

Mohawk Valley Library System

Director's Report

September - October, 2022

Administration & Governance

The November board meeting always includes the budget hearing for the coming year's operating budget. The proposed 2023 budget is very much a continuation of the budgets for the past several years. Here's a bit of context for that. In the past 10 years, we have built the MVLS year-end fund balance from \$775,000 to nearly \$1.5 million. In nine of those years the approved budget was a deficit budget. How can that happen? Because the general process is to budget income conservatively, and expenses extravagantly. So we are keeping state aid level in the 2023 proposal, while increasing expenses where appropriate. Also, concerning the fund balance, the \$775,000 was just barely enough. The \$1.5 million is more than we need. So, we really don't want to grow the fund balance any more. The full budget, with a basic explanation for the changes will be included with the board meeting materials on the MVLS website.

This first November reorganizational meeting, in keeping with our change to the trustee's year, will also include the election of officers for the 2023 calendar year, and the usual reorganizational motions that are done at every reorganizational meeting. This includes the board meeting schedule for the coming year, which is on the website at: <https://www.mvls.info/board-of-trustees/meeting-schedule/>.

The October 27, in-person MVLS annual meeting was a success. We are already planning for next year! We will review the meeting format at the November board meeting. The annual report is on the MVLS website at: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2021-Annual-Report.pdf>. We also produced an infographic at: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/MVLS-Annual-Meeting-Infographic-2.pdf>.

The Bylaws revisions we discussed in September will again be on the agenda at the November board meeting, to review the specific language proposals. The proposed changes will be included with the board materials on the website. Green highlighting is new text, overstrike indicates text to be replaced. The vote on the agreed to bylaws amendments will take place at the January meeting, at which we will also review the Governance Policy found on the Policy page: <https://www.mvls.info/insidemvls/policies-and-guidelines/>.

We have had a new building issue – a problem with the hot-water circulation system associated with the boiler. The fix was simple but expensive: it involved a service technician spending quite a bit of time here. We will need one more budget amendment to the 2022 budget.

Automation and Resource Sharing

The JA Council meeting is scheduled for November 9. The Council will approve the 2023 JA budget that you approved in September. There will also be amendments to the 2022 JA budget that you will be asked to ratify at the November board meeting.

The JA staff and trainers, including Sharon O'Brien, have successfully implemented another upgrade to the Polaris software. The main changes are to add more functionality to the newer LEAP software that

more library staff are starting to use. The JA staff is also looking at additional security training and 2-part authentication for all users that is needed to get and retain cyber liability insurance coverage.

The final details are nearly all worked out for our new delivery service contract with Arnoff. We were able to meet all of our objectives; you may notice the very small increase in next year's budget for delivery. We were able to incorporate significant savings by making changes to the details of delivery routes without fundamentally changing the service received by libraries. We also successfully negotiated a change to the fuel surcharge formula.

Outreach, Adult and Youth Services

Mary Carrier will once again provide our staff update at the November board meeting, this time reviewing the new websites that she has been introducing for libraries. You can see some of the new websites at these links: <https://shsfreelib.mvls.info/>, <https://northvillepubliclibrary.mvls.info/>, <https://frothinghamfreelibrary.mvls.info/>

Tech Savvy programs continued through, October, after which they will go on hiatus and be re-evaluated. In the meantime, Mary is working on the new Digital Literacy grants, developing a new laptop lab and scheduling classes. Mary is also working with several libraries on wireless printing options, coordinating testing of potential systems with JA staff.

On October 19, Heather set up a meeting with librarians and Lisa Cardilli from Literacy NY. Libraries are often essential partners in the work that Literacy NY conducts. We look forward to continuing the conversation with Lisa and the Literacy NY volunteers.

MVLS used Corrections Funds to assist Senior Librarian Marie Defeo at the Hale Creek Correctional Facility with obtaining resources related to small business skills and entrepreneurship for Incarcerated Individuals. Funds were also used to send Librarian Defeo to NYLA. There has unfortunately been no response from the Schoharie County Sheriff's office about our most recent offer to supply the county jail with magazines, like we do for the Fulton and Montgomery County Jails.

The Summer Reading Program for 2022 is in the books, with all reports submitted. Heather produced an infographic highlighting the results. A copy will be included with the meeting materials.

Heather hosted a Big Play workshop on October 23 for library staff interested in learning more about the Big Play early learning materials we have to lend. It was a fun filled afternoon of exploring materials and connecting the power of play with literacy and language skill development. It was great to get a nice mix of member library staff back at MVLS.

Member Services

The Schenectady County Public Library has a new director. Charity Thorne started at the end of September. I had an orientation session with her at the beginning of October, and have worked with her several times since then. Getting her off to a solid start, and improving the relationship between MVLS and SCPL are big priorities over the next few months. And it is already bearing fruit. In early November, the SCPL annual report was finally completed and approved by the state. This will allow for the release of the state Central Library Aid. There will be changes to this aid – the state is close to approving new Central Library regulations. We have released a payment to SCPL for the 2022 Central

Library Aid. I was also invited to participate in Assemblyman Santabarbara's check presentations for construction projects at the Rotterdam and Quaker Street branches.

