

Mohawk Valley Library System  
**Annual Meeting**  
**October 2, 2024**

**MINUTES**

**MVLS Trustees:** Katherine Hawkins, Mary VanPatten, Kim Zimmer, Chris Witkowski

**MVLS Staff:** Wade Abbott, Mary Carrier, Kate Clingan, Beth Rienti, Eric Trahan

**Library Trustees, Library Directors and Staff, and Friends**

**Fulton County**

**Gloversville** Darla Barry, Barbara Madonna, Greg Niforos, Nicole Hauser, Sally Ostrander, Shari Peto, Charlotte Will

**Northville** Alisha Rivera-Holmes, John Knapp, Diane Dillenbeck

**Montgomery County**

**Amsterdam** John Naple, Tom Twente, Dan Gentile, Nicole Hemsley, Leah Fitzgerald, Deborah Marek, Karen Shaffer, Legend Williams, Matthew Young

**Canajoharie** Maria Cancro

**Fort Hunter** Judi Steiger, Letah Graff, Beverly Osborne, Beth Osborne, Susan Nacco, Lynn Otto, Glenda Eager

**Fort Plain** Whitney Hubbard, Jacob Trahan, Sam Zimmerman, Christina Zimmerman

**Fonda** Linda Bell, Pat Galeazza, Carol Stuff, Gretchen Subik, Lynn Richardson

**St. Johnsville** Diane Empie

**Schenectady County**

Charity Thorne, Beth DeMidio, Devon Hedges, Lynn Vincent, David Fronk, Mary VanPatten, Tina Versaci, Carmel Patrick, Jude McQueen, Duane VanPatten

**Schoharie County**

**Cobleskill** Courtney Little, Katherine Hawkins, Kim Zimmer, Becky Leggieri, Amy Mele, David Sampson

**Middleburgh** Terry Pavoldi, Rebecca Young, Diane Stewart, Marilyn Wyman

**Sharon Springs**

Jeanne Irwin, Meghan Keaney, Margaret Kindling, Kerry Parsons

**Schoharie**

Yvonne Keller-Baker

Director Eric Trahan welcomed everyone to the sixty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Mohawk Valley Library System. He thanked everyone all for coming here to celebrate libraries and taking the chance to get to know one another better. It's become a tradition to have these annual meetings in our libraries (we'd love to have it at your library!) and tonight we are at the Fort Hunter Free Library. Eric introduced Beverly Osborne, the President of the Fort Hunter Free Library Board. Beverly welcomed everyone and invited us all to take a look at the library itself. She thanked Letah for creating the centerpieces for the tables with pumpkins donated from Garden Bug, a local store. The oldest person at each table can take the centerpiece home!

As this meeting is a celebration of libraries, there are lots of ways to honor libraries tonight. On each table is a copy of the Annual Meeting report, which talks about what MVLS libraries have done this year. On the walls are the posters that each library helped us make this year. We also celebrate our libraries with the Awards that we give out at the Annual Meeting. Eric encourages everyone to network after the meeting, to get to know each other and make connections. The Annual Meeting is also a learning opportunity, and Mary Carrier will be talking about Elevator Speeches later on in the meeting.

Eric wanted to discuss the four goals that MVLS set during our planning process last year:

1. MVLS Empowers Libraries with the Vision & Knowledge for Secure Futures: Eric is always talking about the importance of going to your community for an annual budget vote. This year, our libraries added \$240,000 to their budgets with annual budget votes!
2. MVLS Empowers Libraries with the Skills, Tools, & Resources for Serving All: This year, Beth Rienti put together Memory Care kits that are available for you to take out and use with your patrons.
3. MVLS Empowers Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Service: Collaboration is key! This summer, we had another great collaborative program with the MVLS-GO trading cards. A binder of those cards can be seen at the back wall by the posters.
4. MVLS Empowers Libraries with Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story: We'll be awarding prizes to each library who has a brave soul willing to give their Elevator Speech tonight, and practice telling their library's story with us.

Eric then introduced MVLS Staff, MVLS board members, member libraries directors, member library board members, and member library staff. It is an honor to be here with you all tonight!

