

Mid-Year Meeting of the Committee Chairs | July 22 | Provided by Richard Swierat, Board President

Committee Chairs met on July 6 to conduct a mid-year review of the committee work related to Board Priorities. Each committee reported successful progress in all categories.

The Board Priorities for 2022 include specific goals for Member Outreach, Board Education, Financial Stability, Equity Diversity and Inclusion and work to gain the Sustainable Library Certification. All committees noted a clear focus on work of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion goal. All committees included a statement in their committee purpose and found specific actions or decisions which supported this work.

The list of accomplishments related to the Board Priorities for 2022 are:

AUDIT COMMITTEE:

- Conducted a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select the auditing firm Sickler, Torchia, Allen & Churchill (STAC). The RFP included language related to EDI.
- The work of the new auditing firm has increased transparency of information and upgraded the accounting practices of MHLS.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT:

- The committee work has increased attention to the EDI priorities during board training sessions.
- The committee conducted the second board self evaluation which included EDI questions.
- The committee sponsored general training sessions on changing NYS regulations
- The committee provided direction and support for the Annual Meeting which will be held virtually again this year.

BYLAWS AND PROCEDURES:

- Advanced Trustee Education Policy to conform with the NYS regulations for training
- Provided guidance for the use of gender neutral language in board and committee reports
- Conducted EDI assessment of MHLS policies
- Provided support for new or amended guidance on discrimination policies, practices to auditing policies on a regular basis and trustee suspension or removal practices.
- Provided a policy on civil conduct for public comments at meetings.

FACILITY:

- Using a checklist for review of ADA compliance and made improvements for the interior of the building in response to results
- Conducted an exterior checklist which will result in adding a second handicapped parking space, change labelling and improve size of space to conform with ADA standards:
- Support adding electronic vehicle charging stations to the parking lot
- Conducted a review and created a plan for compliance with the environmental aspects of the Sustainable Library Certification.

FINANCE:

- Continued to conduct research into creating a stable financial environment through alternate private funding.
- Examined the use of the Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley as a vehicle to attract and manage private funds.
- Agree to recommend the dissolution of the Foundation for Hudson Valley Libraries
- Included value statements for financial decisions and investment decisions which include EDI criteria

- Continues to work of financial policies and decisions related to the Sustainable Library Certification.

INCENTIVES:

- Reminded the group that guidance for Incentive grants to include EDI principles related to access and usability of the facilities.
- Reviewed the need to include analysis of disaster recovery related to environmental issues (related to the Sustainable Library Certification)
- Support the invitation of a speaker for the Annual Meeting to address disaster recovery.
- Supports small grants for staff travel (mileage) and attendance for the NYLA conference.

NOMINATIONS:

- Created guidance for local library boards to recruit trustees who represent the wider community members of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Provided guidance for board practices to encourage recruitment and retention of board members.

PERSONNEL AND PRACTICES:

- Added EDI values to the committee charge
- Supported guidance for new hiring processes to support EDI principles
- Reviewing the issues related to staff turnover
- Provided guidance and oversight to the Plan of Service which included EDI values.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION WORKGROUP:

- Provided guidance for board orientation sessions
- Provided guidance and support for policies related EDI practices in committee practices
- Focused on gender neutral language issues for board and committee minutes
- Continue to provide support for an EDI conference in Fall 2022
- Created and curates a list of resources for use by MHLS and local libraries on EDI values

GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITTEE RELATIONS WORKGROUP:

- Amended the workgroup name to provide direction towards advocating and marketing MHLS and library issues to gain public support.
- Conducted review of the Foundation for Hudson Valley Libraries to determine future sustainability or to disband.
- Interviewed Community Foundations for the Hudson Valley for consideration of partnership in gaining private public financial support
- Review and guided discussions on the development of a messaging and marketing plan for MHLS using private board funds contributed in 2021.

The Chairs group determined that all committees are supporting the Board Priorities through actions and decisions. A final review of this work will be conducted at the end of the year to assist with recommendations for 2023 Board Priorities.