

MHLS REPORT TO MEMBER LIBRARY DIRECTORS – SEPTEMBER 2020

The format of this report is based on the MHLS service priorities as determined by MHLS stakeholders.

1 DELIVERY SERVICES (REBEKKAH)

1.1 COVID-19 CRISIS RESPONSE

Background:

MHLS contracts with a third-party vendor, Valley Courier, to provide delivery services across the MHLS service area. We are in the second year of a three-year contract. The number of stops a library receives from Valley Courier drivers is based on a rolling three-year average of items received and sent. The number of stops is revisited annually to adjust for changes in volume.

Issue:

COVID-19 is a two-fold crisis with both public health and financial implications. Due to COVID-19-related facility closures and the subsequent phased-in restart of socially distanced public service models the circulation of physical materials has significantly declined in the past five months. Our current analysis shows that vans are at 43% capacity and indicators do not point to a drastic increase in this number in the next several months. Our analysis also shows that delivery volume is consistently higher on Mondays and Tuesdays compared to the remainder of the week. Concurrent to the decline in the volume of materials traveling through the delivery system MHLS is also contending with a 22.6% cut in library aid for the fiscal year with concerns about another cut coming in fiscal year 2021. Our analysis of data related to circulation and delivery volume and discussions with Valley Courier have revealed that it is clear that we have an opportunity to right-size our delivery capacity while bringing down the cost for this service. Valley Courier is willing to work with us to make an adjustment and to re-evaluate it as necessary to maximize our ability to responsibly pay for this service.

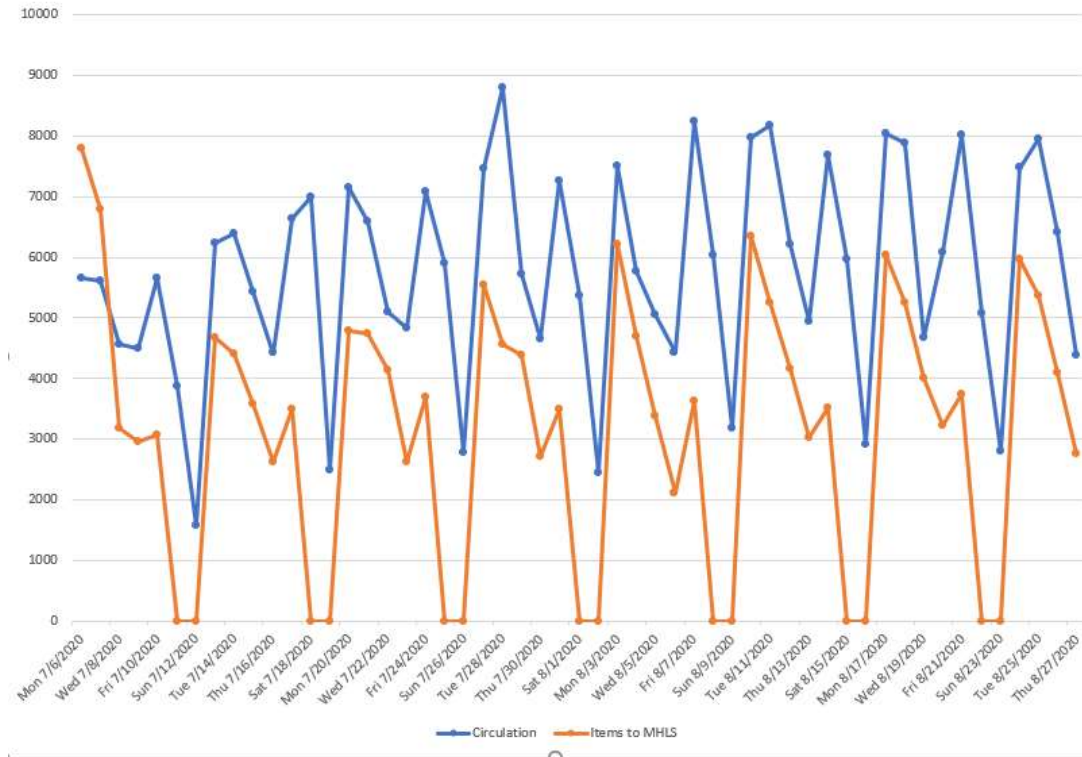


Chart tracking circulation and items in the delivery system July 6–August 22, 2020

