

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
November 21, 2024

MINUTES

PRESENT: Bill Bonner, Jane Borrelli, April Davies, Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Mary VanPatten, Christine Witkowski, Kim Zimmer, and Eric Trahan, Director

EXCUSED: Haileab Samuel

GUESTS (in-person): Kate Clingan, Madelyn Thorne (SCP), Charity Thorne (SCP)

GUESTS (Virtual): Maria Cancro (CAN), Diane Empie (STJ), Nicole Hemsley (AMS), Erica Wing (JOH), Terry Pavoldi (MID)

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

Budget Hearing Eric presented the 2025 Proposed Budget, which is in the board packets. Some of the changes that we see from 2024 are related to SCP leaving JA, which changes the fees that MVLS owes to JA, as well as those received from MVLS members. The changes in the Library Materials budget are related to the InDemand collection – 2024's budget was a rough estimate of what we'd spend, the plan for 2025 is closer to what has actually been spent in 2024. Kim asked about the rotating collections budget, which is currently at \$2500. Discussion ensued about reducing that budget line to \$500. The decision was made to take action on the budget after Executive Session.

Consent Agenda: Consideration of September and October Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Statements of Financial Position for September and October, Payment Schedules #9 for \$280,777.62 and #10 for \$131,721.09. Susan asked about 5290 Other Library Materials – this is items for the Kits that MVLS creates and supplies to members. Bill suggests renaming that category to be more descriptive.

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

Audit 2023 and 990 Our accountants T.M. Byxbee have submitted the 990 for 2023. Joe Sherry is going over the accountants' report, and once that has been checked the accountant will present it to the board, likely at the January meeting.

Bylaws Amendment and plan for further study Our bylaws must be amended to comply with State Education law. The current bylaws are on the MVLS website at: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/MVLS-BYLAWS-2024.pdf>. The proposal is to change the end of the last sentence of Article III Section 5 to: "with candidates elected via vote by the member library trustees present at such meeting." This change would be voted on at the January meeting.

MOTION: To present this bylaws amendment at the January meeting
Witkowski/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

We have also been discussing other changes to our bylaws and board governance policies with member library directors. Eric proposes that at the January meeting, we create a committee that will study other systems' bylaws, discuss, and make suggestions for changes. Discussion ensued about changing the MVLS Board meeting time to be more accessible for working people.

Free Direct Access Plan Amendments These changes are being made as a part of our new Central Library plan.

MOTION: To approve these amendments to the Free Direct Access Plan.
Bonner/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Reorganizational Business - Official bank and newspaper

MOTION: To approve NBT Bank and New York Liquid Asset Fund as the official banks of MVLS and the Daily Gazette as the official newspaper of MVLS.
Witkowski/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Reorganizational Business – 2025 Meeting Schedule We will continue with the third Thursday of every other month in 2025. The 2024-2025 meeting schedule is online at <https://www.mvls.info/meeting-schedule/>

MOTION: To accept the schedule of meetings for 2025 as presented.
Bonner/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Election/Appointment of Officers 2025 Chris presented the slate of officers for 2025:

President: Bill Bonner
Vice President: Susan London
Secretary: Katherine Hawkins
Finance Officer: Jane Borrelli
Executive Committee Member-At-Large: Mary VanPatten
Treasurer: Sally Rappa (not a trustee)

MOTION: To accept the slate of officers for 2025 as presented.
Davies/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The **Director's Report** for September and October 2024 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 reports that the Sharon Springs Free Library passed their budget vote on Election Day. Fonda has also been steadily increasing their budget votes and they are currently developing their Plan of Service.

2. **Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, & Resources for Serving All** Mary Carrier and Kim Zimmer have completed their 5-week training by Senior Planet, allowing us to offer in-person Senior Planet classes to our communities.
3. **Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services** MVLS staff has created a number of users groups that have been meeting throughout the system. These groups focus on things like youth services and grant writing, and provide a great opportunity for library staff to get together and discuss issues that affect them.
4. **Empower Libraries for Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story** The most recent edition of the MVLS newsletter went out in October and work is underway on December's.

