

MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM
System Services Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: October 10, 2023

Location: Virtual

Committee members attending:

- Matt Pavloff (Columbia)
- Thea Schoep (Columbia)
- Carol Fortier (Dutchess)
- Mary De Bellis (Dutchess)
- Catherine Benson (Greene)

- Maureen Garcia (Greene)
- Michele Capozzella (Putnam)
- Johanna Reinhardt (Putnam)
- Julie Kelsall-Dempsey (Ulster)
- Margie Menard (Ulster)

Staff Attending: Rebekkah Smith Aldrich (MHLS), Laurie Shedrick (MHLS)

Others Attending: N/A

Minutes from the August 2023 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Discussion Items:

1. 5th Draft of MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)

Minor wording issues previously brought to RSA's attention have been addressed and incorporated into a fifth draft.

Maureen motioned and Margie seconded to include this draft in the next DA packet in November, and it was unanimously approved.

2. DA Bylaws

Voting Methods: Votes taken during online meetings will be done via roll call or electronic voting method for an accurate tally of those present. Committee members researched viable electronic methods. Concern was expressed that electronic voting might potentially add extra work to meetings. RSA stated that polls can be prepopulated. RSA and Michele will investigate how to most effectively use the Zoom polling feature. It was pointed out that roll call is taken if there is any opposition so that it's noted in the record. Retaining the wording "may" instead of "will" leaves the option of a roll call when someone wants their vote to be on the record. Participants must be engaged in the electronic method being used; they can't just call in. This will need to be made clear if we want to use electronic voting, so Mary will rework the current language and send a new draft to the committee for review.

Margie motioned and Matt seconded to bring the draft to DA in November; the motion was unanimously passed.

3. Path to System Membership

This process came out of the need to have a process for a newly chartered library to join the system as a member library. Committee members stated that some critical requirements: 1) a library has to be

open a certain amount of time before they can become a member; 2) a collection needs to meet prevailing system standards.

RSA will convene an ad_hoc committee of SSAC and MHLS Executive Committee members. Carol Fortier, Matt Pavloff and Thea Schoep volunteered; RSA will arrange for this as soon as possible.

4. 2024 SSAC Officers

It is time to review the current slate of officers to prepare for next year. RSA reminded the committee that there are no term limits on serving on the committee, but there are term limits on officer positions.

- i. Chair (serves as DA Chair): Michele Capozzella (Mahopac)
- ii. First Vice-Chair (serves as SSAC Chair): Thea Schoep (Claverack)
- iii. Second Vice-Chair (fills in for Chair, in lieu of 1st Vice Chair, takes minutes in absence of the Secretary): Jesse Chance (Hyde Park) Note: Jesse is no longer in Dutchess County so this spot needs to be filled.
- iv. Secretary (takes minutes of DA meetings): Mary De Bellis (LaGrange)
- v. Assistant Secretary (takes minutes of SSAC meetings): Johanna Reinhardt (Cold Spring)

All officers need to be named. Mary would like to remain Secretary for the new term. Jesse Chance might be a candidate for Ulster County, taking Julie's seat. Matt also would like to stay on the committee. Maureen will be leaving so there will need to be a new representative from Greene County.

After the respective county meetings to address the openings, Thea will send a message for an online vote before the DA meeting.

5. 2024 Liaisons to the MHLS Board of Trustees

a. 2023: Liaisons:

December 6: Matt Pavloff

b. 2024 Dates:

- i. Friday, January 26 at 10am (snow date: Wednesday, January 31st): **Carol Fortier**
- ii. Saturday, March 16 at 10am (immediately followed by the orientation) (snow date: March 30)
- iii. Wednesday, May 15 at 10am
- iv. Wednesday, July 17 at 10am
- v. Friday, September 27 at 10am
- vi. Wednesday, December 18 at 10am (snow date: Friday, December 20 at 2pm)

Thea will include the other 2024 dates needing representation in the message she will send out regarding voting for officers for committee members to volunteer for.

