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**Payment Schedules:**

**MOTION:** To approve Payment Schedule #6 for \$105,780.32.  
Escobar/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**AUDIT AND FINANCE** Nothing to report.

**AWARDS** Award announcements will be going out within the week.

**BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT** We have an agreement now with Modern Domains to repair the back wall and they should be starting next week. We also have an estimate for signage on the building, which will say M.V.L.S. 858 and cost \$895.

**MOTION:** To accept the quote from K & R Signs for signage on the MVLS building.  
Davies/Witkowski. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**COMMUNICATIONS** Katherine contacted the literacy program in Cobleskill to set up a meeting that she's looking forward to. Heather has provided her with some job search toolkits and other info to share. She's also hoping to help Heather with forging a relationship with the Schoharie County Jail. Susan suggested approaching the Schoharie County Board of Supervisors to try and get their help with this.

**LIBRARY SERVICES** The committee will be meeting in September

**NOMINATING** The committee will have a meeting scheduled soon, likely in September.

**PERSONNEL** Nothing to report.

**JOINT AUTOMATION COUNCIL** JA Council met last week.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**FOUNDATION UPDATE** The Canajoharie Golf Tournament is this Monday the 25<sup>th</sup>. Carl Shepard would like to be appointed to another 3-year term on the Foundation Board.

**MOTION:** To reappoint Carl Shepard to a 3-year term on the Foundation Board.  
Escobar/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**OPEN MEETINGS LAW UPDATE** This continues to be a changing situation – Open Meetings Law Emergency Provisions were extended until August 13, which means virtual attendees count towards a quorum.

**ANNUAL MEETING & MVLS MEETING SCHEDULE DISCUSSION** We've been discussing changing the meeting time from 9:30am to later in the afternoon. This might encourage more participation from folks with a more traditional work schedule. Deb says she might be concerned with conflicts if we are meeting in the evenings. Others expressed concern about driving at night. April says her workplace is flexible enough that she's able to attend but a lot of people don't have that flexibility. Sharon suggests thinking about what we can do to make our Board better reflect the patrons that are using MVLS libraries, and consider if the timing of our meetings is limiting the type of person who is willing to be on the Board.

We've also been discussing setting a meeting schedule of every other month, plus a Board retreat in April and the Annual Meeting in October. Katherine is concerned that might not give the board enough time to discuss all the business we need to discuss. April suggests trying it out and if it turns out to be a problem, adjusting from there. Rosemary suggests trying to get younger folks on the committees for their input. Jane suggests trying this new meeting schedule, but keeping the time the same for now. Rosemary thinks we should make a bigger effort to involve more types of people in the proposed board retreat in April.

MVLS staff has been discussing ideas for the annual meeting. The timeframe is somewhere between the last week of September and the third week of October. Location-wise, we are hoping for one of our member libraries. Chris and Susan volunteered to be a part of the planning process.

**MOTION:** To authorize Chris and Susan to help MVLS staff plan the Annual Meeting Davis/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**BYLAWS & POLICY UPDATE** Eric included a link in his Director's Report to the Board Governance Policy and Committee Charges on the MVLS website. We will start reviewing these policies at board meetings, beginning in September.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** To adjourn the meeting at 10:55am.  
Escobar/Witkowski. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**Next Regular Board Meeting:**  
Thursday, September 15, 2022  
MVLS Service Center