Course of Action:

- On October 5th we will begin delivery service using reconfigured routes, which respond to reductions in volume which is observed in the data we have been collecting since libraries reopened their facilities. The new routes are right-sized to current and forecasted needs. This reconfiguration will reduce the cost for delivery services by approximately \$800 a week which will help to mitigate the news, received in the 8th month of our fiscal year, that our state aid for 2020 is being reduced by 22.6%.
- Under the reconfiguration we will still provide 5-day-a-week delivery service. The schedule of stops will still be based on volume at individual locations. There will be no changes to the Monday-Tuesday schedules, however, there will be one less route run on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays to both right-size the service capacity and cost for current needs.
- The routes will be evaluated against new data on a quarterly basis.

Impact:

- As a result of this reconfiguration some libraries will notice differences. Some libraries will experience less delivery stops (maximum 2 less stops per week); nine libraries will have their delivery days of the week adjusted as noted in the attached; a third of libraries will note their delivery time will be altered, however we expect the majority of

deliveries will continue to be made before the public hours of the library start. *[The number of delivery stops and delivery days for each member library are noted in the attached spreadsheet.]*

- MHLS will no longer be paying for delivery capacity that is not being used thereby reducing the cost of this service by approximately \$800 per week.

MHLS staff will continue to monitor the delivery service, making adjustments that best serve the membership and manage resources effectively and efficiently.

2 INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM & CATALOGING SERVICES (LAURIE)

2.1 NEW TELEPHONE NOTIFICATION SYSTEM LAUNCHED 8/11

- a. For the libraries who participate in the Sierra Telephone Notification System (TNS), a long awaited change in platform has finally come. The former system was so outdated that Innovative had stopped supporting it years ago and we have been working on installation hurdles for the last year. We are thrilled have the new system in place, which is a much better experience for patrons, provide real analytics, and be more reliable. The technology is greatly improved and the message and patron name are clearly read, and the message is clearly delivered, stopping and starting appropriately. The successful installation should be credited to Gerry Formby, who worked directly with the New Zealand based communications company, Illion, a third party vendor used by Innovative to replace Teleforms. Gerry bridged the gap between our phone system, Sierra and Illion's Itiva product to ensure that our implementation met our needs and worked within our internal systems.

2.2 MOBILE WORKLIST – TITLE PAGING AVAILABLE

- a. The Mobile Worklist product now includes Title Paging lists. You can bypass the printer and use your tablet to retrieve your daily title holds. The feature is limited but is effective in providing a paperless process to pulling the vast majority of your holds. Item holds must still be printed.
- b. Documentation can be found at <https://kb.midhudson.org/mobile-worklist/>

2.3 ROADMAP 2.0 IN PROGRESS

- c. We now have a fully mapped itinerary for you on the Knowledge Base. You can learn all about the products, get talking points and see examples of the products. You will also see the dates for installation, training and live rollout.
- d. The 5 items selected for the next leg of our journey are:
 - Serials
 - Inter Library Loan
 - Materials Booking
 - Patron Images
 - Encore Harvesting

2.4 COUNTY GROUPS TO CONSIDER PROGRAM REGISTRATION

- a. The Resource Sharing Committee is asking that each of the county associations review Sierra Program Registration to determine if there is enough interest in the product to pursue implementation. As we approach the end of our contracted implementation period, the decision to install this substantial module needs to be finalized in order to schedule installation and training to be completed before 12/31/2020. At this time Program Registration has not been adopted for as an include for our Sierra Roadmap, but if it is every to be an option we should plan the installation before the close of our implementation period. A video introduction is available at <https://youtu.be/B5WKN6CHZ1Q> .

2.5 DISCOVER VEGA!

- a. Our new contract with Innovative included the migration and licensing for a new discovery platform. Innovative was in the process of developing a new context- based discovery platform called “Inspire” when they were purchased by ProQuest earlier this year. Merging the Innovative development strategy with ProQuest’s development strategy resulted in Inspire being scrapped in favor of what was already in the works at Proquest. As the teams became one, what emerged from the development process began to take shape and look more and more like the Inspire product that we originally had been impressed by. We were offered a front row seat as a development partner. This would give us and 2 other consortia an active role in ensuring that the needs of consortia were not an afterthought in design. Each week we meet to discuss the platform design. Once the platform is ready to be tested we will have our own data installed in the cloud based shared datastore, and begin testing. PPLD has agreed to be the first live library to test the new platform, live with their patrons.

Vega is being designed with the patron first. It is intuitive and flexible and provides the tools that patrons would expect from a modern library. Patrons see all of the available formats in a single view and can make decisions about what meets their needs.



3 COORDINATED IT SERVICES (LAURIE)

3.1 EQUIPMENT PURCHASE REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MHLS BY 10/31/2020

- a. Each year we close the window for ordering computer equipment and technology products. This enables us to place the order with our vendor, receive the order and invoice the library before our books must be closed in December. This hard stop is based on our experience with ordering from the vendors to fill and ship the order, the business office to invoice and the library to make payment.

3.2 AEROHIVE PROJECT REMINDER

- a. It is hard to believe 4 years have passed since our first wave of Aerohive libraries came on board in the Aerohive project. This marks 1 year to go before these devices expire and need to be replaced at the library's expense. MHLS will facilitate a group buy in 2021. Right now the equipment is priced at \$900 each unit. This is significantly higher than normal due to COVID-19 and trade relations with China. You should budget at this level for each unit or even higher. We will keep you posted of changes in pricing. The routers have a 5 year cloud license and replacement policy. Once the license expires they will no longer work. You can extend the cloud license on the current unit (\$450), but the hardware is no longer covered with a replacement policy.
- b. Libraries whose units are expiring in 2021 include: Marlboro Free Library, Mountain Top Library, West Hurley Public Library, Red Hook Public Library, Hunter Public Library, Town of Ulster Public Library, Hurley Library, Town of Esopus Library, Kinderhook Memorial Library, Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library, Rosendale Library, Kingston Library, Valatie Free Library, Elting Memorial Library, Woodstock Public Library District, Pleasant Valley Library, Hyde Park Free Library, Heermance Memorial Library, Hudson Area Association Library, Millbrook Library, Amenia Free Library, NorthEast-Millerton Library.

3.3 SUPPORT CONTRACTS

- a. Coronavirus has not stopped tech support contract services. We provided operating system upgrades, installations, network updates and support to our contracted libraries without interruption throughout the entire calendar year. Gerry and his team have worked closely with many of our contracted libraries to complete projects during the building shutdowns.
- b. We are making onsite building visits upon request. We will also be scheduling our standard on-site visits with you. Our staff observe safe social distancing practices and come to your building equipped and trained to use their own PPE.
- c. For those libraries who have not been in the building or using your equipment, please plan ahead in this area to restore service. Start you staff and patron workstations and test the internet access printing and other applications. If you need assistance, please open a ticket. If your issue is mission critical let us know. We will do our best to prioritize the service resources that we have and deploy staff when necessary as soon as possible. With many sites coming

back, we anticipate that there may be a higher volume of calls, so your steps ahead of opening will help us to assist you in time.

4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CONTINUING EDUCATION (CASEY)

4.1 MHLS ONLINE TRUSTEE EDUCATION SERIES

- a. Trustee Essentials
 - Thursday, September 10th | 5:30-7:00pm | [REGISTER](#)
 - Tuesday, October 13th | 10:00-11:30am | [REGISTER](#)
- b. Core Values & Ethics (aka Policies 101)
 - Thursday, September 17th | 10:00-11:30am | [REGISTER](#)
 - Wednesday, October 21st | 5:30-7:00pm | [REGISTER](#)
- c. Intermediate Level Workshops:
 - a. Financial & Fiduciary Responsibility
 - Wednesday, December 2nd | 5:30-7:00pm | [REGISTER](#)
 - b. Legal Issues: New Minimum Library Standards
 - Tuesday, September 22nd | 5:30-7:00pm | [REGISTER](#)
- d. Advanced Level Workshop:
 - a. Seven Habits of Highly Effective Boards
 - Tuesday, December 8th | 5:30-7:00pm | [REGISTER](#)

4.2 REIMAGINING LIBRARY SERVICES SERIES

- a. Libraries Addressing Food Scarcity
 - Tuesday, September 15th | 2:00-3:30pm | [REGISTER](#)
- b. Innovative Programming
 - Tuesday, October 6th | 10:00-11:30am | [REGISTER](#)
- c. Tech Tools for Library Service
 - Wednesday, October 28th | 10:00-11:30am | [REGISTER](#)
- d. Dealing with the Digital Divide
 - Tuesday, November 10th | 10:00-11:30am | [REGISTER](#)

4.3 MHLS PROGRAMMERS FORUM: SERVING HOMESCHOOLERS AND FAMILIES SCHOOLING AT HOME

- a. Thursday, September 24th | 10:00-11:00am | [REGISTER](#)

4.4 eCOLLECTION DEVELOPMENT WEBINAR SERIES

- a. A 2020 survey of member library directors indicated that eCollection Development in OverDrive “and beyond” was the top training topic of interest. Once COVID-19 stay-at-home orders hit our e-collections became more important than ever, revealing opportunities for re-thinking collection development, budgeting, and marketing of these online collections. In response, the MHLS Central Library/Collection Development Committee and MHLS Staff have put together this

series to highlight **industry trends, peer expertise, and technical know-how** to enhance member libraries' ability to meet the needs of their community in this area.

- a. Monday, October 5th | 2:00-3:30pm

Introduction to eCollection Development in OverDrive and Best Practices

At this webinar Laurie Shedrick, MHLS Assistant Director & Technology Operations Manager will be joined by a panel of member library directors to discuss strategic approaches to developing a collection in OverDrive that meet community needs – from analysis of usage to selection and funding to promotion. Laurie will also provide an overview of industry trends shaping the market. This event will include time for questions from the audience for the panelists.

Proposed panelists: Kristen Salierno, Beacon; Sue Ray, Catskill; Julie Kelsall-Dempsey, Highland; Daniela Pulice, Pleasant Valley

- b. Wednesday, October 14th | 2:00-3:00pm

Introduction to OverDrive Marketplace

Presented by MHLS OverDrive Coordinator Nina Acosta, this webinar will provide an orientation to the OverDrive Marketplace for library staff who are cultivating collections. Nina will review basic reports and features that are available and provide an overview of where to find policies, statistics, and additional support and training materials.

- c. Monday, October 19th | 2:00-3:30pm

A Deeper Dive: OverDrive Reports & Marketing

For those member library staff who want to take a deeper dive into what is possible within OverDrive to create and promote collections that meet community needs, MHLS OverDrive Coordinator Nina Acosta will delve into reports such as Title Status and Usage and Purchased Titles Summary and marketing options such as Advantage Curation, Lucky Day Collections, and weeding to enhance the desirability of your library's OverDrive collection.

- d. Monday, October 26th | 2:00-3:30pm

Beyond OverDrive in eCollection Development

Hear from a panel of member library directors who have worked to expand their e-collection with locally funded products. Each director will share their philosophy of e-collection development, their tips for selection and working with vendors as well as reveal their "best" and "worst" e-collection development decisions over the years.

5 CONSULTING & DEVELOPMENT (CASEY)

5.1 NEW RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE FOR NY LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS

- a. The NY State Archives revised and consolidated its local government records retention and disposition schedules and issued a single, comprehensive retention schedule for all types of local governments on August 1st, 2020. The new schedule, Retention and Disposition Schedule for

New York Local Government Records (LGS-1), supersedes and replaces the CO-2, MU-1, MI-1, and ED-1 Schedules. The [new schedule is accessible online](#).

