

Government & Community Relations Working Group Friday, May 19, 2023

In Attendance:

- ✓ Richard Swierat, Chair (D)
- ✓ Mark Wilson (C)
- Jill Leinung (C)
- Barry Ramage (D) (ex officio)
- ✓ Rebekkah Smith Aldrich (Staff Liaison)
- ✓ Laura Crisci (Staff Liaison)

1. A report was provided from the Board meeting of the Foundation for Hudson Valley Libraries:
 - a. The Board met on May 15, 2023.
 - b. In attendance:
 - i. Richard Swierat, MHLS Board Representative
 - ii. Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director
 - iii. Saran Camara, MHLS Finance Manager & Personnel Officer
 - iv. Carol Donick, Director, Kent Public Library
 - v. Linda Deubert, Former Director, Heermance Memorial Library (retired)
 - vi. Debra Kamecke, Director, Cairo Public Library
 - vii. Margie Menard, Director, Kingston Library
 - viii. Francis Rees, Former Director, Saugerties Public Library
 - c. The FHVL Board voted to disburse the remaining funds of the Foundation as follows: once any remaining fees or obligations are paid that the remaining funds are to be signed over to the Mid-Hudson Library System to be used for two specific purposes defined here, split evenly between these two items: (1) content for the shared MHLS OverDrive Advantage Account using the same guidelines used to expend Central Library Service Program funds on the OverDrive collection; and (2) MHLS Advocacy and Outreach activities that have the potential to benefit all member libraries, for example: NYLA Advocacy Day, outreach supplies for on-site community events; and/or a "Library Road Trip" event as overseen by the MHLS System Services Advisory Committee. The motion passed unanimously.
 - d. The FHVL Board unanimously voted to voluntarily dissolve the Foundation.
 - e. The related paperwork has been filed with New York State and the bank accounts have been closed with the funds transferred to MHLS.
2. Results of the reports from Impact PR & Communications were reviewed and considered.
 - a. The reports consisted of:
 - i. A report on "MHLS Comparators" (OWWL Library System, North Country Library System, and Southern Tier Library System)
 - ii. Public Relations Audit Report & Toolkit
 - iii. Community Outreach Ideas
 - iv. Suggested Taglines and Key Messages
 - v. PR & Communications Handbook on developing a PR & Communications Plan
 - b. MHLS Staff will work to develop a PR & Communication Plan to present to the Working Group at a future meeting.

3. Grant Updates:
 - a. The group reviewed the final grant report to the Dyson Foundation and authorized Executive Director Aldrich to file the report.

4. Continued Discussion: Draft Purpose Statement
 - a. *To raise the profile of the Mid-Hudson Library System; In a way that ensures stakeholders understand the value of the System to our member libraries and communities while also promoting the value of our member libraries; So that stakeholders contribute to the financial sustainability of the System*

5. Ambassador or Alumni Committee: Chair Swierat proposed exploring the idea of convening former members of the MHLS Board to broaden our advocacy and development reach. The Working Group will explore this further.