

MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM
MINUTES of the ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Friday, October 23, 2020 | Online

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

1. ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- a. Trustees Present: Stuart Auchincloss, Lisa Baker Brill, Sharon Davis, Kenneth Goldberg, Priscilla Goldfarb, Rajene Hardeman, Michele Ment, Barry Ramage, Lynne Ridgeway, Janet Schnitzer, Ric Swierat, Mary Linda Todd, Mark Wilson
- b. Trustees Excused: Robert Culp
- c. Trustee Absent: Debra Klein
- d. Staff Present: Alvin Alberto, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, John Barath, Isaac Barbee, Casey Conlin, Kerstin Cruger, Tom Finnigan, Joan Kay, Chris McCann, Vinnie McCombs, Thomas O'Connell, Laurie Shedrick, Tara Stohr, Linda Vittone
- e. Others Present (list attached to file)

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Swierat welcomed attendees to the 61st Annual Membership Meeting of the Board of Trustees and introduced the 2020 Board of the Mid-Hudson Library System and the 2020 leadership of the MHLS Directors Association. Ms. Aldrich added her welcome to the audience and introduced the MHLS Staff.

3. ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Wilson, Chair of the MHLS Nominations and Elections Committee conducted the election of three trustees to the MHLS Board.

From Columbia County: Jill Leinung was nominated for a five-year term by AnnaLee Dragon, Director of the Kinderhook Memorial Library and Chair of the Columbia County Library Association, and seconded by Thea Schoep, Director of the Claverack Free Library. Ms. Leinung's nomination was unanimously approved at the Columbia County Library Association's meeting held on August 14th, 2020.

From Dutchess County: Barry Ramage was nominated for a second five-year term by Tom Lawrence, Director of the Poughkeepsie Public Library District, seconded by Sandy Bartlett of the Morton Memorial Library & Community house in Rhinecliff. Mr. Ramage's nomination was unanimously approved at the Dutchess County Directors Association meeting held on June 5th, 2020.

From Greene County: Debra Klein was nominated for a second five-year term by Debra Kamecke, Director of the Cairo Public Library, seconded by Catherine Benson of the Heermance Memorial Library in Coxsackie. Ms. Klein's nomination was unanimously approved at the Greene County Library Association meeting held on June 17th, 2020.

There being no additional candidates nominated, Mr. Wilson declared the election of Jill Leinung, Barry Ramage, and Debra Klein for 5-year terms commencing on January 1, 2021.

4. REPORT OF THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Mr. Swierat's report provided recognition of the tremendous work of member libraires and the System's staff to confront and manage the challenges presented due to the COVID-19 public health crisis and ensuing financial crisis this year. He acknowledged the growing need to support workforce development and remote education and thanked library workers as the essential workers that they are. Mr. Swierat thanked member library trustees for their governance support and leadership during COVID-19. In acknowledgement of the challenges that lie ahead for the System financially, due to state aid cuts caused by COVID-19, Mr. Swierat thanked the staff of the Mid-Hudson Library System for their efforts under challenging circumstances, including the current hiring freeze and acknowledged next year will bring further challenges as our country continues to manage life in face of the reality of COVID-19. Mr. Swierat's closing remarks celebrated libraries as providing truly democratic and essential service and thanked all stakeholders who have worked together to make our system survive and thrive this year.

5. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Mr. Wilson, MHLS Treasurer, provided a report on the fiscal standing of the organization including sharing the results of the 2019 audit of MHSL by RBT, CPAs, LLP. The System's board, staff and CPAs have worked together to ensure our organization is managing its revenue and expenditures well and there were no adverse findings from the 2019 audit to report. Mr. Wilson addressed the concerning 22.6% cut in state aid this year and outlined how the MHLS staff and board have mitigated the cuts to maintain services and staff throughout the year. Mr. Wilson acknowledged that 2021 will be another challenging fiscal year given revenue forecasts at the state level and encouraged all stakeholders to continue to work well together to manage the finances of our System.

6. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Aldrich provided a chronological review of the events of the past year including:

- a. Celebration of the Claverack Free Library for the grand opening of their new facility and the Kent Public Library for the successful passage of their first municipal ballot referendum;
- b. A review of first quarter activities of the system included 2020 Census efforts, advocacy actions related to digital access and state funding and the launch of Decisions Center, the last component of the first ILS Road Map.
- c. A report of System staff response and service creation manage the impact of COVID-19, the temporary closure of library facilities in the region, and the safe re-opening of library facilities across the service area.
- d. A presentation of the efforts of member libraires to meet the needs of their residents through socially distanced services and programs with particular focus on digital inclusion, food insecurity, combatting social isolation, early work to address racial injustice, and the important work to encourage citizens to get ready to vote and to participate in the 2020 Census.
- e. A preview of 2021 areas of focus including the transition to the next generation online catalog, ILS Road Map 2.0 and a socially distanced iteration of the Turning Outward program to assist members with long-range planning goals.

7. STAFF SERVICE AWARDS

Ms. Aldrich reviewed and celebrated the service milestones of five MHLS Staff Members:

- a. Chris Herron, Facilities Manager & Assistant Delivery Operations Manager (25 years)
- b. Linda Vittone, Financial Manager & Personnel Officer (20 years)
- c. Joan Kay, Financial Assistant (20 years)
- d. Chris McCann, Delivery Ops Clerk II (10 years)

e. Michael Tsahalis, Delivery Ops & Facilities Associate (5 years)

8. **ADJOURNMENT OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

At 10:58am, Mr. Swierat adjourned the Business portion of the 61st Annual Membership Meeting.

9. **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

Ms. Aldrich introduced Tracie D. Hall, Executive Director of the American Library Association. Ms. Hall provided a presentation entitled, "*Fighting Two Pandemics: Information Poverty and What Libraries Can Do to Close the Gap,*" which focused attention on the importance of digital inclusion, including digital literacy services, as a focus of all libraires in the years to come.

10. **CLOSING COMMENTS**

Ms. Aldrich thanked Ms. Hall and the audience for participating in the 2020 Annual Membership Meeting and thanked stakeholders for their ongoing participation in the Mid-Hudson Library System.

Respectfully submitted by Michele Ment, Secretary

Approved

2020 by the MHLS Board of Trustees