

# Incentives Committee

Friday, February 21, 2025 | 1:30PM | Online

## 1. Roll Call

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| ✓ Carla Taylor, Chair (P) | ✓ Barry Ramage (D) (ex officio)          |
| ✓ Leslie Gerber (U)       | ✓ Rebekkah Smith Aldrich (Staff Liaison) |
| ✓ Rajene Hardeman (D)     |  |
| ✓ Charles Kutcher (G)     | ☐ Laura Crisci (Staff Liaison)           |
| ✓ Jill Leinung (C)        |  |

2. **Approval of the minutes from the last meeting:** Chair Carla Taylor moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded a motion to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

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 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 2025 Funding Priorities and recommend that the priorities document be amended to include a stipulation that in order to apply, a library must be in good standing in regard to the timely submission of their Annual Report to the State and any required reporting related to an open State Aid for Library Construction project.
  - i. **ACTION:** Chair Carla Taylor moved, and Leslie Gerber seconded a motion to amend the priorities to reflect this change 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 agreed to recommend an expansion of that definition.
  - i. **ACTION:** Charles Kutcher moved, and Jill Leinung seconded the expansion of the definition to broaden the number of member libraries eligible for the opportunity for a reduced match by including any libraries whose service area is located within a Potential Environmental Justice Area and recommend that the board approve the following expanded definition of an economically disadvantaged community in our region to: “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 or a chartered service area which is fully or partially within a [“Potential Environmental Justice Area”](#) as defined by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.”

- 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 serve on the board of 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 four times, in 2019, 2022, 2023 and 2024. Funds have been allocated for this program in 2025 (\$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:** Leslie Gerber moved, and Rajene Hardeman seconded, a motion to recommend to the board that this grant program continue for 2025 pending the outcome of the 2025 state budget negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm.