

**MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
**Saturday, May 13, 2020**

President Swierat called the meeting to order at 10:00am through the online meeting platform

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

Trustees Present: Stuart Auchincloss, Lisa Baker Brill, Sharon Davis, Kenneth Goldberg, Priscilla Goldfarb, Rajene Hardeman, Debra Klein, Michele Ment, Barry Ramage, Lynne Ridgeway, Janet Schnitzer, Richard Swierat, Mary Linda Todd, Mark Wilson

Trustees Absent: Robert Culp (e)

Directors Association Liaison: Tom Lawrence, Director, Poughkeepsie Public Library District

Staff Present: Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Casey Conlin, Laurie Shedrick, Linda Vittone

**2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

In his report, President Swierat:

- Congratulated and thanked the staff for their highly professional work to support our member libraries during the pandemic.
- Urged MHLS trustees to participate in the New York Library Association's advocacy call to action to reach out to federal representatives to support state aid in the next federal stimulus package.
- Reported on the COVID-19 Response & Recovery Working Group formed out of the Finance Committee to seek advice and alternate revenue sources in preparation for the financial forecast from New York State.
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*President's report presented*

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Auchincloss moved and Ms. Davis seconded that the minutes of the March 2020 meeting be approved. **The motion carried** unanimously.

*Minutes approved*

**4. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Wilson, MHLS Board Treasurer, reported that he reviewed the Financial Reports and noted that we are behind both on income and expenses, neither of which was unexpected due to the changes we have made due to the pandemic. Ms. Aldrich and Ms. Vittone reviewed the state and purpose of the operating reserve fund and the operating contingency fund. Mr. Wilson noted that he found both the March 2020 and April 2020 financial reports acceptable. Mr. Goldberg moved and Ms. Ridgeway seconded that the financial reports for March 2020 and April 2020 be received. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Financial Reports received*

**5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Ms. Hardeman reported that she reviewed the warrants for March and found them acceptable (Doc 5.A). Ms. Ment moved and Mr. Auchincloss seconded that the warrant report for March 2020 be received. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*Warrants received*

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

In addition to her written report (Doc 6), Executive Director Aldrich reported on service responses in the face of COVID-19 crisis:

*COVID-19 Response*

- Ms. Aldrich thanked the trustees who helped with the “Restart Guidance Campaign” which was successful to get the attention of Empire State Development (ESD), the agency that issues guidance for Executive Orders related to the COVID-19 response. As a result, ESD invited Ms. Aldrich to provide input on restarting library services in New York State. Ms. Aldrich used the invitation as an opportunity to coordinate input from member library directors, public library system directors throughout the state and staff from the New York Library Association.
- MHLS staff have developed a “Phased Reopening Plan Template” for member libraries to use to base their local planning on. The template incorporates guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), New York State Department of Health, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, US Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Northeast Document Conservation Center, and the Institute of Museum and Library Service (IMLS).
- MHLS Delivery Operations team has been analyzing routes, capacity and possible strategic reconfigurations to respond to both the financial crisis caused by COVID-19 as well as logistical changes that may be called for as libraries restart moving items through the system.
- MHLS has helped multiple school district public libraries comply with Executive Order 202.26 which enabled these libraries to be a part of a special vote-by-absentee ballot initiative on June 9<sup>th</sup> with their school districts. MHLS continues to advocate for safe solutions for 414 petition signature gathering efforts and special district vote options.
- Financial Issues:
  - Ms. Aldrich reported that no announcement has been made about cuts, likely due to the continued advocacy work to increase state aid in the next federal stimulus package. Cut estimates continue to be discussed in the 14-20% range.
  - Cuts to MHLS services and programs, as agreed upon by the MHLS Finance and Executive Committees, have commenced.
  - Ms. Aldrich reported on further efforts to both decrease expenses and increase revenue.
- Board-to-Board Visits: As per a request from the Trustee Services Committee an emessage to all member library board presidents and directors will be issued on May 15<sup>th</sup> to reintroduce the board-to-board visit outreach effort from the MHLS Board. Ms. Aldrich encouraged trustees to become familiar with the resources available through the MHLS COVID-19 Resources page to aid member libraries as well as to watch for updated talking points related to the MHLS financial issues to ensure we communicate in a transparent and accountable way about what is going on.

### **7. DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT & CENTRAL LIBRARY REPORT**

- Mr. Lawrence referred attention to the minutes of the last Directors Association meeting.
- Mr. Lawrence presented a document that reported on the certified financials for the Central Library program including the 2019 certified financials, the projected 2020 budget which includes an anticipated 5% cut, and a projected 2021 budget. Mr. Lawrence noted the budget was created with input and approval from the oversight committee of the Directors Association, the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee (CL/CD).

