

Incentives Committee

Friday, March 1, 2024 | 10:00am

1. Roll Call

- ✓ Rajene Hardeman, Chair (D)
- ✓ Heather Blakely (U)
- ✓ Jill Leinung (C)
- Carla Taylor (P)
- ✓ Mary Linda Todd (G)
- ✓ Barry Ramage (D) (ex officio)
- ✓ Rebekkah Smith Aldrich (Staff Liaison)
- ✓ Laura Crisci (Staff Liaison)

2. **Chair's Comments:** Chair Rajene Hardeman reported on the intersection of the committee's charge with the 2024 Priorities presented by President Barry Ramage.

3. **The Committee reviewed its charge and recommend no changes:** "Responsible for the continuing review of the MHLS grants program. Presents its recommendations for the following year's grants program to the board prior to the review of the next year's budget."

4. Review of the State Aid for Library Construction Program

- a. Executive Director Aldrich provided an overview of the program, application process, timeline, and the roles of the MHLS Staff, Incentives Committee and MHLS Board
- b. The Committee discussed the 2024 Funding Priorities and recommend that the priorities be amended to clarify how the ENERGY STAR program intersects with the energy conservation point and to broaden the fifth point to allow for a point for projects that show alignment with broader community climate action plans.
 - i. **ACTION:** Chair Hardeman moved, and Mary Linda Todd seconded a motion to amend the priorities to reflect these changes and recommend to the board the adoption of the priorities as presented in the attached document. The motion passed unanimously.
- c. The Committee reviewed the definition of an "economically disadvantaged community" in the Mid-Hudson Library System and concurred no changes were necessary.
 - i. **ACTION:** Heather Blakely moved, and Jill Leinung seconded, a motion to recommend that the board adopt the same definition as used in recent years: "A political subdivision within which the percentage of the population living in poverty is equal to or greater than the New York State average as demonstrated by federal Census data." The motion passed unanimously.
- d. The Committee discussed their plan for reviewing submitted applications later this year.

5. **The Committee reviewed the Board policy on conflict of interest as it applies to the work of the committee on the State Aid for Library Construction Program.** All understand that should a library that applies for funding from the State Aid for Library Construction Program that they either serve on the board of or work for, that they will need to

recuse themselves from the application evaluation process.

6. The Committee reviewed the [Mileage Equalization Program](#) and agreed it should continue on as is.
7. **The Committee reviewed the MHLS New York Library Association (NYLA) Annual Conference Attendance Grants**
 - a. Background: This program has been offered three times, in 2019, 2022, and 2023. Funds have been allocated for this program in 2024 (\$2,500), however, we may want to reserve announcement of this opportunity until we know the final outcome of the NYS budget since our budget assumptions were based on receiving at least what was received last year.
 - i. Matching grants between \$250-\$500 were provided, up to a total allocation of \$2,500
 - ii. Eligible: new library director or new library staff member
 - iii. Reimbursement for conference registration fee, travel to and from the conference, and/or accommodations and per diem costs.
 - b. **ACTION:** Chair Hardeman moved, and Jill Leuning seconded, a motion to recommend to the board that this grant program continue for 2024 pending the outcome of the 2024 state budget negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.
8. **Other**
 - a. The Committee discussed the State Library's recommendation that public library systems consider blocking access to the State Aid for Library Construction Program if a member library's board has not fully complied with Education Law 260-d which requires at least two hours of relevant education per trustee annually. AT this time the Committee does not feel this is necessary in our System.
 - b. Mary Linda Todd stressed the importance of staff guidance for libraries applying for digital signage regarding the need for sunscreens to protect this equipment to ensure its longevity. Todd also noted a request that staff ask a library if a permit has been secured for a digital sign before we would agree to fund it through the State Aid for Library Construction Program.
 - c. The Committee discussed the importance of stressing that we cannot fund repairs and routine maintenance through the State Aid for Library Construction Program.
 - d. The Committee agreed to meet if necessary in June online and to hold their September meeting in person.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55am