

Core Values Working Group

March 2025 Report to the Board

Working Group Members:

- Rajene Hardeman, Chair (D)
- Stuart Auchincloss (U)
- Barbara Swanson (G)

- Barry Ramage, ex officio (D)
- Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director

1. As this was the first meeting of the Advisory Group, members discussed the intersection of the MHLS Core Values (stated [here](#)); the [2025 Board Priorities](#), which includes a section on “Living Our Values Out Loud”; and the [Core Values of Librarianship](#) from the American Library Association.
2. In view of recent executive orders issued, the Advisory Group:
 - a. Reviewed the MHLS Core Values:
 - i. **Responsive Customer Service:** The staff and board of the Mid-Hudson Library System strive to be active listeners and timely problem solvers that create a culture of support and professionalism with each other and our member libraries.
 - ii. **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:** The staff and board of the Mid-Hudson Library System believe in working together to co-create a society that is free from structural inequities.
 - iii. **Environmental Stewardship:** The staff and board of the Mid-Hudson Library System are committed to minimizing our organization’s ecological impact and maximizing future generations’ ability to live, work, and play in our shared natural environment, with equal access to clean air, clean water, and natural resources.
 - iv. **Economic Feasibility:** The staff and board of the Mid-Hudson Library System are committed to achieving sustainable funding both for the System and for member library services.
 - v. **Future-Focused:** The staff and board of the Mid-Hudson Library System are devoted to optimizing, balancing, iterating and innovating services to equip member libraries for the future.
 - b. **ACTION ITEM:** Stuart Auchincloss moved, and Barbara Swanson seconded a motion to recommend to the MHLS Board that we vote to reaffirm our core values. The Advisory Group agreed that the current core values are relevant and commendable.

- c. The advisory group agreed that their charge calls upon them to continue to monitor trends impacting our core values and to be “alert and aware” so they can discuss potential ramifications to MHLS as a risk management activity.
3. The advisory group discussed measuring the impact of MHLS and member libraries on local economies as an important activity for advocacy. Executive Director Aldrich shared some existing ways libraries have reported economic impact for households (e.g. MHLS’ Real People. Real Dollars. Campaign, [Library Use Value Calculators](#)) and will report back on broader economic impact reporting opportunities after investigating further.