

Executive Director's Report to the MHLS Board | January 2023

1. State Update

- a. We are very focused on advocating for the **Municipal Ballot Petition Signature Reduction Bill**.
 - i. This bill has been named a legislative priority for both the New York Library Association and the Board of Regents. It is MHLS' #1 legislative priority as it would reduce the number of petition signatures necessary for 60% (40) of our members to get their budget initiatives onto the ballot in November.
 - ii. We coordinated a targeted letter campaign to key staff in the Governor's office in late December to advocate for the inclusion of this bill in the budget bill currently being drafted.
 1. Fifty-one (51) MHLS member library directors signed on to our letter. This included not only libraries directly impacted by this issue but also directors of special district and school district public libraries.
 - a. This letter is also being shared with our region's state legislators to ensure they are aware that this is our #1 legislative priority.
 2. Five other public library systems with member libraries impacted by this issue also issued letters to the Governor's office using our template:
 - a. Four County Library System
 - b. Mohawk Valley Library System
 - c. North Country Library System
 - d. OWWL Library System (formerly the Pioneer Library System)
 - e. Westchester Library System
 - iii. Next Steps: Once the Executive Budget is released in mid-January we will better know how to proceed. Our goal would be to have the one-house budget bills reflect this priority as well which is why we've concurrently begun communicating with our area legislators. Should the bill not be included in the budget bill we will pursue the traditional bill introduction path post budget season.
- b. I testified before the **New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Libraries & Education Technology** in Albany on December 15th on the topic of the Future of New York State's Libraries. I was asked to focus my remarks on the need to retain and expand the State Aid for Library Construction Program.
 - i. A status report of need in our own system was provided:
 1. Total reported need: \$44 million. Total capital reserve funds reported in the last Annual Report to the state: \$7.4 million.
 2. 45% of member library facilities are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); this is down from 54% just three years ago thanks to the funding through this program.

3. 56% of member library facilities are more than 50 years old.
 4. 38% of member library facilities are more than 100 years old.
- ii. I focused on four broad areas impacting libraries not only in our system but across the state:
1. Broadband connectivity: 83% of our member libraries currently report that they do not offer the broadband connectivity speed recommended by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the American Library Association (ALA).
 2. The demographic trends in our state speak strongly to the fact that more New Yorkers are choosing to age in place. In the Hudson Valley, total population is anticipated to grow by 5.9% by 2040, yet the over-80 population is anticipated to grow by 54.6%. Addressing fully accessible library facilities is a must to meet the basic needs of residents.
 3. More space for people, not just “stuff.” Post-pandemic usage of libraries is trending towards programs, social interactions, and collective impact work. This is in addition to, not instead of, classic public library services that rely on the collection and technology.
 4. Climate change is the single greatest threat to global health, a code red for humanity and is this generation’s grandest challenge. The impact of more frequent severe weather events, rising temperatures that put a strain on the electrical grid, and wildfires all impact the design and resilience of library facilities.
- iii. The full proceedings were recorded and are available for viewing [here](#).
- c. NYLA’s **2023 Legislative Session Summary** is now available [here](#).
- d. **Committee Appointments for 2023:** There is significant turnover for both library committees in the state legislature, including new chairs which are noted below. No MHLS area legislators are on either committee this year:
- i. [Carrie Woerner](#) (Saratoga Springs) has been named Chair of the Assembly Libraries & Education Technology Committee for 2023
 - ii. [Iwen Chu](#) (Brooklyn) has been named the Chair of the Senate Committee on Libraries
- e. **MHLS Area Legislators:** We have a significant number of new legislators in our region, we appreciate your help in reaching out to introduce yourself so they can get to know our system and our libraries. An up-to-date list of legislators and which libraries are in their district is attached to this report at the end. Meetings will be set with all legislators by early March that you will be invited to.
- f. **Save the dates:**
- i. **MHLS Advocacy Briefing:** Tuesday, February 14th, 2023 at 10:00am

- ii. **New York State Library Advocacy Day/Week 2023:** Advocacy Day 2023 is scheduled for Tuesday, February 28. This will take place in Albany, however MHLS will have a hybrid meeting schedule with some appointments online on or around February 28th and some in Albany.

2. Personnel Updates

- a. Our search continues for a new part-time Financial Assistant.
- b. Farah Faizi, our Administrative Assistant will be going out on maternity leave February – April, 2023
- c. There is a correction to the 2023 Salary Schedule. My salary was inaccurately reported on the original version provided in December. This will require a board vote.

3. Delivery Contract Extension: We have signed the extension contract that will go into effect July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024.

4. Authority Control Project: Update provided by Nina Acosta, MHLS Data Operations Supervisor

- a. All of our shared resources in the online catalog have been processed and any names, subjects, uniform titles, and series titles have been updated to match the current Library of Congress headings. We've added alternative terms for several headings in an effort to be more inclusive:
 - "Undocumented Immigrants" on instances of "Illegal immigration"
 - "Hard of hearing" on instances of "Hearing impaired"
 - "Inuit peoples" on instances of "Eskimos"
 - "Indigenous peoples" on instances of "Indians"
 - "Low-wage work" on instances of "Unskilled labor"
 - "Children in difficult situations" on instances of "Problem children"
 - Include Chicano Thesaurus terms for Non-Chicano Persons of Latino Heritage
 - Include endonyms for 10 indigenous groups
- b. The project also added Accelerated Reader and Lexile Measures which teachers often request their students use to find appropriate reading levels. Those can now be used by library staff and catalog users to identify lists of books that match their criteria.

5. Trustee Education

- a. We have officially announced the 2023 schedule for the Trustee Handbook Book Club which is produced through a partnership with MHLS, the OWWL Library System and the Southern Tier Library System. Our promotional partners include the State Library, PULISDO, and the Library Trustee Association Section of the New York Library Association. All sessions count towards your education requirement (two hours) for the year:
 - i. Tuesday, February 21, 2023 | 5:00-6:30pm: **Open Meetings Law with Kirsten O'Neill, Committee on Open Government**

- ii. Tuesday, April 18, 2023 | 5:00-6:30pm: **The Board-Director Relationship**
- iii. Tuesday, June 20, 2023 | 5:00-6:30pm: **Financial Planning & Budgeting**
- iv. Tuesday, August 15, 2023 | 5:00-6:30pm: **Strategic Planning**
- v. Tuesday, October 17, 2023 | 5:00-6:30pm: **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Access & Justice**
- vi. Tuesday, December 19, 2023 | 5:00-6:30pm: **Financing & Managing Construction Projects**

b. I will be working on a new edition of the [Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State](#) this year.

6. **Dyson Foundation Grant**

- a. We have received the full grant award of \$15,000
- b. We have signed the contract and have a kick-off meeting with the consultants from Impact PR & Communications scheduled for January 23rd. Ric Swierat and Mark Wilson, members of the MHLS Government & Community Relations Working Group will join Laura Crisci, MHLS Library Sustainability Coordinator and myself at that meeting.

7. **Hudson Valley Digital Inclusion Coalition Exploratory Group:** We have scheduled a meet up for February 16th with organizations from around the Hudson Valley to share their activities in this area. At this meeting we will determine the level of interest to create a formal coalition.

8. **Town of Union Vale Update:**

- a. In December I provided feedback on a draft job description and job ad for a library director to the board president. I have encourage the board to hire a full-time director at a competitive salary.
- b. On January 3rd, 2023 the Division of Library Development issued an email to the Town Supervisor to check in and clarify next steps. The representative from DLD stated that the budget for the new library will need to at least align with the State Library's recommendation of \$50 per capita.
- c. A second custom training session which I will lead is scheduled for Monday, January 23rd. The trustees participated in a survey to determine the topics of interest that will be addressed.

9. **Board Operations**

- a. **Training on Demand Access for MHLS Board Members:** You will receive an automated message providing you each with access to the new learning management system, "Training on Demand," so that you can access the Trustee Education academy. This gives you a new option to fulfill your trustee education requirement online, at your convenience, with a certificate of attendance issued after you view a session.
- b. **Board-to-Board Visits**
 - i. **Action Requested:** Please provide a list of all 2022 visits made to Farah: ffaizi@midhudson.org
 - ii. Reminders:

1. Please coordinate responses to libraries requesting a visit with your peers in the county and, as always:
 - a. Please let me know if you need any assistance to prepare for your meetings or with follow-up information.
 - b. Please let Farah know once you've attended a meeting for tracking purposes: ffaizi@midhudson.org
- iii. Talking Points
 1. Please raise awareness about the MHLS Board's vote to become a partner with [Unite Against Book Bans](#).
 2. Trustee Education
 - a. Please help advertise the guidance on the new Trustee Education Requirement which went into effect January 1, 2023 and the launch of the new Training on Demand service from MHLS that helps trustees meet this requirement:
<https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/trustees/education.htm>

10. Executive Director's Event Participation: December 3, 2022 – January 10, 2023

- a. MHLS Finance Committee
- b. MHLS Bylaws, Policy & Procedures Committee
- c. Facilitator: New Directors Forum
- d. Consultation: Patterson Library Board of Trustees
- e. Greene County Library Association
- f. MHLS Director Association
- g. Hudson Valley Digital Coalition Planning Group
- h. Presentation: Sustainable Thinking for the Future of Libraries, Southern Westchester BOCES
- i. Columbia County Library Association
- j. MHLS Facilities Committee
- k. Presentation: Pathways to Sustainable Funding, MHLS Trustee Education Series
- l. Public Library System Directors Organization of New York State (PULISDO)
- m. Facilitator: Libraries & Sustainability Virtual Book Club (session 3), Public Programs Office, American Library Association
- n. NYS Assembly Standing Committee on Libraries & Education Technology Hearing, Albany, NY
- o. State Library/PULISDO Monthly Meeting
- p. Hudson Valley Climate Action Network (HVCAN) Event, Kingston, NY
- q. Consultation: Pleasant Valley Free Library Board of Trustees
- r. Council Committee on Sustainability, American Library Association
- s. Ulster County Library Association
- t. Consultation: Woodstock Public Library District Director & Trustees
- u. Consultation: Starr Library (Rhinebeck)/NYS Division of Library Development

- v. Advisory Board, Sustainable Libraries Initiative
- w. New Director Orientation: Chris Fisher, Director, Pawling Library
- x. Planning Group, Trustee Handbook Book Club
- y. New Trustee Orientation: Heather Blakely & George Joiner with Richard Swierat & Barry Ramage
- z. Presentation: Sustainable Thinking, Library of Virginia

Appendix: MHLS Area Legislators

- [New York State Senate](#)
 - Senator Robert Rolison (R) 39th District
 - Beekman Library
 - Blodgett Memorial Library (Fishkill)
 - Desmond-Fish Public Library (Garrison)
 - East Fishkill Public Library District
 - Grinnell Public Library District (Wappingers)
 - Howland Public Library (Beacon)
 - Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library (Cold Spring)
 - LaGrange Association Library
 - Pawling Free Library
 - Poughkeepsie Public Library District
 - Adriance Memorial Library
 - Boardman Road Branch Library
 - Sadie Peterson Delaney African Roots Branch Library
 - Putnam Valley Free Library
 - Senator Peter Harckham (D) 40th District
 - Brewster Public Library
 - Kent Public Library
 - Mahopac Public Library
 - Patterson Library
 - Reed Memorial Library (Carmel)
 - Senator Michelle Hinchey (D) 41st District
 - Amenia Free Library
 - Cairo Public Library
 - Catskill Public Library
 - Palenville Branch Library
 - Chatham Public Library
 - Canaan Branch Library
 - Claverack Free Library
 - Clinton Community Library
 - D.R. Evarts Library (Athens)
 - Dover Plains Library

