

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
September 19, 2024

MINUTES

PRESENT: Bill Bonner, April Davies, Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Mary VanPatten, Kim Zimmer, and Eric Trahan, Director.

EXCUSED: Haileab Samuel, Chris Witkowski

GUESTS (IN-PERSON): Kate Clingan, Nicole Hemsley (AMS), Leah Fitzgerald (AMS), Charity Thorne (SCP), Madelyn Thorne (SCP), Wade Abbott

GUESTS (VIRTUAL): Beth Rienti, Pat Gosda, Sharon O'Brien, Diane Empie (STJ), Maria Cancro (CAN), Whitney Hubbard (FTP), Erica Wing (JOH)

Call to Order President Mary VanPatten called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

Consent Agenda: Consideration of July Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Statements of Financial Position for July and August, Payment Schedules #7 for \$179,203.07 and #8 for \$129,137.70

Kim asks about how the interest from the NYLAF is being spent. Eric says it's general income. She asks if there would be a way to create another account for Central Library money, so that the interest that account accrues would go into Central Library money. Eric says right now we have one NYLAF account for MVLS and one for JA, but we could certainly look at creating another for the Central Library money when we get it.

MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda.

Davies/London. Ayes – 5. Nays – None. Abstentions – 1 (Bonner).

Nominations Jane Borrelli, who was on our board from 2011-2022, is interested in representing Fulton County on the MVLS Board, filling the remainder of Becky Sokol's term.

MOTION To appoint Jane Borrelli to a seat on the board, with a term ending 12/31/2026 Hawkins/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Public Library Construction Grants The Library Services Committee met on Tuesday Sept 16th to discuss the grant applications and ask questions of the applicants. Seven libraries submitted applications. The proposal that the committee recommends has each project funded at 71.1% of project cost – this puts us in a good place where if there is more money available in a few months, we may be able to fund things more.

This would fund (for a total of \$1,145,377):

Amsterdam Free Library at \$454,902

The Community Library, Cobleskill at \$215,064

Gloversville Public Library at \$93,201

Johnstown Public Library at \$224,307

Northville Public Library at \$63,631
Schoharie Free Library at \$89,581
Sharon Springs Free Library at \$4,692

MOTION To fund the Construction Grants in the amounts indicated above.
Bonner/Davies. Ayes – 5. Nays – None. Abstentions – 1 (Zimmer).

Dream & Do Grants These grants come from the Foundation. The total requested is \$6500.

MOTION To fund \$6500 for Dream & Do Grants
London/Bonner. Ayes – 5. Nays – None. Abstentions – 1 (Zimmer).

Central Library Services Plan and Related Approvals This is the official motion to change the Central Library from SCP to AMS. This information goes to the State in October, so that they can approve it to be effective January 1.

Central Library Services Plan 2025 – 2026 Bill asks about why it goes right from Element 1 to Element 3. Element 2 refers to “Special Client Groups” and isn’t relevant to the Central Library. Kim says many of the directors asked her that question as well. These are the only two of the State’s elements that are relevant to the Central Library issue. Eric will add language to this that mentions the inapplicable elements to help with confusion.

MOTION To approve the changes to the Central Library Services Plan 2025 – 2026.
Davies/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

State Plan of Service 2022-2026 This has an amendment in the **Integrated Library System** section, changing the language to say “participating” libraries. Kim says that the language here is confusing, and should clarify that “system” refers to the ILS and not the library system itself. She’d also like to remove the word “all” from the next sentence, since libraries do not use the ILS for all collections management. Kim asked if there were any other sections of the Plan of Service that needed to be amended, and Eric says that DLD directed him to change only these sections.

MOTION To approve the changes to the State Plan of Service with these adjustments.
Bonner/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Free Direct Access Plan The only change here is where Schenectady was mentioned as the Central Library. This changes the language to “one-county library” to identify Schenectady. Kim would like to remove the “Many” from the second paragraph under #1, since all MVLS libraries will provide a library card to residents of the MVLS service area.
Kim also mentions that the second to last page mentions this document being discussed at Directors Council and it hasn’t been. She is not comfortable voting on this until Directors have had a chance to weigh in. There is a director’s meeting next week, so this can be discussed then and then be voted on at the November MVLS board meeting.