Privilege of the Floor Madelyn Thorne, President of the SCP Board of Trustees, wanted to reiterate that SCP has no intention of leaving MVLS. She would request that since they are approximately 55% of the service population of MVLS, SCP and MVLS should work together to make sure system services work for everyone. She says that the SCP board of trustees made the best decision for them, and they never intended to inhibit access for anyone. She hopes to work with the MVLS board to increase access system-wide.

Directors Council Report The directors have met several times recently to discuss things like Overdrive, MVLS bylaws amendments, and the SCP JA exit. Kim has decided to resign from the MVLS Board and she shared this decision with the directors at their meeting this Tuesday. Terry Pavoldi from MID has agreed to serve out the remainder of Kim's term, which expires 12/31/25. The Directors Council agreed, and has nominated Terry to be their representative on the MVLS Board.

MOTION: To accept with regret Kim Zimmer's resignation from the MVLS Board.
Witkowski/Davies. Ayes – 7. Nays – None. Abstentions – 1 (Zimmer).

MOTION: To appoint Terry Pavoldi to the Directors Council seat on the board, with a term expiring 12/31/2025.
Davies/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

JOINT AUTOMATION Erica Wing's term on the JA Council is expiring and she is willing to serve another term

MOTION: To appoint Erica Wing to a new term on the JA Council ending 12/31/2027.
Hawkins/Witkowski. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

There is a Central Library representative from each system on the JA Council. AMS has selected Leah Fitzgerald to represent them.

MOTION: To appoint Leah Fitzgerald to term on the JA Council expiring 12/31/2026
Davies/Borrelli. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The MVLS Board President or their designee serves on the JA Council. Bill Bonner would like to serve on the JA Council.

MOTION: To appoint Bill Bonner to the JA Council, with a term expiring 12/31/25.
Witkowski/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT Susan pointed out the potholes on the driveway and asks if they can be addressed. Eric can look into getting quotes to re-pave the parking lot. Kim has used cold patch in her parking lot and recommends it.

Privilege of the Floor resumed As this is her last meeting, Chris wanted to speak to the board. There has been quite a bit of contention this year, but she thinks a lot of good will end up coming out of it. She is happy that Madelyn and Charity attended the meeting today and hopes that they continue to attend them. She believes that if the SCP board had put together a committee to explore the exit from JA before voting on it, things would have gone a lot more smoothly. Chris does not regret the actions she has taken or the advocacy she has been a part of. Her actions have not been without consequences: after 17 years of involvement with the SCPL Friends, she has been removed from her roles with them. She believes she has always worked for the betterment of the Schenectady County Public Library. She has enjoyed her time on this board and hopes to continue working with the library in the future. The Board thanks Chris for her years of service on the MVLS Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session at 11:48am to discuss 2025 Salary & Benefits package for MVLS staff.
Hawkins/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The board meeting resumed at 12:37pm. The Personnel Committee proposes the following:

1. Salary Increases for 2025: 3.5% cost of living increase for all employees in 2025. Kate Clingan will receive an additional salary increase of \$2,000 to acknowledge additional responsibilities.
2. Benefits Changes for 2025: The Personnel Committee proposes increasing the employer share of health insurance for employees hired post-2010 to 85% for individual coverage, 80% for 2-person coverage and 65% for family coverage in 2025. The Committee approves adding the NYCON Delta Dental Comprehensive PPO to the health insurance options included in employer provided health insurance, at the same employer share as other health insurance offerings. The committee approves a one-time accumulated vacation time buy-back for employees who have accumulated vacation time of over 300 hours at the end of 2024. Affected employees can receive payment for having up to 95 hours removed from their accumulated vacation time, at their 2024 rate of pay.
3. Personnel Manual updates:
 - a. Approved the new Personnel Manual preamble: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Personnel-Manual-Official-November-2024.pdf>
 - b. Approved adding a clarifying addition to page 11, 7.a. Bereavement Leave; adding, after the word child “(including stillbirth or pregnancy loss)”.

MOTION: To accept the Personnel committee's recommendation for the Salary & Benefits package for 2025.

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

MOTION: To approve the 2025 budget, with the rotating collections line amended to \$500.

Bonner/Borrelli. Ayes – All. Nays -None.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40pm.

Next Board Meeting:

9:30am, Thursday, January 16, 2025.

MVLS Service Center