

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
September 18, 2025

MINUTES

PRESENT: Bill Bonner, Jane Borrelli, Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Parish Ogunjana, Terry Pavoldi, and Eric Trahan, Director

EXCUSED: Mary VanPatten, Haileab Samuel, April Davies

GUESTS (in-person): Kate Clingan

GUESTS (Virtual): Pat Gosda, Kim Zimmer (COB), Sharon O'Brien, Mary Carrier

Call to Order President Bill Bonner called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Bill first wished to start by offering Katherine our condolences for the loss of her daughter, and to observe a moment of silence for Barbara Hawkins.

Trustee Appointment Bill introduced Parish Ogunjana, a new potential trustee from Montgomery County. Trustees went around and introduced themselves.

MOTION To appoint Parish Ogunjana to fill the vacant seat on the MVLS board, for a term ending December 31, 2029.

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

Special Presentation Eric wanted to discuss the Four-Year Financial Plan 2026-2029, which is in the board packets. He pointed out the charts that show the progression of MVLS's fund balance. MVLS maintains a healthy fund balance because our budget is done on the calendar year, but the bulk of our funding comes from State Aid, which can be unpredictable in its timing. For example, you can see that the chart shows a deficit in 2023 followed by a surplus in 2024 – this is because the bulk of State Aid for 2023 was not delivered until 2024. Since most of our budget comes from State Aid, which has increased at roughly a rate of 1% a year, many library systems are looking into alternative sources of funding. Some systems charge their member libraries fees to cover system services. MVLS does not charge our member libraries a membership fee, but it is something that we may begin to explore. Bill asks if we might create an exploratory committee to discuss what the future of the budget looks like, and Eric agrees that will likely be the next step.

Advocacy Update With the current budget year from the state, MVLS has received most of our State Aid. The biggest mystery in the future is Federal Aid, which MVLS does not directly receive, although Federal Aid is what pays the NYS Library and the Division of Library Development. At the NY State level, there has been discussion about how to make those institutions less reliant on Federal Aid.

Consent Agenda: Consideration of July Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Statements of Financial Position for July and August, Payment Schedules #7 for \$108,259.54 and #8 for \$197,177.75

MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda.

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

Bylaws Amendment The bylaws amendments presented at the July meeting are awaiting the final vote at our September board meeting. The fully amended version of the MVLS Bylaws is available here:
<https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/MVLS-BYLAWS-September-2025.pdf>

MOTION To accept these Bylaws Amendments.
London/Hawkins. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Trustee Election 2025 There will be a virtual meeting with library trustees to conduct the MVLS Board election at 5:30pm on September 25th for the two seats that expire at the end of 2025. Eleven libraries have responded and let us know that their trustees will be attending the meeting, and the remaining libraries have received a reminder.

Public Library Construction Grants The Library Services Committee met on Tuesday to consider four construction grant applications. The libraries presented their proposals. MVLS was able to award them each slightly over 60% of the funding that they requested, in the following amounts:

AMS (Connector Transition) \$525,924
FON (Exterior & Interior Improvements) \$143,713
GLV (Carnegie Room HVAC) \$54,693
JOH (Learning Landscape Phase II) \$421,046

MOTION To approve the Member Library Construction grants in the amounts stated.
London/Borrelli. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Budget Amendments MVLS has several 2025 budget amendments for approval that can be seen in the board packets. State Aid increased by about 2.6%. Earned income decreased because SCP withdrew from the MVLS Overdrive e-resources budget. The overall change to the budget is quite small, largely we are just making adjustments, for example moving budgeted money from library materials and e-resources to Central Library Aid.

MOTION To approve the budget amendments as presented in the board packets.
Borrelli/Ogunjana. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

JA Business: 2026 Budget This budget has been approved by the JA Council and now goes to the MVLS And SALS boards for approval.

MOTION To accept the JA 2026 budget.
Hawkins/Borrelli. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

JA Business: 2025 Budget Amendment \$1,210 is being moved from the Hardware Maintenance to the Generator Maintenance line to cover repainting of the JA Generator.

MOTION To approve this budget amendment to the 2025 JA budget.
Borrelli/Ogunjana. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

JA Business: JA Agreement/Job Search Process MVLS, SALS, and the JA Council have been working with our attorneys to update the JA Agreement. This is presented now to the system boards for their review. Please look through this document and submit any questions or concerns to Eric or Bill before the JA Council meets to approve this document on October 8th. Susan mentions that there was a lot of information sent out before this particular board meeting, and Eric acknowledges that this was a very document-heavy meeting. Michele Largeau, the JA Project Manager, is retiring in March 2026. Another discussion item for the October

JA Council meeting will be creating a job description and beginning the job search process. Eric believes that there may be action items needed from the MVLS board before the next scheduled meeting in November, and the board may want to authorize the Executive Committee to take action if necessary.

MOTION To formally authorize the Executive Committee to make necessary decisions before the November Board meeting, concerning the JA Agreement updates as well as the JA Project Manager job search process.

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

Annual Meeting The Annual Meeting this year will be on Wednesday October 8th from 5:30-7:30pm at the Fort Hunter Free Library. A formal invitation will be sent out this afternoon. MVLS wants the Annual Meeting to be a celebration of libraries. We hope as many MVLS Board members as possible will be able to attend. The MVLS Board will met for the System Director Evaluation meeting on September 29th from 9am-12pm at MVLS.

The **Director's Report** for July and August 2025 was distributed before the meeting. 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** Ten years ago, MVLS Libraries had \$1,072,321 in secure, voter-approved funding. This year, that number is \$3,305,891. We are proud that all MVLS libraries understand the importance of the annual budget vote and are building secure futures.
2. **Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, & Resources for Serving All** Mary and Beth have been doing a lot of outreach work lately, notably in some of the unserved areas in our service area.
3. **Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services** MVLS tries to help connect our member libraries to the larger world. We provide memberships to NYLA for members, and the Foundation this year approved grants to help fund NYCON memberships for members.
4. **Empower Libraries for Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story** We hope everyone is enriched by the library stories told at the Annual Meeting.

Director's Council Report Terry reports that the next director's council meeting will be in Amsterdam in October. Maria Cancro, the director at Canajoharie, is unfortunately leaving her position and there will be a goodbye party at CAN on Friday 9/26. Meghan Keaney from the Sharon Springs Free Library is also leaving her position to pursue a master's degree in school librarianship.

Terry asks if Awards applications could be sent out in the beginning of the summer rather than closer to the Annual meeting. We will make an effort to send those out earlier in the year, and if anyone would like a head start on next year's Awards, the guidelines and application are always available at <https://www.mvls.info/awards>

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Awards We had four applications for Awards this year, and we will be awarding them at the Annual Meeting.

Building & Equipment Katherine commented on the potholes as you turn into the driveway from Route 7. Since Route 7 is a state road, we have reached out to NY State to fix that issue and are awaiting their reply.

Finance No report.

Joint Automation No further report.

Library Services No further report.

Nominating The committee will be meeting again before the November board meeting.

Personnel The committee will be meeting again before the November board meeting.

Privilege of the Floor Nothing shared.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 11:14am.

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

Next Regular Board Meeting:

9:30am, Thursday, November 20, 2025.

MVLS Service Center