

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

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rosemary Barger, April Davies, Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Joanne Mickle, Haileab Samuel (virtual), Rebecca Sokol, Mary VanPatten, Christine Witkowski, Kim Zimmer, and Eric Trahan, Director.

EXCUSED: Mary Salluzzo

GUESTS: Sharon O'Brien, Kate Clingan, Wade Abbott, Mary Carrier

Call to Order President Mary VanPatten called the meeting to order at 9:35am

Budget Hearing Eric presented the 2024 Proposed Budget, which is in the board packets. As he discussed in the Director's Report, the 2024 budget is largely a continuation of the budgets we've had for the past few years. The few changes that we see from 2023 are largely one-time grants and things that we don't expect to see in 2024 as well. The biggest change in the expenses is due to the changes in the timing of State Aid that we saw in 2023. We'll also have a significant increase in interest now that we've moved funds into our NYLAF account, which has a higher interest rate than our bank accounts.

Consent Agenda: Consideration of September and October Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Statements of Financial Position for September and October, Payment Schedules #9 for \$280,135.20 and #10 for \$119,351.41.

MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda.
Witkowski/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To accept the proposed 2024 MVLS Budget.
Barger/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Annual Meeting Comments Eric was very pleased with how the meeting went, and the ample opportunity it provided to talk with library staffers and trustees. Mary was disappointed by the lack of staff members from Schenectady there. We received a thank-you note from Jean LaPorta who won the Trustee Award. Chris was very pleased with the awards that were given out. Having the meeting at our libraries has been a success so far, and the Fort Hunter Free Library is already lobbying to host next year. Discussion ensued about how to increase participation in future years. Kim commented that her employees were paid as part of their workday to attend, and that may not be the case for all of the libraries. Maybe we should ask some of the staffers/directors why folks didn't attend – Kim can ask at the Directors Council meeting next week.

Policy Update – Library Collections Policies Updates to the Library Collections Policy are in the board packets.

MOTION: To approve the updates to the Library Collections Policy.

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

MVLS Trustees: Proposed Bylaws Amendments After discussing this with the staff and with the Executive Committee, Eric has presented these Amendments to the MVLS Bylaws, which would be voted on at the January meeting. The number of MVLS Board members would be reduced from thirteen to nine, with eight members representing the four counties, plus a Directors Council representative.

Review Central Library Aid Plan The proposed Central Library Aid Budget is in the board packets. This is another item that would be acted on at the January meeting.

Reorganizational Business - Official bank and newspaper

MOTION: To approve NBT Bank as the official bank of MVLS and the Daily Gazette as the official newspaper of MVLS.

Davies/Witkowski. Ayes – 8. Nays – None. Abstentions – 1 (Mickle). Motion Passes.

Cash Exposure Limits

MOTION: To approve annual cash exposure limits: \$250,000 for MVLS and \$250,000 for the MVLS/SALS Joint Automation Project.

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

2023 MEETING SCHEDULE The schedule is available at: <https://www.mvls.info/meeting-schedule/> It reflects an every-other-month meeting schedule, with tentative dates for the Spring Symposium in late April/early May and the Annual Meeting in October. Chris mentioned that we could consider moving the meetings to a more accessible time to increase board participation.

MOTION: To accept the schedule of meetings for 2024 as presented.

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

Election/Appointment of Officers 2024 Chris presented the slate of officers for 2024:

President: Mary VanPatten

Vice President: Katherine Hawkins

Secretary: Susan London

Finance Officer: Rosemary Barger

Treasurer: Sally Rappa (not a trustee)

Executive Committee Member-At-Large: Chris Witkowski

Mary asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

MOTION: To accept the slate of officers for 2024 as presented.

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

The **Director's Report** for September and October 2023 was distributed before the meeting. Eric organized the report around 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 St Johnsville and Northville libraries with director searches, as both Dawn Lamphere and Michael Burnett will be retiring at the end of the year. Helen Thomas of the Sharon Springs Free Library has also submitted her resignation. Eric is pleased to report that Sharon Springs also passed their budget vote.
2. **Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, & Resources for Serving All** Mary Carrier has been going out into the community to teach digital literacy at senior centers in our service area. Community partners are so important when it comes to increasing support for libraries, so these connections that Mary has been making are essential.
3. **Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services** One method of collaboration that we don't always talk about is resource-sharing. With our new plans for using Central Library funding, we hope to better provide resources that benefit all of our libraries.
4. **Empower Libraries for Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story** Eric has begun sending out regular Director's Update emails to member library trustees. These updates will help to provide trustees with the information they need to be more active and involved in their libraries.

Eric reports that at NYLA's annual conference this year, they discussed increasing their advocacy with the governor's office. MVLS will be looking to increase public advocacy, so expect to receive emails from NYLA about actions you can take. New York State failed Federal Maintenance of Effort, proving that it does not adequately fund its libraries, so we need to work to change that.

Directors Council Report Kim reports that the directors will be meeting on Monday 11/20 in Fort Plain.

Foundation The Foundation's Annual Appeal is going on now.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT Katherine notes that caulking needs to be done on the back wall baseboards. Susan commented that the driveway is getting a bit rutted. Rosemary mentioned the broken stall in the ladies' room.

MOTION: To get the toilet fixed in the ladies' room.

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

Privilege of the Floor: Chris announced that the Friends of SCPL book stores will be having a 50% off sale next week from Friday-Sunday.

Mary Saluzzo sent in her resignation from the board.

MOTION: To accept with regret Mary Salluzzo's resignation from the MVLS Board of Trustees.

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

This is also Joanne Mickle's last meeting. Joanne says she has enjoyed her time on the board and has loved everyone she's been able to meet through the board. We have been honored to be able to work with her over the years and we will miss her!

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session at 11:23am.
Witkowski/Mickle. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The board meeting resumed at 11:54am

MOTION: To approve a 4% salary increase for all employees beginning January 2024.
Witkowski/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To remove "subject to annual board approval" from the MVLS Personnel Manual section on summer hours.
Davies/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays -None.

MOTION: To update the Technology and Growth Consultant (previously the Technology and Growth Specialist) title and job description.
Hawkins/Sokol. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To increase the Technology and Growth Consultant salary to reflect the updated position.
Hawkins/Witkowski. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To update the Office Administrator (previously the Administrative Associate) title and job description.
Hawkins/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To increase the Office Administrator salary to reflect the updated position.
Witkowski/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To approve the 20-year longevity pay increase for Sharon O'Brien
Davies/Barger. Ayes – 8. Nays – 1 (London). Motion Passes.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:59am.

Next Board Meeting:

9:30am, Thursday, January 18, 2024.

MVLS Service Center