

Mohawk Valley Library System  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
July 17, 2025

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Bill Bonner, Jane Borrelli, April Davies, Susan London, Terry Pavoldi, Haileab Samuel, and Eric Trahan, Director

**EXCUSED:** Mary VanPatten, Katherine Hawkins

**GUESTS (in-person):** Kate Clingan, Mary Carrier

**GUESTS (Virtual):** Pat and Dave Gosda, Kim Zimmer (COB), Diane Empie (STJ)

**Call to Order** President Bill Bonner called the meeting to order at 9:31 am.

**Staff Update** Mary Carrier attended the meeting to brief the board on some of her current projects as the Technology and Growth Consultant. June marked the end of the grant cycle for Mary's Digital Literacy grant, and her classes out at libraries and senior services in our service area had 94 participants. Last week, Mary attended a Library Accessibility Day of Learning workshop at the New York State Museum. Accessibility means more than access; it means inclusion, equity, and belonging. A panel discussion focused a lot on training staff to provide quality customer service, understand that there are invisible disabilities, encourage empathy without pity, and avoid invasive questions. Suggestions for libraries also included asking whether folks need accommodations on program registration forms, including individuals with disabilities in planning and feedback, offering staff trainings in basic sign language, making employment accommodations for individuals with disabilities, and offering a quiet space for staff and patrons in your library. Mary has a resource page about accessibility that she'll be sending out to all contacts at MVLS libraries.

**Consent Agenda: Consideration of May Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Statements of Financial Position for May and June, Payment Schedules #5 for \$101,073.51 and #6 for \$104,510.47**

**MOTION:** To approve the Consent Agenda.

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

**Governance Structure Review Committee** Last meeting, the resolution for Article III Section 5 was presented. Today we vote on the formal approval of that resolution.

**MOTION** To approve Article III, Section 5 of the MVLS Bylaws.

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

We have new Bylaws Amendments proposals from the GSR Committee. These amendments are available highlighted here: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/MVLS-BYLAWS-Proposed-Amendments-Presented-July-2025.pdf>

**MOTION** To accept these Bylaws Amendments for provisional approval, to be voted on in September.

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

**Conflict of Interest Policy** The GSR Committee crafted a new Trustee Conflict of Interest Policy, available here: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Conflict-of-Interest-Policy-2025.pdf>

**MOTION** To approve the new MVLS Trustee Conflict of Interest Policy  
Borrelli/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**Board of Trustees Ethics Statement** This is a new policy created by the GSR Committee, available here:  
<https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/MVLS-BOT-Ethics-Statement.pdf>

**MOTION** To approve the new MVLS Board of Trustees Ethics Statement.  
Davies/Samuel. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**Trustee Election 2025** As a part of our new trustee election procedures, an advisory group was convened to help us identify potential trustees. The advisory group met on Monday 7/7, and there is a plan for another meeting on Friday 7/18, with the aim of coming up with names of potential trustees. The hope is to have a ballot with candidates to send out to libraries on August 1<sup>st</sup>. The tentative date for the virtual meeting with library trustees to conduct the election is September 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Board Evaluation Retreat** There was a Board evaluation meeting on June 26<sup>th</sup>, where four board members and Eric met to discuss the Board Evaluation document the Board discussed at the May meeting.

**Delivery Contract** MVLS's contract with Arnoff, our delivery provider, ends in October. We've been in discussion about possible changes, and are looking at extending the current contract for another year.

**Public Library Construction Grants** Libraries have started to apply for this year's construction grants, and because of the State's timeline, we are also in the process of finding out how much libraries will receive from last year. This year's projects total about \$2.4 million in requests, and MVLS should have about \$1.14 million to disperse (an estimate based on how much we received last year), so some libraries may end up scaling back their proposals.

#### **JA Business: Privacy Policy Posting**

**MOTION** To approve the new JA Terms of Service and Privacy Policy  
Samuel/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

**Foundation Fundraisers & Grants** The first of the Foundation's two annual golf tournaments was held in Canajoharie at the end of June, where they raised \$3300. There is another tournament coming up in Johnstown in August if anyone knows anyone who likes to play golf.  
The Foundation is planning to once again give out Dream & Do Grants for up to \$500 per library.

**MOTION** To approve the Dream & Do Grants for up to \$500 for each library  
Borrelli/Samuel. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The Foundation has also discussed another potential incentive grant to encourage libraries to become members of the New York Council of Nonprofits. NYCON membership is based on library budget, and for most of our libraries it would be under \$200, so the Foundation proposes grants of up to \$200 per library to help pay for NYCON membership for one year.

**MOTION** To approve the NYCON membership incentive grants.  
London/Davies. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The **Director's Report** for May and June 2025 was distributed before the meeting. Eric announced that the 2025 MVLS Annual Meeting has a tentative date of Wednesday October 8<sup>th</sup> at the Fort Hunter Free Library. Eric encourages everyone to take advantage of federal advocacy efforts with regards to IMLS funding, especially those of you who have Elise Stefanik as your representative. Terry asked about future meetings with

Schenectady to discuss outstanding issues related to their exit from JA. Haileab says he's going to be reaching out to Charity at SCP to see if they can get a meeting planned to discuss some of these issues, such as Overdrive and CBA collections.

As usual, Eric organized his report around the goals that were set during our most recent plan of service process.

1. **Empower Libraries with the Vision & Knowledge for Secure Futures** We're asking all libraries now to reapprove the MVLS Free Direct Access Plan. The Free Direct Access Plan ensures that everyone in our service area has access to library services.
2. **Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, & Resources for Serving All** MVLS has several rotating collections that move between our libraries: DVDs, Graphic Novels, Large Print collections, and holiday-themed children's books.
3. **Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services** MVLS staff has been collaborating statewide with other library systems. This October, MVLS will be working with UHLS, 4CLS, and the Strong Museum of Play on a "Power of Play" workshop for public library staff.
4. **Empower Libraries for Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story** We've had a couple of positive news stories in the Mountain Eagle and the Daily Gazette about the summer reading program and it's always nice to see positive coverage of libraries.

**Director's Council Report** Terry reports that the directors met in June at MVLS. They created a committee for collaborative system-wide programming which met in Amsterdam later in June to discuss ideas and do some preliminary planning.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Awards** No report.

**Building & Equipment** No report.

**Finance** No report.

**Joint Automation** No further report.

**Library Services** No report.

**Nominating** No further report.

**Personnel** No report.

**Privilege of the Floor** Nothing shared.

**MOTION:** To adjourn the meeting at 10:50am.

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

**Next Regular Board Meeting:**

9:30am, Thursday, September 18, 2025.

MVLS Service Center