5.2 FY2021 INFLATION AND ALLOWABLE LEVY GROWTH

- a. Property tax levy growth for libraries with fiscal years that close on December 31 will be capped at [1.56 percent for the 2021 fiscal year](#), according to the Office of the State Comptroller. All libraries that have their own board and their own budget vote – even if you did not hold a vote/don't plan to hold a vote in 2020 for FY2021 – are required to file the online “[tax cap form](#)” with the Office of the State Comptroller by the end of the year. A primer on the Tax Cap for libraries is available from MHLS at <http://bit.ly/2ceMNIO>

5.3 OATHS OF OFFICE FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEES

- a. Public Officer's Law §10 requires all public library trustees (but not association library trustees) to take an oath of office within 30 days of beginning their term of office. Public library trustees are public officers and the oath of office is required to officially undertake and perform the duties of a public library trustee. If a public library trustee does not properly complete and file an oath of office, the trustee's position may be deemed vacant. See Public Officer's Law §30(1)(h). For more information about how and why the oath of office is administered, and where to properly file an oath of office, please see the Oaths of Office FAQ page on the State Library's web site: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/trustees/oath.htm>

5.4 NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

- a. Libraries can help activate citizens throughout their communities by participating in National Voter Registration Day on Tuesday, September 22. Access toolkits, resources and sign up to be a 2020 Partner and more at <http://nationalvoterregistrationday.org>. "Partners" organize voter registration efforts on National Voter Registration day and promote voter registration through marketing and communication efforts.

5.5 THE GREAT GIVEBACK: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17TH

- a. MHLS member libraries are invited to participate in the statewide 2020 Great Give Back to connect patrons with meaningful service-oriented experiences and highlight the evolving roles libraries play in supporting their communities. Many libraries will be focusing on addressing food scarcity by accepting donations of food, toiletries, and other supplies in the weeks leading up to the Great Give Back on October 17th. Riverkeeper has partnered with libraries in New York State to host their annual Riverkeeper Sweep event on October 17th. Sweep events can provide lower risk outdoor service experiences that clean up areas within the Hudson River Estuary and Mohawk River watersheds. Riverkeeper will also provide organizational and volunteer recruitment support. For more info and resources visit <https://midhudson.org/great-give-back/>.
- b. Libraries participating in the GGB should complete [this form](#) to provide info to help people find and access their events.
- c. Program Promotion Idea Exchange
 - o Monday, September 14th | 11:00am-12:00pm | [REGISTER](#)

5.6 SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION DEADLINE

- a. Sexual harassment prevention training must be carried out for all New York State employees annually. MHLS has [policy, forms, and training materials](#) to make meeting the requirements of the law as easy as possible for member libraries.

5.7 2019 ANNUAL REPORT DATA POSTED

- a. MHLS has compiled member library Annual Report data for 2019 into reports organized by topic and county. These reports have been posted to the [MHLS website](#). Feedback should be directed to Casey Conlin at cconlin@midhudson.org.

5.8 2020 ANNUAL REPORT QUESTIONS EVALUATING LIBRARY SERVICES AND COVID19

- a. Member libraries will be asked to report on 15 new yes or no questions to measure the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on public libraries and public library services such as answering calls, emails, or texts with answers to information requests from the public; hosting virtual programming or recorded content; offering "curbside," delivery (mail or drop-off), or drive-thru circulation of physical materials; managing IT services to ensure external Wi-Fi access; and providing other types of online and electronic services. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the American Institutes for Research (AIR), and State Data Coordinators have collaborated on the content of these questions, which will be included on the national Public Library Survey (PLS) to measure the national impact of the pandemic on libraries across the country. The New York State Library has recommended that libraries collect data on the services provided during the pandemic in order to report this important activity to their governing boards and their communities and share the data with researchers in future surveys. In response to requests, the State Library will be adding three additional optional questions to the 2020 NYS Annual Report. View the full list of questions on the [MHLS Annual Report Tips page](#).

