

Government & Community Relations Working Group

December 16, 2024 | 1:30pm

1. Roll Call

- ✓ Richard Swierat, Chair (D)
- ✓ Mark Wilson (C)
- ✓ Jill Leinung (C)
- ✓ Thomas Silvius (G)
- ✓ Barry Ramage, Ex Officio (D)
- ✓ Rebekkah Smith Aldrich (Staff Liaison)

2. Alumni Engagement

- a. As previously reported, the working group had been considering how to harness the expertise of MHLS Board of Trustee alumni for the stated purpose* of this working group.
- b. The working group unanimously endorses the addition of alumni to this working group rather than creating a separate alumni advisory group as had been previously discussed.
- c. The proposed process to facilitate this:
 - i. **ACTION:** The working group members recommend that the board endorse the allowance of alumni to the Government & Community Relations Working Group roster for 2025. Alumni are defined as folks who have previously been elected to the MHLS Board of Trustees.
 1. The working group would now report to the Executive Committee of the Board
 2. The chair of the working group would be a member of the Executive Committee
 3. Other sitting board members would also serve on the working group.
 4. The board president would continue to be ex officio of the working group.
 5. Alumni appointments to the working group would be for one year with the option for renewal by the board for subsequent years.
 6. Ideally, we would have one alumnus from each county serving on this working group with other currently sitting trustees.

3. 2025 Budget Advocacy:

- a. Prior to the January 2025 board meeting, Rebekkah will be reaching out to members of our board who are representing areas of our region covered by legislators that may be influential in shaping the Executive Budget to ask for their help in making the case for increased operating aid for public library systems.
- b. At the board meeting, Rebekkah will review key talking points and strategies during the meeting as well as covering the relationship with key stakeholders at the annual orientation which will be held directly after the January board meeting.
- c. All MHLS trustees are encouraged to sign up to be a "NYLA Library Advocate" through this link: <https://www.nyla.org/become-an-advocate->
- d. An online Advocacy Day briefing is being scheduled for the end of January to prepare people for NYLA Library Advocacy Day on February 5th in Albany.
- e. A new member library trustee e-newsletter will be issued to enlist more help from member library trustees.
- f. Rebekkah will work to ensure an alumni mailing list is creating to harness more alumni

**To raise the profile of the Mid-Hudson Library System; In a way that ensures stakeholders understand the value of the System to our member libraries and communities while also promoting the value of our member libraries; So that stakeholders contribute to the financial sustainability of the System*

4. MHLS Staff Updates:

- a. The final report for the implementation grant from the Dyson Foundation has been filed.
- b. There are no updates from NYS on the effort to dissolve the Foundation for Hudson Valley Libraries.
- c. Staff have drafted a new quarterly PR plan for 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm.