MHLS REPORT TO MEMBER LIBRARY DIRECTORS - NOVEMBER 2020

The format of this report is based on the MHLS service priorities as determined by MHLS stakeholders.

1 DELIVERY SERVICES

1.1 DELIVERY OPS UPDATE

a. The adjustments to the delivery system put into place in October are going well as member libraries, drivers, and MHLS staff continue to adjust to the new route structure. We are not experiencing any capacity issues at this time and will continue to monitor volume quarterly, as previously stated.

1.2 WINTER IS COMING...

a. Just a reminder that if your library's parking lot is not plowed and/or your walks are not shoveled the drivers may not be able to make a delivery to your library after a storm.
b. If severe weather is predicted the drivers may go out the evening before a day with bad weather forecasted to ensure delivery keeps running smoothly. In these cases, a message will be send to the MHLS Alerts list and posted to the homepage of midhudson.org

2 INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM & CATALOGING SERVICES

2.1 ILS ROAD MAP 2.0 UPDATE

a. Serials is now installed. MHLS cataloging is currently transitioning our traditional Bibliographic records in Sierra to Serials records, creating separate holdings records and checkin cards. Training for member libraries has also taken place and has been recorded for future use. As 2021 cover dates are received, libraries will begin using the newly converted Serials records. The move to Serials improves the visibility of periodicals in the Encore catalog and streamlines receiving issues into Sierra.
b. ILL is now installed and we will transition to making ILL requests part of a Sierra workflow in the new year. MHLS will be trained on this work on 11/18/20 and will be creating documentation and workflows in time to train members on December 17. Using Sierra ILL will improve visibility of the ILL transaction within the patron record of both Encore and Sierra.
c. Patron Images has been installed. This feature allows libraries to capture and store photos of patrons to be displayed in the staff view of the patron record. There are equipment requirements, so if your library is interested in using this feature please open a ticket with techsupport@midhudson.org to let us know. We are interested to learn which libraries have interest in implementation and testing.

2.2 Sierra "Hot Fix"

a. Sierra 5.1 had an inherent issue where notices in progress of being sent where being overwritten by new jobs coming in. While the issue is fixed in 5.2, and the release has so many other critical issues that we could not consider it. Innovative agreed to patch our system with a code fix to release 5.1.   We are observing the notices of 3 libraries who consistently reported that they were experiencing issues. The fix seems to have corrected the issue and we see no further reports.

2.3 Sierra User group

a. Though we had to meet online this time around there was a good turnout. The agenda covered the MHLS ILS Road Map 2.0 changes since the last meeting and looked ahead to what is coming. We also took Vega (the Discovery platform, not the car) for a spin, using the newly launched Ferguson Library site.

2.4 Vega development

a. We continue to have meetings with the development team every other week and it is incredibly exciting. There are now two standalone sites live on the platform and more to follow. Consortia will be entering the development phase by the end of this year through spring and it is expected that we have a test site in place by second quarter.

3 Coordinated IT Services

3.1 Contract renewals for IT services

a. if you are currently using MHLS for It Support, you should have received a request from MHLS to let us know if you plan to work with us again through a renewal of your IT contract for 2021. We will use this information to plan for the coming year and manage our resources and determine if we can take new contracts. The contract invoices will be distributed by our business office in January.

3.2 Aerohive renewals

a. A reminder was given in the last report that libraries who received Aerohive units in the first year will need to replace their units. MHLS is not able to fund the replacement, so we urge you to plan for replacement early. MHLS has updated our equipment form with cost estimates. Currently, these costs are steep and have fluctuated because of trade agreements in flux.

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4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CONTINUING EDUCATION

4.1 TRUSTEE EDUCATION

a. **Financial & Fiduciary Responsibility** |Wednesday, December 2nd | 5:30 -7:00pm | Register
   Presented by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director
   This intermediate-level course is for trustees who have been on the board for at least a year. Library boards are trusted with public and private funds to provide quality library service to their community. Transparency and accountability must be at the forefront as a board makes decisions pertaining to the library's finances. This course will focus on the financial and fiduciary responsibility involved with:
   - o The library's budget
   - o Library funding
   - o Financial policies
   - o Reports to the board
   - o External audits

b. **Seven Habits of Highly Effective Boards** | Tuesday, December 8th | 5:30-7:00pm | Register
   Presented by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director & Casey Conlin, MHLS Library Sustainability Coordinator. An effective board is a knowledgeable, professionally organized group of diverse individuals working with consistent collaboration and dedication to the common goal of providing quality public library services to all residents of the community. Attendees will be able to recognize the habits of effective boards, understand the value of effective recruitment and self-evaluation, and appreciate the importance of continuing education in developing a dynamic, high performing group that operates with the best interest of the library at heart.

5 CONSULTING & DEVELOPMENT

5.1 PANDEMIC PREP PLANS

a. In compliance with new legislation from New York State, public employers, including public libraries, will be required to create pandemic response plans to protect workers in the event of another state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease. While association libraries are not required to create pandemic response plans under the new law, they are strongly encouraged to create similar plans for the event of a disaster involving a communicable disease, particularly in light of a recent opinion about this obtained by the New York Library Association from the Governor's office. Plans are required to include the aspects below.

b. For more information, see Governor Cuomo's announcement of the legislation, and the New York Library Association's Simplified Checklist with Definitions and Requirements.

5.2 SICK LEAVE LAW (NON-COVID-19)

a. On October 20, 2020, the New York State Department of Labor released guidance regarding non-COVID paid sick leave. The [guidance page](#) provides information about amount of leave, accruals, eligibility, permitted uses, and more, and the supporting [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document provides further clarification. Public libraries are not subject to these new requirements.

5.3 THE GREAT GIVE BACK

a. Thank you to the 44 libraries that participated in the Great Give Back to give their patrons a chance to help out in their community. GGB events in 2020 included food and supplies collection drives, environmental cleanup events, pet food and supplies drives, pet adoption events, and a chicken race.

b. When you have a moment please complete the [GGB follow up form](#) to share your library's experience with the GGB.

5.4 PROPERTY TAX CAP FORMS DUE

a. Libraries with calendar fiscal years (January-December), who have their own board and have ever held a public vote on their budget, are required to submit the online Property Tax Cap form prior to the adoption of their 2019 budget.

b. For more information: https://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/realprop/localgovernments.htm

5.5 SALARY AND BENEFITS SURVEY 2020

a. The Salary and Benefits Survey will assess library background, salary, health, and retirement benefits for staff serving in various positions in MHLS member libraries.

b. MHLS is seeking member library director input on their staff salary and benefits. Please respond to Action Memo 20-09 to provide this information. Action Memo 20-09: Salary and Benefits Survey 2020 will be released through the MHLS-Notice list on December 1, 2020. Deadline to respond December 22, 2020.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Salary_Benefits_Survey_2020

5.6 TURNING OUTWARD ONLINE FOR 2021

a. In recognition of the risks around gathering for training and public community conversations, the MHLS Turning Outward program is being redesigned to provide libraries with a strategy and tools to safely collect authentic input around community aspirations which can be used in crafting a library's long range plans. The program will include training for facilitating conversations around community aspirations, using tools from the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation, and guidance and support from cohort libraries undertaking the program and MHLS staff for project management and long-range plan development. More information will be available in late 2020.

b. This program may be a good fit for those libraries working to come into compliance with the new minimum standards that require a community-input based plan for your library.

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5.7   NEW MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR LIBRARIES
a.   The New Minimum Standards for Libraries will go into effect on January 1, 2021. For a full listing and help with the minimum standards see DLD's Helpful Information for Meeting Minimum Public Library Standards and the Minimum Standards Comparison Chart.

5.8   TRUSTEE PETITIONS IN 2021
a.   For school district public libraries and special district public libraries that voted with school districts this year and do not normally do so, please remember that the number of signatures on petitions that candidates for the Board of Trustees may need in 2021 may be significantly higher than the 25 or so that you normally require.
   o   For school district public libraries: the law is the higher of 25 signatures or 2% of the total number of people who voted that day which, if you voted with a school district, could be much higher. You will want to check this with your attorney well in advance of your vote so that you can prepare potential candidates to meet the requirements.
   o   For special district public libraries: your special district legislation language would be the place to refer to when answering this question.

COOPERATIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT & DIGITAL COLLECTION ACCESS

5.9   LIBBY FOR WINDOWS ENDING
a.   Overdrive is ending support of LIBBY in the Windows OS on December 7th.. Their analytics show that there is a dwindling need for supporting Libby in Windows, and they will turn those resources to develop towards the IOS and Android.

5.10 SYNDETICS UNBOUND
a.   MHLS has a new post on the advisory board for Syndetics Unbound. The group met on 10/29 for the very first time. Syndetics Unbound is used to enhance the catalog and they also develop other tools and widgets to drive traffic to the catalog. Vega, our future discovery platform has early ties to Syndetics Unbound (of course it helps that both are ProQuest companies), so it behooves us to have a voice.

6   AWARENESS & ADVOCACY SERVICES

6.1   NYLA ADVOCACY WEBINARS
a.   The New York Library Association (NYLA) will begin a six-part series later this month focusing on, Advocacy Fundamentals. Each 90-minute session will spotlight the different aspects of

advocating for your library. There is no fee to participate in this series, but registration is required. https://www.nyla.org/fundamentals-series/

- o **Building People's Self Advocacy Skills: An Introduction to the Right Question Strategy** | Tuesday, November 24th | 9:00 - 10:30 am | Presented by Luz Santana (She/Hers), Co-Director of the Right Question Institute & Yeja Dunn (They/Them)
  Led by representatives of the Right Question Institute (RQI), this session will ask library workers to decide for themselves the need to be involved in advocacy work. Any library worker - from a Director with a master's degree to the library clerk or volunteer - needs to feel their work is valuable and critical to their communities before they can expect others to understand and appreciate the library experience. Libraries are foundational to a healthy community. We will use the Question Formulation Technique to explore the role of the library and library workers in making libraries flourishing and well-resourced public spaces.
- o **The Legislature & Libraries** | Tuesday, December 15th | 9:00 - 10:30 am
  Successful advocacy at the New York State Capitol requires community involvement and support from the legislature. The general election is now in our rear-view mirror and we are speeding ahead to the next two-year legislative session. Members from the Senate and Assembly will join us to discuss the 2020 Session, their roles within their respective houses, priorities and, the year ahead.
- o **Empowerment through Self Advocacy** | Tuesday, January 19th, 2021 | 9:00 - 10:30 am
  Advocacy means fighting for the self, too. As women have cracked the glass ceiling and climbed the ladder in the working world, stereotypes about their behavior have increased. Women attempt to assert themselves when faced with challenges, yet assertive women are viewed as aggressive, mean, or bossy. Historically, librarianship has been regarded as "women's work" and women dominate the field. However, library administrative roles are often held by men. How might women in the library world advocate for themselves and ascend these roles? Be inspired by these three women who overcame challenges in the workplace.
- o **Growing Genuine Community Support (Budget)** | Tuesday, February 16t, 2021 | 9:00 - 10:30 am | Presented by Brian Hildreth, Executive Director, Southern Tier Library System
  Local libraries are funded with local funds. This statement might seem obvious to library advocates, but it is a mystery to many local officials and residents. Community members who are charged with funding libraries, or who influence local decision-making will exercise good choices on behalf of their communities when they understand how libraries are funded, and the true value of delivery meaningful service. This workshop will focus on how libraries can (1) advocate consistently for local funding, (2) inform local stakeholders about the nuances of library funding and (3) craft messaging that ties increased library investment to improved community wellbeing.

6.2   2020 CENSUS

a. Self-response and field operations relating to enumeration in the 2020 decennial Census closed on October 15, 2020. The efforts by MHLS member libraries to inform patrons and non-users of the importance and safety in completing the Census helped contribute to an increase in self-response over 2010 rates in many areas. An accurate count ensures these communities receive the funding and representation they are entitled to. After unprecedented challenges to a

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complete and accurate count including the introduction of new methods of self-reporting, efforts to suppress responses from hard-to-count populations, and a global pandemic, outreach and organizational efforts by libraries through in-person enumeration support and publicity campaigns were especially important. CUNY's interactive Hard-to-Count Map provides detailed information on self-response rates as well as non-response followup rates for the 2010 and 2020 Census, which can be viewed at the state, county, and city/locality levels.

b. Thanks to aid from the New York State Census Equity Fund at The New York Community Trust, MHLS was able to provide training and print and digital publicity materials to help member library staff and stakeholders understand and share the importance of the Census with their communities and how to support a complete count.

