

MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM
System Services Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: January 23, 2023

Location: Virtual

Committee members attending:

☒ Matt Pavloff (Columbia)
☒ Thea Schoep (Columbia)
☒ Jesse Chance (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), Saran Camara (MHLS), Laurie Shedrick (MHLS)

Others Attending: N/A

The committee welcomed Matt Pavloff (Kinderhook) who is filling the term previously held by Elizabeth Powhida who retired at the end of 2022.

Minutes from the October 2022 meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Discussion Items:

1. Second Draft: Memo of Understanding (MOU)

The current Document of Understanding is more than 20 years old and out-of-date in relation to our current practices and ILL contract. The Automation Agreement is overdue for a review as well. To this end, a merged, updated draft of these documents into a Memo of Understanding (MOU) has been created for the committee's consideration by Rebekkah, Laurie, Michele and Thea, ensuring it reflects current practice, shared understanding, and our current ILS Contract. This draft is not a major departure from the original two documents, rather it simplifies them, removes out-of-date language and concepts, and clarifies issues that have become questioned in the past few years. Committee members provided their comments to inform the first draft.

The second draft now incorporates input received at the county level. Most of the work was done in the Grievances section, broadening it and introducing levels of escalation to create opportunities for mediation before triggering the costs of arbitration. The document includes language ensuring MHLS as well as member libraries are being held responsible for timely responses. Rebekkah will also be bringing it to the MHLS Board for their input. All members agreed with the draft as written. Both the redlined version as well as the clean draft will now go back to the counties for feedback and will be reviewed at the next SSAC meeting to determine if it's ready to go before the DA.

2. Union Vale (UV) Update

Rebekkah reported on the custom board training done for the new UV trustees in November, a recent meeting with the State Librarian and staff at the Division of Library Development, and the plan for a second custom board training in January. The State Library issued an email to the UV Town Supervisor citing average per capita costs of \$50 being necessary to grant a provisional charter. This is based on the average per capita amount in Dutchess County. Given this average minimum per capita spending

goal cited by the State Library, all libraries might want to consider bringing this information to their boards if they are not themselves hitting their county's average.

3. Ad Hoc Overdrive Committee

In recognition of the current lack of equitable access to digital books in the marketplace, the Overdrive Committee recommended that our system prioritize advocating at the federal and state level for legislation and agreements with publishers that achieve the goal to have library digital book access be at least comparable to library access to print books (e.g. digital titles available for circulation at the same time as general public release, and at reasonable terms, especially with respect to pricing; equitable access for people with disabilities; and fair use rights in the digital age that are at least as robust as these rights in the analog context.)

SSAC was asked to consider whether we would like to invite a speaker from the ALA Public Policy & Advocacy Office to brief the DA / MHLS Community on the current state of advocacy on this topic. All members agreed that it would be beneficial, and Rebekkah will reach out to Alan Inouye at ALA to see if someone would be willing to speak with us.

Secondly, SSAC was asked to consider whether this committee should continue in 2023. All members agreed, and Rebekkah will check with Ad Hoc Overdrive committee chair Stephanie Harrison to see if she and the rest of committee would agree to continue. It was suggested that a 2022 purchasing report be done for libraries and convene the committee late summer/early fall. Laurie confirmed that MHLS has 2022 data of spending and purchasing as of this date. RSA will report back.

4. Review of DA Bylaws

RSA stated that reviews have not happened on the schedule they were supposed to. The question was asked if we want to do this as a committee or form a subcommittee and come back to the full committee with recommendations. Thea suggested since all committee members are new as of the last time the document was reviewed, we could all benefit from examining the document. All agreed.

A main point to clarify is the issue of voting in an online meeting setting since the bylaws are specific to in-person meetings. Do the current rules work for both in-person and online meetings or do rules need to be spelled out for online meetings? Thea asked how best to make the procedure fair and uncomplicated, and suggestions were that the secretary could indicate that no's are to vote now in the chat, and that there should be a time limit indicated so that there is enough time for the no's to be noted before moving on to the next agenda item. Rebekkah will create a Google doc for the committee to review for discussion at the next meeting.

5. 2023 SSAC MHLS Board Liaisons

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| a. January 19: | Mary De Bellis |
| b. March 11: | Thea Schoep |
| c. May 17*: | Catherine Benson |
| d. July 12: | Jesse Chance |
| e. September 12*: | Michele Capozella |
| f. December 6: | Matt Pavloff |

*All MHLS Board meetings are at 10 am in the MHLS Auditorium except for the May and September meetings which are held at member library locations. All meetings are in person.

6. Library Road Trip

The goal of this event is to increase foot traffic at all libraries in the system. MHLS met with the Mid York Library System who gave us their marketing materials for the program. Maps of the libraries were blown up to poster size for each library, and visitors are given a smaller version. Each visitor's map is stamped, and when an agreed upon threshold is met, there are prizes. Mid York offered a gold library card as a grand prize. Libraries can do their own thing when it comes to the details within their own library, but all need to participate for the program to run. An important consideration is how much work it would be for staff. The Desk Guide included in the marketing materials is very helpful to this end. It was suggested that a timeline of July – October would capitalize on Hudson Valley weather during the season, Library Card Sign Up Month, and The Great Give Back. Matt and Thea mentioned that it aligns well with the summer reading theme of All Together Now. Michele and Johanna commented that the similar summer Passport Program in Putnam County was enjoyable and successful. The committee agreed that the event sounds like a great idea. Members were asked to bring it to their county meetings to see if there is consensus to move it forward.

7. Continued Discussion Regarding Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and the MHLS

An EDI statement is not mandated by the state but the DA believed it should have one to acknowledge and address past issues within the committee. It is also necessary to think about what our trustees need to be successful in this area as well. EDI should be embedded in all that we do: board recruitment, planning, personnel issues, etc. just as with environmental sustainability. This statement was specific to how we operate the DA, so now we may wish to consider whether we need to do anything additional to speak to this statement of intent the DA has approved. This is an open question to continue discussing.

8. Criteria for Retiring/Departing Director's Service to the DA

It was brought to Rebekkah's attention that her suggestion for a resolution for Jeanne Buck when she retired should be DA driven. Rebekkah explained the genesis was to show our many new directors that we acknowledge and appreciate service to the DA because it is critical to the success of our organization. The question was asked what we should consider in the future that would trigger this kind of acknowledgement so that no one is left feeling unrecognized for their service. Margie suggested we acknowledge all retirees and add recognition of pertinent details of service. Laurie mentioned this is similar to what we do for new directors. Mary said the DA chair can ask the retiring director for details on what committees, etc. they served on so that we know we have accurate information and would not need to worry about missing anything. All agreed on this less formal acknowledgement as opposed to a written resolution.

9. Other Business

Dutchess County directors are discussing how best to share out DA advisory committee agendas and the SSAC committee considered this issue as well. No consensus was reached but committee members are always free to forward agendas to their county peers.

Rebekkah will send a poll for the May meeting date. At that meeting we will see the proposed assessment, which in past years has been a 1% increase.

We will also see the annual report for delivery volume which might influence the number of stops each library receives. This was suspended during the pandemic so this is the first year it's been reintroduced, and we will discuss issues at the meeting.

Catherine brought up a discussion about delivery providers she had with an Upper Hudson Library System director, Valley Courier (MHLS uses) versus Arnoff. Valley Courier has contractors as opposed to employees, which means better value and lower price but the tradeoff is higher turnover of drivers which can result in problems.

Jesse moved to adjourn, Michele seconded.
