Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
July 16, 2026

MINUTES

PRESENT: Bill Bonner, Jane Borrelli, April Davies, Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Terry Pavoldi, Haileab Samuel, Kate Clingan, and Eric Trahan, Director.

EXCUSED: Mary VanPatten

GUESTS: Jesse Jensen (JA), Pat & Dave Gosda, Mary Carrier, Diane Empie (STJ)

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

> **MOTION:** To approve the agenda for the meeting.
> Hawkins/Samuel. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Special Presentations Unfortunately Nicole Hemsley from AMS is unable to attend the meeting this morning to present as planned. Hopefully we can get her at a future meeting soon.

Public Comment No public comments made.

Consent Agenda: Consideration of May Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Reports, Statements of Financial Position for May and June, Payment Schedules #5 for $125,510.19 and #6 for $108,415.51

> **MOTION**: To approve the Consent Agenda.
> Borrelli/Samuel. Ayes – Six. Nays – None. Abstentions – One (Davies)

Joint Automation Business: Jesse Jensen attended the meeting to report on JA business. Jesse's written report is in the board packets. JA has continued to make progress on both the end-of-2025 group order and the first 2026 group order. All of the devices have been received for both orders, libraries have received all of the 2025 order and the 2026 order is being imaged now.
Vega Discover Based on testing, it looks like JA will be able to maintain libraries' Overdrive holdings in Polaris. JA has been gathering feedback on staff/patron experiences with Discover. The most significant concern is still helping patrons understand local item availability as well as location-based searching. JA is developing trainings which will hopefully help staff as well as sharing issues with Clarivate on ways to improve Discover functionality. A few members of the Clarivate team attended the JA Council meeting yesterday at SALS.
Polaris JA is preparing for the Polaris 8.1 upgrade. The current plan is to begin training on the new software in mid-August for a mid-to-late-September upgrade. Jesse was also selected to join the Polaris Working Group, which gives him greater insight into future Polaris products as well as an opportunity to influence the direction of Polaris.
Strategic Planning Jesse sat in on some SALS strategic planning sessions and was able to get good feedback on member library needs. Some requests include standardized training materials, technology resources for communicating changes to patrons, and continued expansion of JA technology communications in the vein of the JA TechBlast emails. JA is also working on the continued deployment of the router refresh project as well as a Mac Mini loaner program to allow libraries to evaluate Apple hardware as an option for future group orders. Since May, JA has rolled out the ThreatDown phishing protection across all staff workstations. Staff

participation in KnowB4 training has been high. In June, Chris identified and stopped a malicious email campaign, followed by increased email screening which then prevented a larger wave of malicious emails the following weekend.

Patron Privacy Policy Bill reports that the JA Council worked on a JA Patron Privacy Policy to update the existing policy. The current draft is in the board packets and is open for discussion. The board will be acting on the policy at the September meeting. Jesse is working on a document that lists all third-party services that JA works with that store any patron information, and this document will be linked within the policy when it is ready. Any questions can be sent to Eric or Bill so they can be addressed before the September meeting.

Draft JA Agreement This draft agreement is also in the board packet and will likely be acted on at the September meeting, probably after the SALS board looks at it at their meeting. Any questions or comments should be addressed to Bill or Eric before the September meeting. Eric points out that there is a section at the end (the last two pages) that member libraries will be asked to approve each year.

Governance Structure Review Committee The GSRC has two items for approval at this meeting.
Proposed Bylaws Changes Two proposed bylaws changes are in the board packet. These changes are being presented today and will be voted on in September.

Board Governance Policy: Trustee Job Description The proposed trustee job description is included in the board packets.

> **MOTION** To approve the MVLS Trustee Job Description.
> Samuel/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Reports & Items for Discussion: Trustee Elections 2026 The trustee election process is underway. The Nominating Committee will need to schedule a meeting next week. There was a meeting of the Nominating Advisory Committee which resulted in a recommendation from Schenectady County, but we are still in need of recommendations for Fulton and Montgomery Counties.

Annual Review Processes The annual board review meeting will be next week on the 21st at 9:30 at MVLS. If anyone has any input or comments, please let Bill know beforehand. Bill is also looking to schedule the MVLS System & Director Review meeting in September, he will send out information via email.

Annual Meeting The MVLS Annual Meeting is tentatively planned for Thursday October 1st. Eric is working to schedule the meeting at a member library.

Annual Awards There has been some discussion among MVLS staff and directors regarding revamping the annual MVLS awards. We will be making changes to the annual awards for 2027. Anyone who has any thoughts or comments on this is welcome to share them.

Construction Grants 2026 The process is underway for 2026 construction grants, although we are still in the middle of the 2025 construction grant process. There will be a Library Services Committee meeting in September where libraries can come and present their construction applications for 2026.

Foundation Update The Foundation had a successful golf tournament in June in Canajoharie and they are planning one at Fox Run golf course in August.

The **Director's Report** for May and June 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** – We had another successful budget vote in Johnstown. Sharon Springs will be going up for a vote in November. Eric and Wade are working with St Johnsville on a potential charter change. Susan asked if it's possible to add the type of library to the Member Libraries page on the MVLS website. Eric says we should be able to do that.
2. **Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, and Resources for Serving All** –New information on state minimum standards for library policies has been coming out and Mary Carrier has been sharing that with library directors. Beth has been updating the kits that MVLS loans to member libraries. She also created the Library Care Kits that were sent out to libraries if they committed to taking the Homeless Training module on Niche Academy.
3. **Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services** – This summer, Beth is organizing a Digital Scavenger Hunt as a system-wide collaborative program.
4. **Empower Libraries with Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story** –Wade put a reporter from *The Recorder* in touch with the Frothingham Free Library which resulted in a very positive article about the library coming out at the end of last month.

Susan asked about the targeted trustee training that Eric mentioned doing with member library boards in his director's report. Most of these have to do with particular policies or issues that member libraries are working on, for example the St Johnsville charter change or long-term financial planning with the Middleburgh board. She asked about maybe sending some sort of membership plaque to member libraries showing that they are a part of MVLS. Eric says this sounds like a good discussion for a future Directors' Council meeting.

Directors Council Report Terry reports that the directors met in June. She felt it was an especially collaborative and productive meeting that she would love to replicate in the future. Directors have a tentative meeting set for August but with Summer Reading, attendance may be low. Several of our libraries have been working with a nonprofit out of Albany called Bring on the Spectrum that provides libraries with materials for patrons who are on the spectrum. Terry is working with the remaining libraries to try and get them to look into partnering with Bring on the Spectrum.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUILDING & EQUIPMENT Katherine did a quick lap around the property to clean up some trash. Eric notes that the construction site next door has been good about cleaning up after themselves. Eric reports there is a paver expected this week to give us a quote about the driveway. Bill mentions that he would like to schedule a meeting of the Building & Equipment committee sometime soon.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE COMMITTEE There will be a GSRC meeting following this meeting at 11am.

FINANCE Since Jane will be stepping down from the board at the end of this year, the Board needs a new Finance Officer. Bill asks trustees to think about if they'd be interested in stepping into the role.

Announcements Katherine reports that she has been in touch with a library in Davenport, Iowa who have expressed interest in her collection of 19th century photographs.

> **MOTION** To adjourn the meeting at 10:55am
> Davies/Samuel**.** Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Next Regular Board Meeting:
Thursday, September 17, 2026
MVLS Service Center