5.9 SICK LEAVE (NOT EMERGENCY/COVID) FOR PART-TIME STAFF

- a. The budget bill signed by Governor Cuomo on April 3, 2020, includes an amendment to the Labor Law that requires New York employers to provide sick leave to employees. The legislation becomes effective 180 days after it was enacted, which appears to be September 30, 2020. Public employers are not covered by the sick leave legislation. The amount of sick leave an employer is required to provide and whether the sick leave is to be paid or unpaid depends on the size and net income of the employer. [Click here for more info](#).

5.10 COVID-19

- a. The [Reopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums \(REALM\) Project](#) continues to update findings regarding the detectability of the COVID-19 virus on surfaces commonly found and circulated in libraries and museums. [Check their website](#) for an updated list of tested materials. If you choose to amend your quarantine or other reopening procedures, please notify us through the [MHLS Reopening Status form](#).
- b. Open Meeting Law Adjustments have been extended through September 4, 2020 as per Executive Order (EO) 202.55. The Committee on Open Government has issued an [advisory](#)

[opinion](#) regarding Open Meetings Law stating that Executive Order adjustments allow for online meetings but do not mandate them. In person meetings must comply with executive orders and other guidance related to physical gatherings. If social distancing, masking and other administrative requirements cannot be achieved you must provide a "contemporaneous video or audio broadcast such that members of the public who cannot safely attend in person 'have the ability to view or listen to such a proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed." We will keep you posted as to whether or not the EO is extended beyond September 4.

- c. Libraries should be aware of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Answer to common questions and issues regarding the FFCRA can be found on the [Department of Labor's FAQ page](#). Libraries and staff should be aware of applicable reasons for emergency leave under the FFCRA, and library directors should be aware of the conditions under which some types of leave may be exempt after determination by an authorized officer. Libraries should also consult their bookkeeper or financial manager regarding the availability of eligible tax credits under this program as reimbursement for emergency leave provided under the FFCRA.

6 COOPERATIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT & DIGITAL COLLECTION ACCESS (LAURIE)

6.1 RBDIGITAL/E-MAGAZINES

- a. We will be sending out a list of titles in our current e-Magazine collection and asking for commitments from any county group or individual library that would like to sponsor titles in the collection in preparation for our annual order for this collection. Circ data on each title will be provided in the spreadsheet.
- b. OverDrive Purchases RB Media (Recorded Books / RBDigital): In June of 2020 OverDrive announced that they would be acquiring RB media. At the time they suggested that the purchase would not affect the way the two companies manage customers, but recently they have suggested on their website that the platforms will be merged. The RB Media organization is being disbanded and is expected to be fully absorbed into OverDrive this fall. At this time they are in the process of making decisions about the RBDigital app's future. RBDigital customers who renew before 9/31/2020 will be renewing on the RBDigital platform. It is uncertain beyond that if the Libby app will become the new platform. Stay tuned!

7 AWARENESS & ADVOCACY SERVICES (CASEY)

7.1 CENSUS DEADLINE UPDATE: SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

- a. The deadline for responding to the Census is September 30, 2020. Materials and resources to help promote the Census can be found on the [MHLS Census](#) page. For more info contact Casey Conlin.

7.2 FEDERAL FUNDING

- a. There is still no word on a new federal stimulus package nor the chances for state aid to be included in an upcoming package. The inclusion of state aid is predicted to lessen the cuts announced by the New York State Division of Budget.
- b. The American Library Association continues to advocate for the [Library Stabilization Fund Act](#), introduced in both chambers by Senator Jack Reed and Representative Andy Levin, respectively. The legislation would establish a \$2 billion fund, administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, to address financial losses and bolster library services, with priority to the hardest-hit communities.

8 INTERLIBRARY LOAN SERVICES (LAURIE)

8.1 SEAL RESUMES

- a. Libraries will once again be able to borrow and lend items through SEAL! As of this morning, all public libraries automatically became active again. For now, lenders will primarily include RCLS, MHLS, and the New York State Library. To make it easier to locate lendable SEAL items, we've added different categories to the SEAL search. These categories determine which libraries will be searched for a particular item. The new default search--"SEAL Lenders"--will only include materials from libraries that are presently lending. Special, academic, and school libraries can now change their lending status to active as they are able. Similarly, public libraries who cannot lend at this time can change their lending status back to inactive. Additional information on re-starting and returning items is available on the [SEAL Libguide](#).

