

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 16, 2023

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rosemary Barger, April Davies, Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Mary VanPatten, Christine Witkowski, Kim Zimmer, and Eric Trahan, Director.

EXCUSED: Joanne Mickle, Mary Salluzzo, Haileab Samuel, Rebecca Sokol,

GUESTS: Charity Thorne (SCP), Sharon O'Brien, Kate Clingan, Wade Abbott

Call to Order President Mary VanPatten called the meeting to order at 9:32am.

Consideration of Minutes: Minutes from the November meeting were presented.

MOTION: To accept the minutes from the November 17, 2022 meeting as presented. London/Witkowski. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The **Director's Report** for January and February 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:

1. Empower Libraries with the Vision & Knowledge for Secure Futures – Eric has been helping the Sharon Springs library to move towards a school district vote. They ran into a problem with the local Wal-Mart Distribution Center, which currently has a PILOT agreement. He was able to get the issue addressed by the statewide library Ask-A-Lawyer service, and hopefully Sharon Springs will be able to work towards a solution.
2. Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, & Resources for Serving All – Mary Carrier has been running digital literacy training sessions in our libraries. Normally MVLS doesn't directly interact with library patrons, but this is something our libraries needed and have asked us for, and is a great natural fit for Mary, who has run workshops like these for years before working at MVLS.
3. Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services – We've been discussing improvements to Central Library services, working collaboratively with Schenectady and all the libraries to develop central library services that are more of use to all of our member libraries.
4. Empower Libraries with Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story – Wade has been working with several of our libraries to host community conversations where he meets with various groups within the community to enhance the connection between the communities and their libraries.

April asked about the cyber insurance that Eric mentioned in his report. Eric says we've gotten a quote for pricing and JA has been working on the requirements: quarterly security training, phishing tests, and multi-factor authentication. MVLS is piloting this and it has gone smoothly for us so far. There's been some concern about multi-factor authentication when it comes to the shared accounts we have, but we're working on a solution. It is important to know that our cyber insurance can't cover individual libraries, so they have to get their own insurance.

Staff Update Wade attended the meeting to talk about Advocacy Day 2023. Due to a snowstorm that day, the 15-20 attendees who planned to attend dwindled down to 3. While 3 of our 9 scheduled in-person meetings canceled, we were still able to meet with some staff and legislators to advocate for libraries. Due to redistricting, this was an especially important year for these meetings, as we really wanted to get in front of some of the representatives we haven't met with before. The focus of these meetings for the most part was on the budget, although we also advocated for a bill allowing some association libraries to join the state retirement system. The Governor's Budget cut library operating and construction aid, so we were advocating for the Assembly and Senate to increase the numbers when they negotiate with the Governor for the final budget. The One-House Budgets from both houses have been released and they've both increased those aid amounts. Hopefully this will result in a state budget that looks better for libraries. Next steps: Since it's more important than ever to connect libraries to their new representatives, Wade is going to work on setting up meetings between the libraries and their representatives, and looking for opportunities to get representatives visiting our libraries.

Directors Council Report Kim reported that the directors met in January. This meeting was spent mostly getting to know each other better (since there have been several new directors since they last met in person pre-Covid) and planning future meetings. Their March meeting was rescheduled due to snow, and they plan to meet next in April.

Privilege of the Floor Susan reports that Middleburgh library held a homeschool science fair for their population of homeschool students. One of the staff members at the Sharon Springs library knitted hats for all the members of their preschool group. Sharon Springs also hosted Run by Dogs for an event where children 2-10 got to try a brief sled dog ride. Chris reports that the SCPL Friends are being awarded a 2023 Good News Award from the Chamber of Schenectady County.

Kim reports that next week, CDLC's 10 Counties, 10 Libraries tour is coming to Cobleskill to tour SUNY Cobleskill's library. They'll be stopping by The Community Library beforehand.

Treasurer's Report Eric presented the statements of Financial Position and Payment Schedules for November and December of 2022 and January and February of 2023.

Statements of Financial Position:

MOTION: To accept for audit the Statements of Financial Position for November & December 2022 and January & February 2023.
Barger/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Payment Schedules:

MOTION: To approve 2022 Payment Schedules #11 for \$148,427.71 and #12 for \$213,928.87 and 2023 Payment Schedules #1 for \$126,816.14 and #2 for \$147,517.99
Davies/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

EXECUTIVE Since our January board meeting was canceled, the Executive Committee met on January 27th to take care of a few things that couldn't wait until March. As such, there is a consent agenda that must be approved by the board.

The committee voted to:

1. Approve the proposed JA Fees for 2024, which were increased by 3%, bringing the total fee budget for 2024 to \$708,650.
2. Appoint Terry Pavoldi to a 3-year term on the JA Council beginning 1/1/2023 and to appoint Haileab Samuel to the JA Council as the MVLS Board representative.
3. Approve the Library Advocacy grants in the amounts of: \$750 to the Canajoharie Library, \$2375 to The Community Library, \$2000 to the Gloversville Public Library, and \$2375 to the Schoharie Free Library.
4. Approve the Public Services Consultant job description.

MOTION To approve the above actions taken by the Executive Committee.
Witkowski/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

AUDIT AND FINANCE Rosemary asks if we are going to use the same auditor next year or if we are considering looking elsewhere. Eric says that we're looking at multiple places and he welcomes any recommendations.

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT Our phone system got taken out by a power outage. We are collecting proposals for a new VOIP phone system.

JOINT AUTOMATION COUNCIL Met on March 8th to discuss the cyber insurance Eric reported above.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

BYLAWS

Changes proposed Changes to the MVLS Bylaws that we discussed at the September and November meetings were in the board packets from the January meeting.

MOTION To accept these bylaws changes as outlined in January's board packets.
Hawkins/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

ADDITIONAL GOVERNANCE POLICY AMENDMENTS Our Board Governance Policy was updated to accurately reflect the new NYS Public Library Minimum Standards. The Committee Charges page was updated to remove the Communications Committee.

MOTION To accept the updates to the General Board Governance Policy as outlined in January's board packets.
Hawkins/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

PUBLIC SERVICES CONSULTANT The job was posted, and we had 8 applicants. We have 2 interviews scheduled for next week. If Eric is ready to hire someone after these interviews, he'd like to schedule an executive committee meeting in order to confirm the appointment.

NEW BUSINESS

STATE ANNUAL REPORT

MOTION To note that the board reviewed and approved the 2022 state annual report.
Davies/Zimmer. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

BOARD RETREAT PLANNING So far, the tentative plan for our board retreat is a late afternoon, 2-part event on Wednesday May 3. This will satisfy the state's requirement for 2 hours of trustee training per year. Elissa Kane will come in to facilitate a session with trustees about planning, and Erica Freudenberger will do a virtual presentation on helping libraries recover use rates post-Covid. Eric asked how people feel about the timing with respect to which session should come first. Elissa's planning session is more geared to trustees while Erica's use presentation is more aimed at staff and member library trustees. The consensus seems to be to do Erica's presentation first and Elissa's planning session second. The Library Services Committee will meet to iron out some more of the details.

NEW ATTORNEY, ETC Our longtime attorney, Kathryn McCary, is retiring. She has given us a couple of recommendations for new attorneys. We have relationships with other attorneys who are experts in libraries, but we like to have somebody local who is easier to get ahold of. We are hopeful that one of the recommendations pans out.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:39am.

Next Regular Board Meeting:

Thursday, May 18, 2023

MVLS Service Center