

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 15, 2026

MINUTES

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

EXCUSED: April Davies, Haileab Samuel, Mary VanPatten

GUESTS: Kate Clingan, Wade Abbott, Pat & Dave Gosda, Kim Zimmer (COB), Sharon OBrien

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

Two Edits to the Agenda:

6a. Will be brought back to the Personnel Committee for discussion before coming to the full board at a later meeting.

Adding Item#8. **Director's Council representative**

Special Presentation Wade Abbott, the MVLS Community Engagement & Communications Specialist, attended the meeting to present some advocacy updates. Library Advocacy Day is Tuesday, February 3, 2026. Wade encourages board members to attend and show our legislators that libraries have strong support in the community. A sign-up sheet is available here: <https://forms.gle/pY5TRWvaD8qTft7o6>. Wade went over a few of NYLA's legislative priorities for this year's Advocacy Day, which can be found here: <https://www.nyla.org/2026-legislative-session>.

Consent Agenda: Consideration of November Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Reports, Statements of Financial Position for November and December, Payment Schedules #11 for \$180,093.35 and #12 for \$117,477.32

MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda.

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

Joint Automation Business: 2027 Fees Eric reports that there was a meeting in December where JA and library directors and staff discussed planned fees for 2027. The recommendation from that meeting is for 2027 fees to increase by 5%, for a fee budget of \$621,450. The 2027 fees will be calculated based on 2025 library data. This recommendation was approved at yesterday's JA Council meeting and now goes to the SALS and MVLS Boards for approval.

MOTION To approve a 5% increase in JA fees in 2027, a 2027 JA fee budget of \$621,450, and to the use of 2025 library data for the fee calculation formula.

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

Joint Automation Business: Project Manager Search Eric reports that there are 3 finalists for the JA Project Manager position. After interviews with all 3 next week, the search committee will select a candidate for the position. In the first half of February, the MVLS Board or the Executive Committee will need to hold a meeting to approve the search committee's selection. Katherine asks if the job description could be sent to the MVLS board for review. Susan suggests having the application packets for the 3 finalists sent to the board as well so that any board member could send their thoughts to the Executive Committee before they meet.

MOTION To empower the Executive Committee to approve the appointment of the new JA Project Manager.

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

Committee Assignments Bill suggests keeping Committee Assignments as they are from 2025 into 2026, unless anyone had a desire to make a move. Parish is interested in joining the Library Services Committee.

MOTION To keep committee assignments the same as in 2025 with the addition of Parish Ogunjana to the Library Services Committee.

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

Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosures Annual COI Disclosures are in the board packets. Please fill these out and return to Kate or Eric.

Governance Structure Review Committee

MOTION To re-authorize the formation of the Governance Structure Review Committee in 2026.

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

Planning Process Every 5 years, library systems are required to submit a Plan of Service to the state. MVLS likes to use this opportunity to revisit the planning process. The first step will be small meetings with MVLS staff and library directors (or a representative) to talk about what libraries' needs are in the future. We'll also be discussing the services that MVLS provides and how libraries use these services. Eric plans to use a Start/Stop/Continue rubric in these discussions. We'll move forward from there into larger groups as the planning process progresses.

Personnel Updates re: 2026 salaries & benefits: Office Administrator Job Description An updated job description for the Office Administrator is in the board packets. Most of the updates relate to the addition of Foundation-related activities.

MOTION To approve the new Office Administrator job description.

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

2026 Trustee Training On February 19th at MVLS and online, there will be a trustee training on Open Meetings Law and FOIL.

Director's Council Representative: The Directors have nominated Terry Pavoldi to be their representative on the MVLS board from 1/1/2026 – 12/31/2030.

MOTION To appoint Terry Pavoldi to a 5-year term on the MVLS Board to end December 31, 2030.

Hawkins/London. Ayes - All. Nays - None

The **Director's Report** for November and December 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** – Several of our libraries are in the process of hiring or onboarding new directors. Canajoharie has a new director, Fonda just hired one, and Sharon Springs is in the midst of a search. Eric will be meeting with some of the Sharon Springs trustees tomorrow to discuss their progress, as MVLS is always available to assist member library boards with the hiring process. We also try to work with new directors as they come on board.

2. **Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, and Resources for Serving All** – There is a new regulation from the ADA about website accessibility that takes effect on April 24, 2026. Mary has been working with several of our libraries to bring their websites up to date and accessible. This was also discussed at the JA Council meeting yesterday.
3. **Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services** –Right now, many of our libraries are at the annual Summer Reading Project Workshop being hosted jointly by MVLS and UHLS at the Schenectady County Public Library. Several MVLS staff members will be there for all or some of the day, demonstrating the importance of continuing education and collaboration in our libraries.
4. **Empower Libraries with Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story** –This is the importance of Advocacy Day, to make sure our legislators are aware of the impact our libraries have in their communities.

Katherine mentions the “Meetings, Contacts, and Field Visits” section of Eric’s Director’s Report, and asks if there could be more context for these discussions. Eric says he could try to add another column with the general topic discussed.

Directors Council Report There is a tentative Directors Council meeting in February.

COMMITTEE REPORTS No further reports from Committees.

Privilege of the Floor Susan wanted to note that the documentary The Librarians is going to be playing at the Spectrum theater in Albany on January 21st and at SUNY Albany on February 20th. She’ll send more details in an email to the board. Katherine sent a video link to Bill and Eric about the power of librarians and book banning. She also shared it with some directors and will send it to the rest of the board.

MOTION To adjourn the meeting at 10:58am
London/Ogunjana. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Next Regular Board Meeting:

Thursday, March 19, 2026

MVLS Service Center