In addition to Schenectady, I have also been spending time at Amsterdam, Fonda and Fort Hunter as those libraries look to possible expansions to both buildings and services.

Wade continues to work with Schoharie and Gloversville on community engagement and planning projects. These community meetings are an important service that MVLS provides to member libraries.

Also for the 2022 MVLS Annual Meeting, Heather and Kate developed library brag posters for most member libraries. Libraries were excited to receive these posters for use in community engagement. Copies will be displayed in the board room for your perusal.

Advocacy & Awareness

The annual New York State Library Association conference was held in Saratoga Springs in early November. MVLS provided grants that allowed several member library staff members to attend. At meetings prior to the conference, the NYLA lobbyist provided a state advocacy update. For the first time in decades, NYLA was successful in facilitating a meeting with the Governor's office. There is hope that that will lead to a more positive budget proposal from the Governor. The NYLA recommendation for 2023 funding is \$141,000. Advocacy Day is scheduled for February 28.

Prior to the conference, I attended a roll-out of a new version of the Library District Toolkit. There is little changed in the processes for helping libraries develop sustainable governance and meaningful budget votes; but it is always good to get a pep talk. It is good to see that MVLS libraries are comparing pretty well compared to libraries in other systems, and to hear that many systems have the same issues we do at MVLS: libraries are too apt to be satisfied with inadequate funding.

To encourage libraries to aim high, MVLS and the Foundation are again inviting libraries to apply for Advocacy grants to help with budget proposals. Of course, the funding comes from Foundation fundraising. We had a moderately successful golf tournament at the end of September, and are in the midst of the Foundation's annual appeal. We are also planning a Stay At Home and READ virtual event to be held on Giving Tuesday, November 29.

Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits

9/1/2022	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics MVLS Member Library Directors
9/2/2022	Carlton Shepard Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics John Sullivan
9/5/2022	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
9/6/2022	Cheryl Cufari Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library

	Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery Foundation Board
	Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library
	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
	Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
	Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
9/7/2022	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
9/8/2022	Brideen Finegan
	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Terry Pavoldi, Middleburgh Public Library
	MVLS Trustee Education Session - COB
	Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
	Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
9/9/2022	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Foundation Board
	John Sullivan
	MVLS Board of Trustees
	MVLS Library Services Committee
	Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
	Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
9/12/2022	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library
	JA Council
	MVLS Library Services Committee
9/13/2022	Deb Escobar
	JA Council
	MVLS Board of Trustees
	MVLS Member Library Directors
9/14/2022	Lauren Barton, NBT Bank - Duanesburg Branch
9/15/2022	MVLS Member Library Directors
9/19/2022	Paul O'Brien
	MVLS Member Library Directors
	Lauren Hoyt, New York Library Association
	Beth DeMidio, Schenectady County Public Library
9/20/2022	Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics
	Beth DeMidio, Schenectady County Public Library
	Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
	Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
9/21/2022	Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics
	John Sullivan
	Terry Pavoldi, Middleburgh Public Library
	MVLS Trustee Education Session - AMS
	Lauren Hoyt, New York Library Association
	Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
9/22/2022	Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
9/23/2022	Christine Pesses

9/26/2022 MVLS Trustee Education Session - FON
 Katherine Hawkins
 Foundation Event Committee
 Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library

9/27/2022 Foundation Event Committee
 MVLS Awards Committee
 Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie

9/30/2022 Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics
 Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library
 Kathryn McCary, Law Office of Kathryn McCary
 Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
 Kim Zimmer, The Community Library

10/3/2022 Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
 MVLS Awards Committee

10/4/2022 Christine Witkowski
 Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
 Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
 Kathryn McCary, Law Office of Kathryn McCary
 MVLS Awards Committee
 MVLS Staff
 Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
 Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library

10/5/2022 Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
 Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
 Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library

10/6/2022 Natalie McDonough, Division of Library Development

10/7/2022 Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics
 Mary Beth Farr, Division of Library Development
 John Sullivan
 Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library
 Kathryn McCary, Law Office of Kathryn McCary

10/11/2022 Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics
 Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council
 PULISDO
 Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System

10/12/2022 HFM School Library System Council
 Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
 Kim Zimmer, The Community Library

10/13/2022 Steve Bachman, Four County Library System
 Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
 Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library
 Don LaPlant, The Community Library
 Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
 Tim Burke, Upper Hudson Library System

10/14/2022 Christine Witkowski
 Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library

10/17/2022 Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library

10/18/2022 Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics

	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
	Beth DeMidio, Schenectady County Public Library
	Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
	Tim Burke, Upper Hudson Library System
10/19/2022	Deb Escobar
	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	John
	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
	Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library
10/20/2022	MVLS Workshop
10/21/2022	Capital District Library Council
10/24/2022	Deb Escobar
	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
	Tim Burke, Upper Hudson Library System
10/25/2022	Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics
	Tim Burke, Upper Hudson Library System
10/26/2022	Jane Borrelli
	Christine Witkowski
10/26/2022	Rosemary Barger
	Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics
	Foundation Board
	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
	Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library
10/27/2022	Judi Steiger, Fort Hunter Free Library
	SCPL branch check presentations
	MVLS Workshop – Big Play
	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
10/28/2022	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Foundation Board
	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library