*MHLS Board certified 2019 CLDA/CBA funds and approves 2020 CLDA/CBA Budget*

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- Ms. Aldrich noted that the CL/CD Committee agreed to freeze all non-contractually obligated spending, for example, on non-fiction print materials and non-fiction content for OverDrive, to provide flexibility for deeper cuts that may come later in the fiscal year.
- Mr. Auchincloss moved and Ms. Ridgeway seconded the acceptance of the 2019 certified financials for the Central Library Program and the approval of the 2020 Central Library budget with the caveat that the spending freeze continue to prepare for future cuts. **The motion carried unanimously.**

### **8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Swierat reported that the System's application for a Paycheck Protection Loan was approved. The Committee met to authorize acceptance of the forgivable loan. The funds were received on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Questions about the nature of the loan, interest on the loan, and the timeline of the loan were discussed.

*Paycheck Protection Plan loan approved and accepted*

### **9. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Wilson, chair, noted the plans for the committee to meet frequently this year, at least after each measurement period. Mr. Wilson reviewed the various efforts underway to prepare for deep cuts in state aid this year and answered questions from the board related to the various initiatives. The Committee and MHLS Staff are currently designing towards an anticipated cut of 20% both for 2020 and 2021.

*Financial Plan to manage potential cuts reviewed.*

### **10. FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ms. Ridgeway, chair, provided an update on issues with the elevator in the MHLS office building and presented the revised 2020 Capital Plan which both adds the elevator to the list of top priorities for the coming year and endorses the MHLS Finance Committee's recommendation to delay a State Aid for Library Construction Program application for upgrades to the delivery services area of the office building to conserve funds in the face of the anticipated cuts. Ms. Schnitzer moved and Mr. Auchincloss seconded the acceptance of the committee's findings. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*2020 Capital Plan Revised*

### **11. TRUSTEE SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Mr. Goldberg, chair, reviewed the status of planning for the 2020 MHLS Annual Membership Meeting. The Committee's plans have taken into consideration the financial constraints of our organization at this time as well as likely directives related to social distancing for the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. Mr. Auchincloss moved and Ms. Klein seconded a motion to accept the report of the committee. **The motion passed unanimously.**

*MHLS Annual Meeting Planning*

### **12. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Amendment to MHLS Bylaws**

As recommended by the Bylaws Working Group, the board agreed on the need to add in the standing committees of the board to the MHLS Bylaws. The Trustee Services Committee has decided to change its name to the Board Development Committee through this process. Procedural challenges were discussed related to the reconfiguration of the MHLS Annual Membership Meeting. Ms. Auchincloss moved and Ms. Hardeman seconded a motion to move forward with an amendment to the MHLS bylaws as per Article XII of the bylaws to add in the

*Bylaw Amendment advanced*

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names of the existing committees, as noted in the 2020 Board Committee List, with the exception of the change from "Trustee Services" to "Board Development." This course of action is contingent on an acceptable plan to manage a vote of the membership at a potentially online annual membership meeting. MHLS staff is tasked with researching this. The board will review the viability of this at their next meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**13. COMMUNICATION**

A. Board Members: Mr. Swierat proposed a resolution to acknowledge the high level of productivity and effectiveness of MHLS staff efforts in response to COVID-19 and to support the staff in their efforts to coordinate reopening plans across the system. The resolution read as "The MHLS board of trustees recognizes and supports the professional response and guidance provided by the MHLS staff to the library system to ensure support and a coordinated effort, using the recommended template incorporating all guidance from appropriate official sources, to provide ongoing services with alternative options and to reopen the system when notification from the Governor's office is received."

*Board resolution to recognize and support MHLS Staff*

B. Staff

- Ms. Shedrick provided a more complete report of the activities of the MHLS Technology Operations Team in response to efforts in support of member libraries in the face of the COVID-19 Crisis and commended her team's efforts. Ms. Shedrick reported on a meeting with the leadership team of Innovative Interfaces Inc. to explore the future development of our discovery platform.
- Mr. Conlin provided a report on the state of the Library Sustainability Team and their COVID-19 related deliverables.

*Staff efforts related to pandemic*

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

At 11:40am, Mr. Auchincloss moved and Ms. Ridgeway seconded that the meeting be adjourned. **The motion carried unanimously.**

*The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am location to be determined.*

Respectfully submitted by:

Michele Ment, Secretary

Approved                      2020  
By the MHLS Board of Trustees