

MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM
MINUTES of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Wednesday, September 16, 2020

President Swierat called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

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: Thea Schoep, Director, Claverack Free Library

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

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In his report, President Swierat:

- Thanked the MHLS Board and Staff for their continued commitment and perseverance during the time of COVID-19;
- Acknowledged the retirement announcement of Linda Vittone, MHLS Finance Manager & Personnel Officer, and thanked her for her dedicated years of service which has resulted in stable fiduciary management.
- Shared the news that Robert Culp will be stepping down from the MHLS board due to health concerns.

President's report presented

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Brill moved and Ms. Schnitzer seconded that the minutes of the July 2020 meeting be approved. **The motion carried** unanimously.

Minutes approved

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Wilson reported that the financial reports present no unusual items other than the expected decrease in revenue from New York State due to the financial crisis caused by COVID-19. Ms. Ridgeway moved and Ms. Ment seconded that the financial reports for June 2020 and July 2020 be received. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Financial Reports received

5. REPORT ON PAYMENT OF BILLS

Ms. Ment reported that she reviewed the warrants for June and found them acceptable. Mr. Ramage reported that he reviewed the warrants for July and found them acceptable. Ms. Ridgeway reported that she reviewed the warrants for August and found them acceptable. Mr. Swierat moved and Mr. Auchincloss seconded that the warrant reports for June, July and August 2020 be received. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Warrants received

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In addition to her written report, Executive Director Aldrich reported that:

- The staff continue to manage the 22.6% cut in library aid for the fiscal year and that the partial receipt of state aid, while greatly decreased, has improved cash flow projections for the coming year.

COVID-19 Financial Response

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- A transition plan to hire a new Financial Manager & Personnel Officer has been developed and is in motion. The goal being to have a new staff person in place in early December to overlap with Ms. Vittone before her retirement.
- More member libraries continue to find tune their in-person service delivery with an increasing number graduating from curbside service to opening the doors of their facilities to the public.
- Plans to right-size MHLS Delivery Operations, in light of significant decreases in delivery volume due to COVID-19, in cooperation with our delivery vendor are moving ahead with the endorsement of the MHLS System Services Advisory Committee and Directors Association. The new schedule will go into effect on October 5, 2020.

Linda Vittone to Retire

Members' COVID-19 Response

7. DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION LIAISON REPORT

Ms. Schoep reported on the most recent Directors Association meeting, noting the discussion about the right-sizing of MHLS Delivery Services in light of COVID-19 influenced statistics and fielded questions from the board about the action taken related to the OverDrive Reciprocal Lending Arrangement. Mr. Swierat expressed the board's gratitude to the MHLS Directors Association for the on-going support and partnership as the System navigates the fiscal crisis caused by COVID-19.

OverDrive RLA Program

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Auchincloss moved and Ms. Ment seconded a motion to go into executive session to discuss the Executive Director's performance review. **The motion passed unanimously** and the board entered executive session at 10:40am. At 10:49am Ms. Brill moved and Mr. Auchincloss seconded a motion that the board leave executive session. **The motion passed unanimously.** Mr. Swierat resumed the regular session of the Board meeting and moved that the board accept the results of the performance review of the executive director and congratulate Ms. Aldrich on her exemplary performance over the past year in light of several significant challenges. This was seconded by Ms. Brill and **passed unanimously** by the full board.

Executive Director Performance Review

9. NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Wilson reported that all three counties with upcoming vacancies on the MHLS Board have nominated candidates to fill these positions: Columbia County – Jill Leinung; Dutchess County – Barry Ramage (incumbent); Greene County – Debra Klein (incumbent). These candidates will be elected at the MHLS Annual Membership Meeting on October 23rd and their terms will begin in January 2021. Mr. Wilson presented the slate of officers for 2021 and Mr. Swierat called for any nominations from the floor. Mr. Goldberg nominated Mr. Auchincloss for the position of secretary in addition to the slate presented by the committee. Mr. Auchincloss accepted the nomination. Mr. Swierat declared nominations closed for the year.