6. MHLS Updates

a. MHLS ILS Road Map 3.0: Vega Discover and Connect

Laurie reported that training sessions have been receiving enthusiastic receptions. She mentioned the launch is very close, noting that there is a walkthrough for new users that can be seen now on NY Public Library's website, which is not yet installed on ours. One issue that

remains to be addressed is with patrons being able to opt into text messaging. Encore will remain for a period time side-by-side with Vega. The launch information will be in the DA packet a month prior to the launch date, giving time for libraries to prepare.

Carol moved, Michele seconded, and it was unanimously approved to recommend December 6 as the go-live date for Vega at the November DA meeting.

b. Innovative Interfaces Inc. (III) Contract

Laurie reported that our five-year contract will expire in September 2024. Exploratory meetings with the three vendors (Innovative, Sirsi Dynix, and Koha/Bywater) have been completed by MHLS Staff and reported on at the August SSAC meeting. Since that time a meeting was convened with other consortia members using III and Koha/Bywater to get feedback on those products. Koha resulted in a 40% savings for them, so Laurie is exploring the option, however those libraries had different costs so may have seen a more dramatic savings than MHLS would. Additionally, in Koha It was noted that there is less granularity required to manage central services, like cataloging, acquisitions and loan rules. Reporting is not customizable and several functions simply have not been developed.

With 5 years of Vega at no cost remaining, MHLS can realize a significant savings (\$165k annually), by extending our contract for multiple years or with an annual rollover. Laurie stated that conversations and numbers are still needed with Innovative and Sirsi Dynix, and she would like to get new quotes for a mobile app.

RSA pointed out that remaining with Innovative likely means a 5% increase each year and then we will be faced with \$165k on top of that, thereafter, so projections are needed to see how the assessment can be increased incrementally rather than one massive amount in five years.

c. “Banned Books Club” with Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill

This event has been tabled but there may be a December 3 event at the FDR Site and a new award, The Bravery in Literature Award, but as of now there is nothing available to promote.

d. 414 Petition Signature Reduction Bill

We are still waiting on our 414 Petition Signature Reduction bill to be sent to the Governor for signature. RSA will put out a call to action to member libraries to find out why this is not moving to the Governor’s desk.

e. 2024 Salary & Benefits Survey

RSA reminded everyone how helpful this survey is to all system libraries. She is asking for everyone’s help to encourage our peers to participate in this survey so we have 100% participation. A strong data set helps with finding trends and allowing libraries to have enough data to make a case when budgeting.

f. Draft of 2024 Action Plan

No major changes have been proposed. RSA pointed out are that because we are in the third year of the five-year plan, in the first quarter of 2024 she will ask county chairs to go through the same questions used to develop the plan to see what we our current challenges are. This could influence a mid-year adjustment if we need to course correct.

g. Revisit “Library Road Trip”

The plan was a passport program to encourage patrons to visit other libraries. RSA was hesitant to go through with it because she didn't know what the budget would be. She saw the results of libraries that did it which reported great success. If we start fundraising for it we could do it in summer of 2025. Other systems said it took 12 -18 months to plan it well. SSAC agreed. RSA would like to convene a group of system staff to advise on the project.

h. **Other**

- a. **Book Sanctuary program Chicago Public Library:** encouraged libraries to be sanctuaries for books that get challenged. RSA would like to have the board declare MHLS a sanctuary whereby we own all the books on the challenged list each year. Issue was over the word sanctuary. Margie Menard mentioned that there are some negative connotations to the word that we would want to avoid. Other names proposed: Banned Book Bastion or Book Haven. The Board is enthusiastic about the concept, and not tied to the name so RSA asked for alternative names to be proposed.
- b. **November luncheon Honoring MHLS Staff: November 15** Mary De Bellis reported that it will follow the DA meeting. Information was sent out to the directors, and invitations were sent to MHLS staff. There will be food for all dietary restrictions. Directors are asked to bring a dessert.
- c. **Request to Visit the MHLS DA:** Members of the Ramapo Catskill Library System have requested permission to attend an upcoming MHLS DA meeting to observe how this group operates. This was agreed to at the June DA meeting. Michele Capozella contacted them but has not heard back. It is an open invitation, if they decide they would like to come at a later point.

Next SSAC meeting TBD.
