

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 18, 2024

MINUTES

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

EXCUSED: Haileab Samuel, Rebecca Sokol,

GUESTS: Sharon O'Brien, Kate Clingan, Wade Abbott, Mary Carrier, Doug Bixler (SCP), Valerie Acklin (GLV), Beth DeMidio (SCP), Charity Thorne (SCP), Devon Hedges (SCP).

Call to Order President Mary VanPatten called the meeting to order at 9:33am.

Consent Agenda: Consideration of November Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Statements of Financial Position for November and December, Payment Schedules #11 for \$172,709.52 and #12 for \$118,911.41.

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

Bylaws Amendments – Number of Trustees Eric presented these Amendments to the MVLS Bylaws, which we discussed at the November 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.

MOTION: To approve the Bylaws Amendment.
Davies/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The board must also pass a resolution to acknowledge that all current MVLS trustees will be able to keep their seats until their terms expire or they resign. While we don't have a Fulton County trustee at this time, the next open trustee spot will be filled with a Fulton County trustee. Currently, the board is made up of 3 Schenectady County trustees, 3 Schoharie County trustees, 2 Montgomery County trustees, and 1 Director's Council representative.

MOTION To accept the following resolution: "Notwithstanding the geographic distribution of MVLS trustees as of January 2024, all nine current MVLS trustees will continue their terms until the trustee is term-limited or the trustee resigns or chooses not to serve. When trustee positions become vacant, the MVLS trustee geographic distribution outlined in Article III Section 1 of the amended MVLS Bylaws will dictate the selection of new MVLS trustees."
Hawkins/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Central Library Aid Plan This is a formal acceptance of the Central Library Aid Plan that was discussed at the November meeting.

MOTION: To approve the new Central Library Aid Plan.

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

Joint Automation Business:

2025 Fees Each January we approve the JA Fees for the following year. 2025 fees reflect a 3.5% increase in fees from 2024, bringing the total JA fee budget to \$733,453. Kim says that the school districts are asking for library budget requests earlier, so it would be helpful if the process of determining JA fees could move earlier in the year.

MOTION To approve the 3.5% increase, bringing the JA fee budget to \$733,453, and that the formula used to determine each library's share will come from 2023 data.

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

SCPL IT Proposal Schenectady County IT is interested in taking over hosting the SCPL domain from JA. There is a meeting scheduled next week between JA, MVLS, and SCP to discuss how to move forward with these proposals. The county and library would like more control over their network and PCs, and that needs to be balanced with JA's need to ensure security. Kim asks why it's a problem for SCP to have their own IT staff if other libraries do. Mary says that it wouldn't be library staff, it would be county staff. Eric says that that's part of the concern that needs to be discussed next week.

Kim brought up issues with emails not getting through JA's spam filter and with sending emails to her board members with Spectrum email addresses. Eric clarifies that some of these issues go beyond what JA or anyone can do (for example, Spectrum blocked all .info email addresses which caused problems last year).

Appoint Beth DeMidio to JA Council Devon Hedges is coming off of JA Council, and SCP would like Beth DeMidio to fill his seat.

MOTION To appoint Beth DeMidio to the JA Council.

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

Advocacy Wade attended the meeting virtually to talk about Advocacy Day 2024. In the board packets is a flyer with NYLA's Advocacy Priorities. Wade has scheduled meetings with all of our representatives for Advocacy Day this year on February 7th. Wade encourages lots of participation from all of our libraries, by staff, trustees, and patrons. Eric reported good news, that the Governor's Budget included a (slight) increase in library funding for the first time in a long time. Kim asks about the possibility of getting representatives into libraries, especially since they're up for re-election this year. Wade thinks that is a great idea and encourages folks to use Advocacy Day as the opportunity to invite them to your libraries.

Library Advocacy Grants Three libraries applied for Advocacy grants in the current round: Amsterdam applied for a project to build their young adult audience, Canajoharie applied to improve marketing materials and build their hotspot program, and Cobleskill applied to do budget postcard mailing. The total requested was \$5893, which is outside of the Foundation's budget, so Eric proposes we fund all the proposals at 75%: Amsterdam would receive \$1500, Cobleskill would receive \$1500, and Canajoharie would receive \$1420.

MOTION: To approve the Advocacy grants at the amounts above for a total of \$4420 Davies/Witkowski. Ayes – six. Nays – None. Abstentions – one (Zimmer).

Committee Assignments and Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosures

The Committee list is on the website at <https://www.mvls.info/board-committees/>. Conflict of Interest forms will need to be filled out for 2024 and returned to either Eric or Kate.

The **Director's Report** for November and December 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** Wade has been working with Gloversville to develop a new Plan of Service and is happy to help any library with theirs or with any community engagement needs.
2. **Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, & Resources for Serving All** This is what our goal is for the new Central Library Plan: to provide more resources that benefit everyone in our system.
3. **Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services** Mary and Beth are going out into the community, working with new organizations, and creating new community partnerships. They are modeling what collaboration can look like for our libraries.
4. **Empower Libraries for Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story** We're trying to increase communication between MVLS and the member libraries with tools like the MVLS Newsletter and Eric's Director's Updates.

DIRECTOR'S COUNCIL Meetings are moving to quarterly – monthly meetings weren't successful with how busy the directors are. With several new directors starting this year, it's more important than ever to get together.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT Katherine reports that the second toilet in the ladies' room is fixed. She found some separation in the concrete blocks behind the toilet that she caulked. Her next project is to correct the corner in the parking lot that trucks drive over by filling it with gravel. She's also looking into a new hot water heater for the building.

Privilege of the Floor: Rosemary wonders if there's a way to get donations from companies like streaming services. April invites everyone to a mac 'n cheese cookoff at the SUNY Cobleskill library on Valentine's Day. Their 50th Anniversary Library Cookbook also came out this past fall and copies are still available. Chris shares that the Schenectady Friends' winter book sale is February 3rd and 4th in the McChesney room of the Central Branch. In research for her book, Katherine discovered the story of a woman who was born a slave and lived to be 116.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:16am.

Next Board Meeting:

9:30am, Thursday, March 21, 2024.

MVLS Service Center