MVLS traditionally gives out three awards at the MVLS Annual Meeting. The first is the Harold & Junice Wusterbarth Volunteer Service Award, which honors a volunteer or trustee. This year, we didn't receive any nominations for this award which is a great reminder to nominate your volunteers for this award in the future.

The second award traditionally given out is the Library Recognition Award, which honors a library program. This year there were also no nominations for this award.

Two years ago, we established our third MVLS Award, the Outstanding Library Staff Award, which honors a staff member at an MVLS member library for outstanding efforts and/or results in providing library service to community members. This year, we have two staff members who are receiving this award. The MVLS Outstanding Library Staff award is awarded to Courtney Little from The Community Library, Cobleskill and Samantha Zimmerman from the Fort Plain Free Library.

Kim Zimmer of The Community Library spoke about her outstanding staff member, Courtney Little. Courtney joined the team in 2022 as the Library Assistant for Youth Services. She comes from a museum educator background, and shortly after joining the library it was clear that she was going to turn the youth program around. She reorganized the children's space, worked to broaden teen engagement efforts with new resources and programming, and worked with staff to create new arts and crafts programs. Her outreach efforts with school and community organizations have resulted in impressive increases in program attendance. As if all this wasn't enough, she enrolled in the Information Sciences graduate program at SUNY and is well on her way to pursuing her library degree. Thank you for all you do, Courtney!

Whitney Hubbard from the Fort Plain Free Library spoke about her outstanding staff member, Sam Zimmerman. The staff of the Fort Plain Free Library work together as a strong team, and they wanted to nominate Sam not just because of what she's done this year, but for the immense amount of effort and drive she has put in to everything she does since joining the library staff. They first met Sam when she painted a square on Fort Plain's community mural several years ago. Years later, she started to volunteer at the library, where she went about making herself indispensable. From a very small part-time position, she's now a full-time staff member. She's been involved in many programs, including her incredibly popular Monday music lessons, a composer's guild, and playing the ukulele at story-time every week. A long time ago, she started talking about how fun it would be to create library-related trading cards, and last spring, she set out making a set of trading cards for the library's summer reading program. This ended up being expanded to the entire MVLS-GO trading card initiative. Creating trading cards for all 14 libraries was a tall order, and she did it without fear. Thank you for all you do, Sam!

Mary Carrier spoke to remind folks about the importance of having an "elevator speech" about your library to spread the word about how important libraries are in our communities. Mary thinks it's wonderful that we all have the ability to talk about our libraries with passion. She invited everyone present to give their elevator pitch to the library. Everyone who does so will receive a prize for their library. Presenting their library elevator pitches tonight were:

Alisha Rivera-Holmes from the Northville Public Library.

John Naple from the Amsterdam Free Library.

Beverly Osborne from the Fort Hunter Free Library.

Meghan Keaney from the Sharon Springs Free Library.

Becky Leggieri from The Community Library.

Barbara Madonna from the Gloversville Public Library.

Marilyn Wyman from the Middleburgh Library.

Carmel Patrick from the Schenectady County Public Library.

Linda Bell from the Frothingham Free Library.

Mary also took a moment to thank Fort Hunter for hosting us tonight and for all their help setting up.

**Business Meeting:**

MVLS Board President Mary VanPatten called the business meeting to order at 6:45pm. The MVLS Board has one trustee seat that is opening at the end of 2024, as Chris Witkowski of Schenectady County will not be seeking another term on the Board. This is a 5-year term running from 1/1/25 – 12/31/2029. The MVLS Nominating committee nominates Karen Bradley from Schenectady County. From the floor, Tina Versaci would like to nominate David Fronk of the Schenectady County Public Library. Fronk's nomination is seconded by Carmel Patrick. Trustees and Directors of MVLS Member Libraries are eligible to vote for the trustee seat. The MVLS Library directors would like to take a moment to discuss this amongst themselves. After lengthy discussions, their decision was to table the vote until the November meeting of the MVLS Board. A trustee commented that we would have to adjust the normal meeting time in order to accommodate the member library trustees and directors. All MVLS member library trustees will be invited to participate.

**MOTION** To table the vote until the next MVLS Board meeting in November.

Twente/Keller-Baker. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**ADJOURNMENT** With that, the Business meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm.

**Next Regular Board Meeting:**

Thursday, November 21, 2023, 9:30am

MVLS Service Center