2021 Candidates for the MHLS Board

2020 Slate of Officers Presented

2021 Slate of Officers to be determined by vote at the December board meeting:

President: Ric Swierat

Vice President: Barry Ramage

Treasurer: Mark Wilson

Secretary: Janet Schnitzer or Stuart Auchincloss

Member-at-Large: Priscilla Goldfarb

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10. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Ramage and Ms. Aldrich presented the mid-year adjusted budget. Mr. Wilson moved and Mr. Ramage seconded the approval of the mid-year budget. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Ramage and Ms. Aldrich reviewed 2021 budget planning efforts. Mr. Swierat presented the findings of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Working Group, a subcommittee of the Finance Committee, reviewing the purpose statement and planned approach of the group. Working group members Mr. Ramage, Ms. Goldfarb, and Mr. Wilson provided their perspective on the work ahead, acknowledging the extreme nature of the financial challenge faced by the organization and enforcing the need to think differently about alternative revenue sources.

*Adjusted Mid-year
Budget Accepted*

*COVID-19 Response
and Recovery
Working Group*

11. INCENTIVES COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Auchincloss reported on the process used to review and rank member library applications and presented the committee's recommendations for awards to the Division of Library Development. Mr. Auchincloss moved, and Ms. Davis seconded the motion to approve the recommended award amounts. **The motion passed unanimously.** Mr. Auchincloss thanked Mr. Conlin for his work to process the applications and summarize them for committee review.

*Recommended
Construction Awards
Approved*

12. PERSONNEL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Ramage and Ms. Aldrich presented an amended sick leave policy to bring the MHLS policy into alignment with a new NYS law. Mr. Ramage moved, and Ms. Schnitzer seconded a motion to approve the policy. **The motion passed unanimously.**

*Sick Leave Policy
Amended*

13. BYLAW AMENDMENT POSTPONED

Ms. Swierat explained the complications related to the MHLS Annual Membership Meeting due to the ongoing adjustments to Open Meetings Law related to Executive Orders designed to address COVID-19. As a result, it is recommended that the bylaws amendment to clarify committees of the board be postponed to 2021. Mr. Auchincloss moved, and Ms. Goldberg seconded a motion to postpone this bylaw amendment. **The motion passed unanimously.**

*Bylaw Amendment
Postponed*

14. SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION TRAINING

Ms. Aldrich reminded the board of the annual requirement to submit the prescribed form to indicate their compliance with mandated sexual harassment prevention training.

*Sexual Harassment
Prevention Training*

15. ORIENTATION: Racial Equity Working Group

Mr. Swierat reported on the findings of the MHLS Racial Equity Working Group and facilitated a discussion around the question of whether or not racial equity work is an issue for the MHLS Board. The discussion revealed that trustees do believe this should be addressed and unanimously endorsed a working purpose statement for the working group to operate under:

*Racial Equity Working
Group Purpose
Statement Endorsed*

To review Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) policies, procedures and practices in the areas of governance, human resources and system service design and recommend new approaches; In a way that promotes equity, diversity and inclusion as a core value of the institution; So that MHLS

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is authentically improving its commitment to racial and social equity and serving as a model for our member libraries.

16. COMMUNICATION

Ms. Shedrick reported that the ILS Road Map 2.0 is well underway and on schedule. Tech Ops staff are busy working with Innovative staff on implementing products on the Road Map and receiving training on new products.

*MHLS ILS Road Map
2.0*

Mr. Conlin thanked the Board for their work related to the State Aid for Library Construction Program and acknowledged the assistance of Joan Kay, MHLS Financial Assistant and Kerstin Cruger, MHLS Library Sustainability Associate & Communications Specialist to complete the work associated with this program.

*MHLS Staff Support
Acknowledged*

13. ADJOURNMENT

At 12:40, Ms. Goldfarb moved, and Ms. Ment seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. **The motion carried unanimously.**

The MHLS Annual Membership Meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 23rd at 10:00am. Location to be determined.

Respectfully submitted by:
Michele Ment, Secretary

Approved 2020
By the MHLS Board of Trustees