

**MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
**Friday, July 18, 2025**

President Ramage called the meeting to order at 10:01am in the MHLS Auditorium.

**1. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Trustees Present:                     Stuart Auchincloss, Kevin Finnegan, Leslie Gerber, Kenneth Goldberg, Rajene Hardeman, Jenny Post, Barry Ramage, Janet Schnitzer, Thomas Silvius, Barbara Swanson, Carla Taylor, Mark Williams

Trustees Absent:                     Peter Carey, Charles Kutcher, Jill Leinung

Directors Association Liaison:     Johanna Reinhardt, Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library (Cold Spring)

Staff Present:                       Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, James Coyle, Elinor Levy, Laura Crisci, Laurie Sheldrick

**2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Ramage

*President's report*

- Congratulated Kerstin Cruger. MHLS Outreach & Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Specialist on being elected as the incoming President of the New York Library Association.
- Upon the announcement of the retirement of Thomas Finnigan, MHLS Delivery Services Manager, Barry Ramage moved, and Stuart Auchincloss seconded the following resolutions:

*Kersti Cruger elected incoming NYLA President.*

WHEREAS, Tom Finnigan, MHLS Delivery Operations Manager has served the Mid-Hudson Library System for over 30 years with distinction; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Finnigan has announced his plans to retire this September; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Finnigan, in the face of enormous changes in our field over the past three decades, has provided steady leadership and management of key MHLS services, including our former audio-visual department and current delivery operations team; and

*Resolution passed in gratitude to Thomas Finnigan, MHLS Delivery Operations Manager upon his retirement*

WHEREAS, Mr. Finnigan was part of the team that migrated our integrated library system to a more modern project, elevating library services across our service area for decades to come; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Finnigan has exemplified dignified, empathetic, and professional leadership for his colleagues and our member libraries,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of the Mid-Hudson Library System hereby expresses its gratitude to Mr. Finnigan for his service to the organization and for his superior work on behalf of our organization.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

## Minutes, MHLS Board of Trustees Meeting, Friday, July 18, 2025

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Barbara Swanson moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the May 2025 meeting (Doc. 3.A.). **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Minutes approved*

### **4. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer Stuart Auchincloss provided an explanation of the Operating Reserve fund; noted that expenditures are at 40% halfway through the fiscal year; reported that \$2 million has been transferred to the New York Cooperative Liquid Assets Securities System (NYCLASS) Local Government Investment Pool in order to receive a higher interest rate; and provided an overview of the process to receive reimbursement from the State Aid for Library Construction Program for the MHLS rooftop solar project. Carla Taylor moved, and Mark Williams seconded a motion to receive the April (Doc 4.A), May (Doc 4.B), and June (Doc. 4.C) financial reports. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Financial Report received*

### **5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Rajene Hardeman reported that they reviewed the warrants for March 2025 and found them acceptable; Jill Leining provided a written report, noting that she had reviewed the warrants for April 2025 and found them acceptable; Janet Schnitzer reported that she reviewed the warrants for May 2025 and found them acceptable; and Thomas Silvius reported that he reviewed the warrants for June 2025 and found them acceptable. Thomas Silvius moved, and Stuart Auchincloss seconded a motion to receive the March, April, May, and June warrants. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Warrants received*

### **6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- In addition to her written report, Executive Director Aldrich provided:
  - An update on the status of the Institute of Museum and Library Services and federal funding for the State Library;
  - An outlook on state finances in the context of the recent passage of the federal reconciliation bill and how MHLS may be impacted;
  - An update on the status of the Union Vale Library's registration application; and, at the request of President Barry Ramage,
  - A report on issues facing public libraries in the UK as presented at the recent Libraries Connected conference where she provided the keynote presentation.
- Barbara Swanson moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded the approval of personnel action for the meeting (Doc. 6.A). **The motion passed unanimously.**

*Personnel actions approved*

### **7. DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT**

Johanna Reinhardt, Director of the Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library in Cold Spring; Chair of the MHLS System Services Advisory Committee; and Directors Association Liaison for this meeting reported on the June Directors Association Meeting including the decision to increase their Members Assessment amount by 9.5% for FY2026; a unanimous vote to remove artificial intelligence (A.I.)-generated content provide by the vendor Hoopla from the MHLS Catalog; and the recently discovered problem of patrons sharing their barcodes and passwords through the social networking site Reddit, to allow others to check out electronic materials on their cards, driving up costs for libraries.

*Report from the Directors Association Liaison*

## **Minutes, MHLS Board of Trustees Meeting, Friday, July 18, 2025**

### **8. PERSONNEL & PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- Chair Rajene Hardeman provided a report on the work done to update the personnel policies, including updating to reflect recent changes in employment laws and ensuring everything aligns with the new CSEA contract. *Personnel Policy Amendments approved*
- The Personnel & Planning Committee members has recommended the approval of the personnel policy amendments as presented. This recommendation was approved unanimously.
- Chair Hardeman announced the Executive Director annual evaluation form will go out to all board members at the beginning of the following week.

### **9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Chair Carla Taylor presented the Facilities Committee Report from April which had been tabled at the May meeting due to Carla's excused absence from that meeting. Carla and Executive Director Aldrich updated the Board on the status of the Community Geothermal Pilot Program.

### **13. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss.

### **14. ORIENTATION**

Executive Director Aldrich provided an overview of the State Aid for Library Construction Program and the MHLS Board's role in administering the program.

### **15. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

### **16. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Rajene Hardeman, Vice President

Approved on [DATE] by the MHLS Board of Trustees