7 INTERLIBRARY LOAN SERVICES (ILL)

7.1 MHLS PLANS TO TRANSITION ILL TRANSACTIONS TO SIERRA

a. MHLS is in the process of producing documentation for the Sierra ILL rollout. Delays in the implementation by III have made it difficult to report in detail at this time, but documentation on the ILL module, including training dates, and video recordings are being made available on the road map area of KB.midhudson.org.   MHLS ILL staff is available to assist members in placing requests as in this new environment. Please forward questions or concerns to tstohr@midhudson.org or extension 224.

7.2 ILL MANAGING DONATIONS TO CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

a. Libraries that would like to donate materials to the correctional facilities including: magazines, Spanish-language materials, encyclopedias published after 2010, coloring books and puzzle books should contact Tara Stohr, tstohr@midhudson.org. All donations must be dropped off at the MHLS offices, they may not be sent through the delivery.

7.3 NOTICES TO CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

a. Save yourself the stamp and put your late notices and bills into the MHLS delivery, labelled **ILL Department- Tara Stohr**. The MHLS delivery is efficient at getting the documents into Tara's hands and also cost effective!

8 CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM SERVICES

8.1 2020 CONSTRUCTION AWARDS ANNOUNCED

- Amenia Free Library / $445,611 / Renovation of Original Building and Expansion of the Library
- Brewster Public Library / $27,195 / Children's Room Built-Ins and Furnishings
- Claverack Free Library / $182,429 / Renovation of New Claverack Free Library
- Marlboro Free Library / $117,062 / Roofing Upgrade

- Plattekill Library / $126,910 / Current Library Site Purchase
- Pleasant Valley Free Library / $190,078 / Acquisition, Demolition and Site Prep of 11 Church St.
- Putnam Valley Free Library / $10,787 / Installation of Outdoor Electronic Sign
- Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library / $51,765 / Main Level Exterior Accessibility Improvements
- Stanford Free Library / $157,261 / Phase 4 - New Stanford Free Library
- Mid-Hudson Library System / $30,898 / MHLS Office Building 2nd Floor AC System Replacement

8.2   2021 CONSTRUCTION AID APPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED
a.   Applications are now under review by the NYS Division of Library Development.

8.3   2022 CONSTRUCTION AID
a.   Want to apply next year? Watch for updates on the Notices list and at
https://midhudson.org/nysconstructiongrant. You can also start getting your Facility Plan updated, and getting an energy audit.

8.4   ACTION MEMO: CONSTRUCTION GRANT FUNDING PRIORITIES
a.   The State Aid for Library Construction Program provides funding for member library construction projects that address eligible costs under the NYS Education Commissioner's Regulations 90.12, which are all currently eligible under MHLS Priorities for Funding.

The State Aid for Library Construction Program, as administered by the New York State Division of Library Development, directs the local public library system (MHLS) to create a fair and equitable method for distribution of this State Aid and is tasked by the Education Commissioner to develop priorities for funding to facilitate the ranking of received applications. The MHLS Board annually sets local priorities for funding to enable the ranking of member library applications should the total amount requested through eligible member applications exceed the amount of funds allotted through this program to the MHLS service area.

The MHLS Board is seeking member library director input on their funding priorities. Please respond to Action Memo 20-08 to provide feedback on the MHLS Board Priorities. Action Memo 20-08 will be released through the MHLS-Notice list on November 16, 2020. Deadline to respond November 30, 2020.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Action_Memo_Construction_Priorities_2020

9   COMMUNICATIONS AMONG MEMBER LIBRARIES

9.1   LIBRARY INFORMATION UPDATE REQUEST
a.   In order to effectively communicate with our members, the Mid-Hudson Library System maintains a database of contact information for our member libraries. Once a year we request an update of this information, to keep our records accurate. An Action Memo will be sent out

via the MHLS-Notice List in January 2021 for all member library directors to complete and submit.

10 SPECIAL POPULATIONS

10.1 2020-2021 ADULT LITERACY GRANT
a. The state has released funding at a reduced level for this program. Participating libraries will be contacted to confirm they can still participate in this program at the new funding levels and timeline.