9 CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM SERVICES (CASEY)

9.1 FY 2020-2021

- a. State Aid for Library Construction award recommendations for FY2020-2021 will be announced after the MHLS Board of Trustees meeting on September 16.

9.2 FY2019-2020

- a. There has not been any update on 2019-2020 construction aid projects. Announcements of 2019-2020 grants are expected soon.

10 COMMUNICATIONS AMONG MEMBER LIBRARIES (CASEY)

No Report for this meeting. If you have any questions about this service area please contact Casey (cconlin@midhudson.org)

11 SPECIAL POPULATIONS (CASEY)

11.1 ADULT AND FAMILY LITERACY GRANTS

- a. Participants for the 2020-2021 Adult and Family Literacy grant programs have been selected. These programs will begin once funding is announced by DLD.

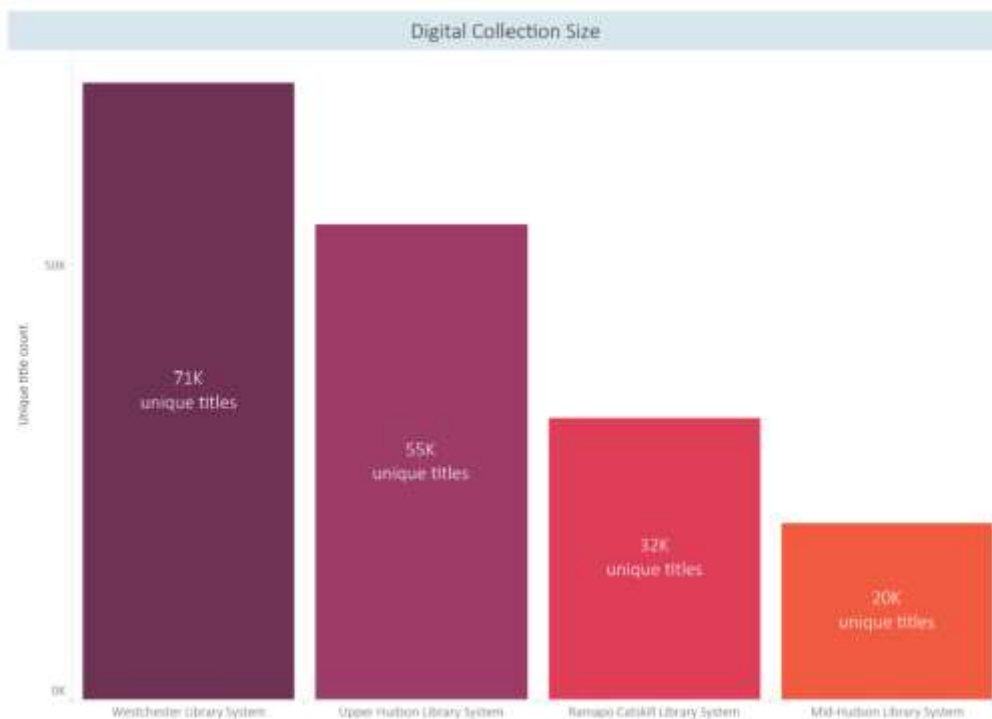
11.2 SUMMER READING REPORT

- a. The Division of Library Development (DLD) has not released the Summer Reading Program Report questions for 2020. MHLS will notify members through the MHLS-Notice List as soon as any information regarding this report is announced by DLD.

12 COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH OTHER LIBRARY SYSTEMS (LAURIE)

12.1 MHLS BEGINS DISCUSSIONS WITH RCLS, WLS AND UHLS ON OVERDRIVE'S RECIPROCAL LENDING ARRANGEMENT

- a. The four neighboring library systems have begun discussing the option to allow each other's patrons to have visitor access to OverDrive collections. This is made possible through OverDrive's support within the platform. We are in very early stages of the discussion. OverDrive has provided an analysis of the four collections, and there is a significant amount of unique material that we would gain access to in this agreement.