JA 2025 Proposed Budget The JA Council looked at this at their meeting last week, but they didn’t have a quorum, so they did not vote on it. It goes to the MVLS and SALS boards now and will be voted on by the Council at the November JA Council meeting. Susan asks about the

Hardware Maintenance line going from nothing spent in 2023 to \$11,000 estimated in 2025. Eric says there are a lot of maintenance subscriptions that renew on a 5-year basis. Kim asks how this budget will affect her as a director. Eric says that 2025 fees have already been decided on at the end of 2023. There will be a meeting to discuss 2026 fees in December. Bill notes that this is a deficit budget, and asks how we prevent that from happening every year. Eric says that 2025 will be an experimental year, with SCP leaving JA, and we don't yet know how these expense lines will be impacted by this. JA has a healthy fund balance currently, so they do have the ability to have an experimental year. Discussion ensued about the future of JA's budget.

MOTION To move into Executive Session at 10:32am to meet with MVLS's lawyer, Cole Adams, to discuss a pending legal matter.

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

The **regular board meeting** resumed at 12:29pm.

Staff Update Wade Abbott attended the meeting to discuss the donation made to Schoharie County Libraries by Fenimore Asset Management. Fenimore is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, and they're kicking off the celebration by donating to five categories in the community: Arts, Education, Healthcare, Human Services, and Youth Development. The Schoharie County Libraries are receiving part of the Education donation. There was a ceremony honoring the recipients at Proctors last week. Fenimore has asked us not to disclose the amounts we've received or the other recipients, but they'll be releasing more information on the grants soon.

JA 2025 Proposed Budget continued

MOTION To accept the JA 2025 Proposed Budget.

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

CDLC Board Representative Eric recommends that Mary Carrier be the MVLS representative on the CDLC Board.

MOTION To appoint Mary Carrier as the MVLS representative on the CDLC Board

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

Summer Survey Follow-up: Eric posted the results of the Post-Symposium Survey on the MVLS website here: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Post-Symposium-Survey-Results-July-2024.pdf>. Eric asks how the board would like to proceed with this information.

April suggests bringing in a consultant to look at the survey and answers. Susan suggests Elissa Kane. Eric says there is a directors meeting next week where he can follow up with directors on it. He also will contact Elissa to get her thoughts on it.

JA/SCPL Withdrawal Eric says that during executive session, they discussed their response to the recent letter from the SCPL board to the MVLS Board. He also reports that he had a good meeting with Haileab Samuel, SCP director Charity Thorne, and SCP board president Madelyn Thorne earlier this week. Madelyn attended the board meeting to discuss this meeting on Monday. Madelyn says this has been a rough transition so far. At the meeting on Monday, they came up with a few items that need to be discussed and resolved. Madelyn has asked some of

the trustees of SCPL to form an ad-hoc committee to discuss these issues and work with MVLS. They want to focus on making sure that as many patrons as possible have as much access as possible to everything. She says that the lines between JA and MVLS are murky, and they intend to stay a part of MVLS and enjoy all of the services that MVLS provides. Katherine says that she appreciated the letter from the SCPL board. Madelyn says that at no point did SCPL want to remove access from their fellow MVLS libraries, and she would like to get back on the same page and work together. Madelyn also announced that SCPL has been named as one of Dolly Parton's Imagination Libraries.

Director's Report The Director's Report is in the board packets. Eric asked if anyone had any questions. Susan asked if we had any data on how many people participated in the MVLS-GO project. We gave out over 1350 trading cards, but there's no way of knowing how many people collected them. Susan also asks about the automation project at the Schenectady County Jail. Sharon and Beth had a meeting there last week, so the project is in preliminary stages. Susan asks about the conference scholarships offered to members and whether anyone took MVLS up on that. No one did for the Association of Small and Rural Libraries conference, but MVLS will continue to offer these scholarships.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

NOMINATING The November meeting is when we will be electing officers. The Nominating Committee currently has only one member, Chris Witkowski. Eric asks if anyone else would be able to join that committee. With no volunteers, it will be up to Chris and Mary VanPatten to develop a slate of officers.

Privilege of the Floor: Susan would like it if we did introductions at the beginning of the meetings. Madelyn wanted to clarify that she and Charity are not related, their shared last name is a coincidence. April says the SUNY Cobleskill Chili Cookoff is October 23rd.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:16pm.

Next Regular Board Meeting:

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

MVLS Service Center