

RULES & PROCEDURES

LEGAL BASIS

The Board of Trustees shall adhere to the provisions of (1) the New York State Education Law, and all other applicable New York State laws; (2) Rules of the Board of Regents; (3) Regulations of the Commissioner of Education; and (4) the MHLS Bylaws.

OATH OF OFFICE

At the January meeting or within 30 days of the start of a new term, Board members will take a formal oath of office:

I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of New York, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Trustee of the Mid-Hudson Library System.

MEETINGS--TIMES AND PLACES

Board meetings shall generally be held at 10:00am on dates set by the board before or at the December meeting.

Meetings will generally be held at the MHLS Auditorium in Poughkeepsie, although it is suggested that one or more meetings be held at one of the member libraries.

ATTENDANCE

The System adheres to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law. Meetings of the board and of its committees shall be open to anyone who accepts the rules of conduct established by the board or by the committees.

The director may arrange for staff members to be present and make presentations at board and committee meetings.

AGENDA

The agenda shall be drafted by the director and previewed by the president prior to its distribution.

Matters to be reported to or discussed by the board at any meeting shall, whenever possible, be presented to the president or director for inclusion in the distributed agenda, or be approved by the board as amendments to the agenda.

Recommendations to the board from Standing Committees will be listed as Action Items in the agenda. As per Robert's Rules of Order, actions recommended from Standing Committees do not need to be moved or seconded in order to allow for discussion and a vote at the board meeting.

A representative of the Directors Association, as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the MHLS Board of Trustees, shall be requested to prepare a written report, for which the minutes of their last meeting combined with the minutes of the last meeting of the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee may suffice (for distribution with each agenda), on those aspects of the Directors Association which are of direct interest to the board and shall be given an opportunity at all monthly meetings to comment on or add to the report.

At the May meeting the board shall review the MHLS bylaws and, if necessary, propose amendments to be presented at the annual meeting.

At, or prior to, the December meeting the board shall:

- Elect officers for the following year
- Authorize the new president to establish committees for the following year.
- Adopt a schedule of board meeting dates and locations for the twelve-month period January through December (at the September meeting).
- Update the FISCAL DESIGNATIONS statement.
- Review these RULES AND PROCEDURES.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Board values and welcomes civil, respectful statements and clear, concise communications that inform its deliberations.

The purpose of system board meetings is to conduct the business of the system and, as required by Open Meetings Law, are open for observation by the public. They are not public hearings about system or library affairs. Under Open Meetings Law, a provision for public comment/participation is not required, however the MHLS Board regularly sets aside a period for communication from visitors in the agenda.

In the interests of time and the effective conduct of business, individual public comment may be limited at the discretion of the presiding officer of the meeting so that all members of the public attending a board meeting will have an equal opportunity to speak when time allows. Speakers in the public comment period of the agenda may be limited to three (3) minutes or less at the discretion of the presiding officer. The presiding officer of the Board reserves the right to forego or close a public comment period.

Board members are not required to respond to questions or statements made during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Speaking priority may be given to MHLS staff, member library directors, and member library trustees.

MINUTES AND REPORTS

The presence or absence of any board member from any board or committee meeting shall be noted.

The official copy of the minutes for any meeting shall have appended (a) financial reports, (b) the warrant, (c) the director's report and (d) significant other documents that clarify or augment the record. The enclosure of all such documents shall be noted in the text of the minutes by the designation "(Doc. #)".

A summary of each board meeting shall be published in the BULLETIN immediately following the meeting.

Board Documents will be posted on the MHLS Website.

The minutes of all board meetings, and of the annual meeting, together with an index of resolutions, shall be bound into annual volumes.

COMMITTEES

At the December meeting the president shall recommend to the board for their approval the establishment of committees, including ad hoc committees such as working and advisory groups, for the following calendar year and provide a general description of their responsibilities.

- **Standing Committees** are defined in the MHLS Bylaws and make recommendations to the board for their consideration.
- **Working Groups** are ad hoc committees formed temporarily to focus on a particular project or challenge. Working Groups are structured under a particular Standing Committee and report to that Standing Committee.
- **Advisory Groups** are ad hoc committees formed temporarily to advise the board on a particular topic or area of focus. Advisory Groups are structured under the Executive Committee and report to the Executive Committee, unless the Executive Committee delegates oversight of an advisory group to a standing committee.

At the first meeting of the year the president shall propose the appointment of members and chairs of the Board committees for board approval.

The president shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. As an ex-officio member, the president does not vote and does not affect the quorum.

A quorum for any committee shall be a majority of the members.

Approved: January 26, 1996

Revised:

December 5, 1996

December 24, 1996

January 27, 2001

February 9, 2002

December 14, 2008

December 10, 2011

December 8, 2012
December 5, 2015
December 12, 2020
March 12, 2022
December 13, 2022
March 16, 2024
March 12, 2025