- b. The platforms of the other systems would remain separate from ours, available as an external link where our patrons might seek out additional content. Content would be available based on agreed upon terms, where metered access titles, cost per circ, in demand titles and holds may or may not be available.
- c. Follow up meetings will continue to explore the platform options, review additional data and determine if this moves forward. Each library system will need to take the proposition to their members. The goal would be to work towards establishing a path forward that includes parameters and policies that are agreed upon. This process will need time to unfold before patrons have access.

13 ADMINISTRATIVE (REBEKKAH)

13.1 STATE AID FOR LIBRARIES UPDATE

- a. The New York State Division of Budget has released 77.4% of the system's Basic Aid. This is in response to the 2.6% cut in the state budget approved in April and a 20% "withholding" by the state in reaction to significantly reduced income due to COVID-19 related business closures and hopes that advocacy at the federal level to include state aid in an upcoming federal stimulus package would help to mitigate the impact on state aid programs such as ours. Categorical aid such as Central Library Development Aid, Central Book Aid, Coordinated Outreach, Jails and Local Library Services Aid have not been released. It is projected that when it is released these aid categories will also be reduced by 22.6% from 2019 funding levels.
- b. There is no word on funds for the Adult and Family Literacy Grant Programs for this year.
- c. The State Aid for Library Construction Program seems to be moving forward unaffected by the projected cuts in other aid areas. This is likely due to the fact that these funds are bonded, rather than budgeted.

13.2 MHLS RESPONSE TO STATE AID CUTS

- a. Since the second quarter of our fiscal year it has been clear that the financial impact of COVID-19 would have dire impacts throughout the New York State economy. Early estimates from the NYS Division of Budget spanned from 14%-50% cuts in state aid. The MHLS Board and Staff immediately implemented a financial planning approach to prepare for cuts with the stated goals to avoid layoffs, respect member service priorities while continuing to meet our state mandated responsibilities. To this end we have:
 - Enacted a hiring freeze leaving the Outreach & Engagement Specialist and Administrative Association positions unfilled;
 - Postposed building renovation and maintenance projects;
 - Negotiated discounts with ILL, Valley Courier, OverDrive, Universal Class, and Mango;
 - Eliminated the NYLA Scholarship and Travel Programs for 2020
 - Frozen spending for non-contracted elements of the Central Library Program
 - Secured funding from The Boatbuilder Fund of the New World Foundation
 - Suspended vision and fitness benefits negotiated under the MHLS-CSEA contract
 - Submitted grant applications for the IMLS CARES Act grant and a Pivoting to Respond Grant from the Community Foundation of the Hudson Valley

- Secured a Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loan which is on track to be forgiven
 - Formed a COVID-19 Response & Recovery Working Group, a sub-group of the MHLS Finance Committee, to explore and recommend new options and resource opportunities
 - Found numerous ways to save smaller but meaningful amounts on custodial supplies, technology, training, and more with the help of just about every member of the MHLS Staff.
- b. 2021 Financial Planning is underway as we consider the certainty of more cuts to state aid. Under discussion at this time is the philosophical approach we will take in light of the economic forecast for 2021: will the economy bounce back in a “V” or have a slower recover in the shape of a “U,” or perhaps a reoccurrence of short term recessions in the shape of a “W”? This remains to be seen which means we will continue to do scenario planning to prepare for what is to come. This means an extension of the financial uncertainty we have been reporting to you for several months which we understand is difficult for staff and member libraries, however the more flexibility we can retain, the less long-term damage we feel MHLS will sustain. We continue to welcome your feedback on our efforts to combat future cuts and, as always, will look to balance member service priorities with the realities of state mandates and contract issues.
- c. We would once again like to thank the DA for their support and financial contributions for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Your commitment to support MHLS with a contribution from the Members’ Capital Fund has been a crucial safety net in our planning.

13.3 MHLS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

- a. The MHLS Annual Membership Meeting will be held on Friday, October 23, 2020. Our keynote speaker will be [Tracie D. Hall, the new Executive Director of the American Library Association](#). At this time, we are planning to host our annual meeting online.