- Elting Memorial Library (New Paltz)
 - Germantown Library
 - Greenville Public Library
 - Heermance Memorial Library (Coxsackie)
 - Highland Public Library
 - Hudson Area Library
 - Hunter Public Library
 - Hurley Library
 - Hyde Park Library District
 - Kinderhook Memorial Library
 - Kingston Library
 - Livingston Free Library
 - Marlboro Free Library
 - Millbrook Library
 - Morton Memorial Library (Pine Hill)
 - Morton Memorial Library and Community House (Rhinecliff)
 - Mountain Top Library (Tannersville)
 - New Lebanon Library
 - North Chatham Free Library
 - NorthEast-Millerton Library
 - Philmont Public Library
 - Phoenicia Library
 - Pine Plains Free Library
 - Plattekill Public Library
 - Pleasant Valley Library
 - Red Hook Public Library
 - Roeliff Jansen Community Library (Ancram, Copake, Hillsdale)
 - Rosendale Library
 - Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library (Milton)
 - Saugerties Public Library
 - Staatsburg Library
 - Stanford Free Library
 - Starr Library (Rhinebeck)
 - Tivoli Free Library
 - Town of Esopus Library
 - Town of Ulster Public Library
 - Valatie Free Library
 - West Hurley Public Library
 - Windham Public Library
 - Woodstock Public Library District
- Senator Peter Oberacker (R) 51st District
 - Olive Free Library Association
 - Stone Ridge Library

- [New York State Assembly](#)
 - Assemblymember Matthew J. Slater (R) 94th District
 - Brewster Public Library
 - Kent Public Library
 - Mahopac Public Library
 - Patterson Library
 - Putnam Valley Free Library
 - Reed Memorial Library (Carmel)
 - Assemblymember Dana Levenberg (D) 95th District
 - Desmond-Fish Public Library (Garrison)
 - Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library (Cold Spring)
 - Assemblymember Christopher Tague (R) 102nd District
 - Cairo Public Library
 - Catskill Public Library
 - Palenville Branch Library
 - D.R. Evarts Library (Athens)
 - Greenville Public Library
 - Heermance Memorial Library (Coxsackie)
 - Hunter Public Library
 - Morton Memorial Library (Pine Hill)
 - Mountain Top Library (Tannersville)
 - Phoenicia Library
 - Windham Public Library
 - Assemblymember Sarahana Shrestha (D) 103rd District
 - Elting Memorial Library (New Paltz)
 - Hurley Library
 - Kingston Library
 - Morton Memorial Library and Community House (Rhinecliff)
 - Olive Free Library Association
 - Red Hook Public Library
 - Rosendale Library
 - Saugerties Public Library
 - Starr Library
 - Stone Ridge Library
 - Tivoli Free Library
 - Town of Esopus Library
 - Town of Ulster Public Library
 - West Hurley Public Library
 - Woodstock Public Library District
 - Assemblymember Jonathan G. Jacobson (D) 104th District
 - Highland Public Library

- Howland Public Library (Beacon)
 - Marlboro Free Library
 - Plattekill Public Library
 - Poughkeepsie Public Library District*
 - Adriance Memorial Library
 - Sadie Peterson Delaney African Roots Branch Library
 - Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library (Milton)
- Assemblymember Anil Beephan Jr. (R) 105th District
 - Amenia Free Library
 - Beekman Library
 - Blodgett Memorial Library (Fishkill)
 - Dover Plains Library
 - East Fishkill Public Library District
 - Grinnell Public Library District (Wappingers)
 - LaGrange Association Library
 - Pawling Free Library
- Assemblymember Didi Barrett (D) 106th District
 - Chatham Public Library*
 - Canaan Branch Library
 - Claverack Free Library
 - Clinton Community Library
 - Germantown Library
 - Hudson Area Library
 - Hyde Park Library District
 - Livingston Free Library
 - Millbrook Library
 - New Lebanon Library
 - North Chatham Free Library
 - NorthEast-Millerton Library
 - Philmont Public Library
 - Pine Plains Free Library
 - Pleasant Valley Library
 - Poughkeepsie Public Library District*
 - Boardman Road Branch Library
 - Roeliff Jansen Community Library (Ancram, Copake, Hillsdale)
 - Staatsburg Library
 - Stanford Free Library
- Assemblymember Scott H. Bendett (R) 107th District
 - Chatham Public Library*
 - Kinderhook Memorial Library
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