10.2 2020-2021 FAMILY LITERACY GRANT
a. The state has released funding at a reduced level for this program. Participating libraries will be contacted to begin this program.

11 COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH OTHER LIBRARY SYSTEMS

11.1 EDI TRAINING
a. MHLS is partnering with our peers in the Public Library System Directors Organization of New York State (PULISDO) to use common funds to develop equity, diversity and inclusion training modules for library staff and trustees. We hope to have more info about this initiative before the end of the year.

12 ADMINISTRATIVE

12.1 MHLS TRUSTEES
a. At the 2020 Annual Membership Meeting three trustees were elected for 5-year terms commencing January 1, 2021
    o Jill Leinung, representing Columbia County
    o Barry Ramage, representing Dutchess County
    o Debra Klein, representing Greene County

12.2 2022-2026 MHLS PLAN OF SERVICE
a. Over the next 12 months we will be working to create our next plan of service. This is a document required by Commissioner's Regulations for public library systems and has three components:
    • System Plan of Service – developed by MHLS staff with input from members
    • Central Library Plan of Service – developed by the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee

- Free Direct Access Plan – developed by an ad hoc committee of member library directors and MHLS staff
  b. The System Plan of Service development will involve several activities including a service priority ranking survey that member library directors, MHLS trustees and MHLS Staff will participate in and "community conversations" held with member library directors and trustees to identify member library goals for the coming years.
  c. Both the System Services Advisory Committee and the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee will be forwarding recommendations to the DA for consideration during this process.
  d. The full plan is due to the Division of Library Development on October 1, 2021.

12.3 A Look Back…

  a. 2020 marks my second year at MHLS Executive Director. It has been, shall we say, a unique year, once again filled with opportunities and challenges. I would like to thank the members of the MHLS Directors Association for their partnership, generosity, and good humor throughout this year which has been intense for all of us. While the pandemic and ensuing financial crisis as we;; as the election are center of mind, I wanted to be sure to acknowledge the highlights of this year:
     o Decision Center was implemented, completing our very first ILS Road Map.
     o ILS Road Map 2.0 was developed and includes the Serials, Interlibrary Loan, Materials Booking, Patron Images modules and Encore Harvesting.
     o MHLS signed on as a development partner for the next generation online catalog product from Innovative Interfaces Inc., Vega.
     o 65 out of 66 of our member libraires now have an online registration form to connect with new library users.
     o We secured and implemented two grants to help get the word out about the 2020 Census and partnered with Bard College and La Voz to amplify our messaging to the Spanish-speaking community.
     o Multiple contracts were renegotiated for financial savings in light of state funding issues including III, Valley Courier, Universal Class, Mango and OverDrive.
     o The MHLS Trustee Education Series was transitioned and reconstructed to be offered 100% online.
     o MHLS staff produced social media marketing materials, re-usable by members to help get the word out about online resources, COVID-19 specific issues, the Census and voting.
     o A Phased Reopening Plan template was created to aid member libraries reopen library facilities safely during the pandemic and training was offered for Directors, Staff, and Trustees to work through tough issues related to reopening facilities.
     o A COVID-19 Resources clearinghouse and member library reopening status page was created and kept up-to-date.
     o Regular updates, Director and Trustee Briefings were offered on COVID-19 related regulation and law to help keep directors and trustees aware of a fast-moving policy changes.

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- A "Reimaging Library Services" webinar series was produced to help member libraries learn from each other as social distancing, digital inclusion and food insecurity issues have challenged our communities.
- The MHLS Board continued to pursue "board-to-board" visits to be sure they remain connected to issues your library is facing; formed a COVID-19 Response & Recovery Working Group to seek alternative revenue sources in light of the financial crisis brought on by flattening the curve of COVID-19; and formed a Racial Equity Working Group to assess System planning, policies and procedures through a racial equity lens.
- We participated in the first-ever statewide Great Give Back program in October 2020.
- MHLS negotiated a 15% discount for member library NYLA memberships.
- Working with the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee we produced an eCollection Development Webinar Series to heighten awareness of OverDrive collection trends, the need to devote more resources to our ecollections and to draw on the expertise of our members who have invested time, energy and funds to build up their ecollections.