

Executive Committee

September 1, 2021

1. Roll Call

- ✓ Ric Swierat, President (D)
- ✓ Barry Ramage, Vice President (D)
- ✓ Stuart Auchincloss, Secretary (U)
- ✓ Mark Wilson, Treasurer (C)
- ✓ Priscilla Goldfarb, Member-at-Large (P)
- ✓ Rebekkah Smith Aldrich (Staff Liaison)

2. Chair's Comments:

Mr. Swierat provided an update on the efforts of the MHLS COVID-19 Response & Recovery Working Group, including a recent exploratory meeting with the leadership of the [Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley](#). The Executive Committee is recommending to the full board that:

- a. The working group, board and staff continue to pursue a long-term financial plan that involves fundraising for future challenges and opportunities. The Committee acknowledges the work that is necessary to fine-tune the details of this effort.
- b. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee recommends the serious exploration of the dissolution of the now dormant Foundation for Hudson Valley Libraries, a charitable foundation established approximately 20 years ago. This Foundation was tied to MHLS in that the MHLS business office managed the recordkeeping and reporting requirements for the Foundation. Various iterations of the board of the Foundation have involved MHLS trustees and member library directors.
- c. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee recommends the serious exploration of the creation of a fund with the Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley to hold funds privately fundraised that would be drawn upon for two primary purposes: (1) to help weather severe economic challenges such as the impact of the pandemic on the FY2020 finances of MHLS, and (2) investments in board-identified strategic goals to advance MHLS' ability to respond to member library and community needs.
- d. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee recommends that the \$6,000 raised by donations from members of this board be utilized to underwrite the legal costs associated with the first two proposed actions above as well as to fund the services of a marketing firm to assist with the messaging challenges identified by the market research survey conducted earlier this year.

3. Mission, Vision, Values, and Ethics

- a. As part of the strategic planning process undertaken this year, the Executive Committee directed the Executive Director to propose edits to the existing mission statement and to develop, for the first time ever, a vision statement, values statement and an ethics policy. Enclosed with this report are proposals for three of these four items. These were developed based on the input of member library directors, MHLS staff and the chairs of the MHLS Board Committees.
- b. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee is proposing the adoption of the attached upgrade to the existing MHLS mission statement.

Committee Charge: "The Executive Committee, consisting of the officers and the immediate Past President, if the immediate Past President is still a member of the Board, and otherwise in conformance with New York State Law, shall transact such business as may be necessary between meetings of the Board. If the Past President is no longer seated on the Board, the Nominating and Elections Committee will nominate an additional member"

- c. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee is proposing the adoption of the attached core values statements.
- d. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee is proposing the adoption of the attached Ethics Policy for Board Members and Employees.

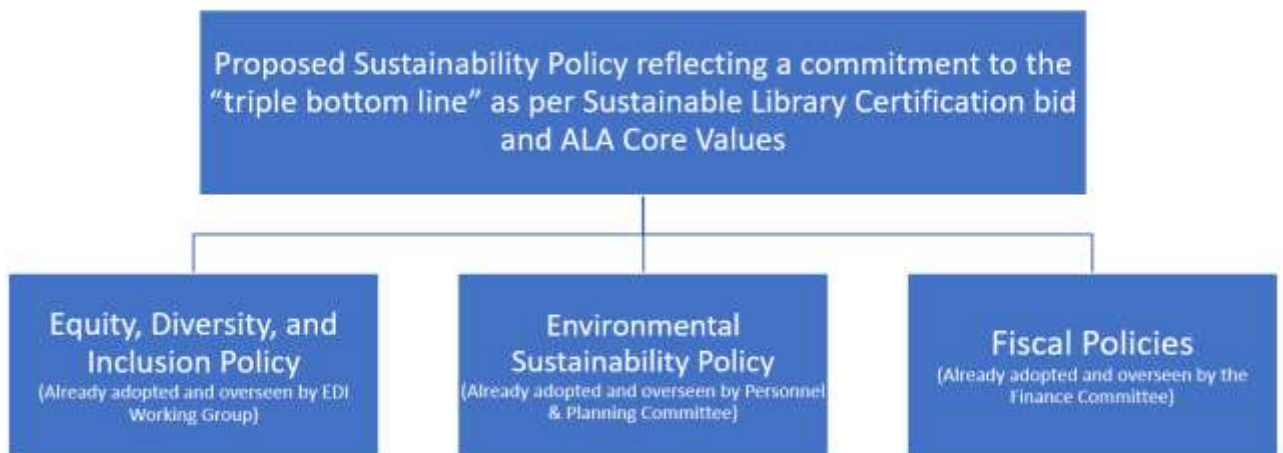
4. Adoption of a Sustainability Policy

- a. Through discussions of the MHLS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group emerged the potential to better express our organization’s commitment to the “triple bottom line” of sustainability. Over the past several years, our organization has been pursuing its Sustainable Library Certification through the Sustainable Libraries Initiative and adopting policies that reflect that work, for example: our fiscal policies, the Environmental Sustainability Policy within the Personnel Policies, and most recently the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

VENN DIAGRAM DEPICTING THE DEFINITION OF THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE



Source: Sustainable Thinking: Ensuring Your Library’s Future in an Uncertain World [ALA Editions]



- i. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee is proposing the adoption of the attached MHLS Sustainability Policy.

5. 2022 Meeting Dates

- a. The Committee discussed the board meeting dates for 2022.

- i. The Committee urged the Executive Director to continue to advocate with legislators, the New York Library Association, and other like-minded organizations to amend the NYS Open Meetings Law to allow for general remote participation as was allowed for in 2020 due to the pandemic.
 - ii. The Committee is recommending that we go back to the practice of holding two MHLS Board Meetings at member library locations in 2022.
- b. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee is proposing the adoption of the attached meeting schedule for 2022.

6. Long Island University's Palmer School of Library & Information Science: Advanced Certificates in Public Library Administration

- a. As discussed earlier this year, in order for this program to be brought to our region MHLS Executive Director Rebekkah Smith Aldrich signed on to be an adjunct professor for the program. Now that enough students have enrolled to formally schedule a new cohort in our region, as requested, Rebekkah brought this issue back to the Executive Committee's Attention: As there is compensation tied to this role in the program and we want there to be no sense of a conflict of interest, Rebekkah has proposed turning over all proceeds, after taxes, from her role as adjunct professor to the program when it is taught in the MHLS region to MHLS.
 - i. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee proposes that the Board enter into a memo of understanding with Rebekkah that codifies and clarifies this arrangement.

- 7. COVID-19 Personnel Issues:** Rebekkah provided a report on the daily impact of COVID-19 on the workplace. Currently only unvaccinated staff are required to wear masks in the workplace. Rebekkah is not recommending mandating the vaccine for staff and the Committee agreed with that course of action for the time being. Formal telecommuting agreements are in place with telecommuting eligible staff as per the board approved Telecommuting policy. These primarily address the ability for eligible staff to split their time between the Poughkeepsie office, their home office, and field work. Only one staff person has opted to work from home 100% of the time. All telecommuting agreements will be formally evaluated at the end of the year and either adjusted or renewed in January 2022.

- 8. Executive Director Evaluation:** The Executive Committee moved into executive session to discuss the results of the Executive Director's evaluation.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm