

**MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**System Services Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Date:** October 29, 2020 2:00pm

**Location:** Online

**Committee members attending:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AnnaLee Dragon (Columbia) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michele Capozzella (Putnam)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thea Schoep (Columbia)               | <input type="checkbox"/> Gina Loprinzo (Putnam)                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mary De Bellis (Dutchess) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Julie Kelsall-Dempsey (Ulster) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Lawrence (Dutchess)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Margie Menard (Ulster)         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catherine Benson (Greene) |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sue Ray (Greene)                     |  |

**Staff Attending:** Rebekkah Smith Aldrich Smith-Aldrich (MHLS); Laurie Shedrick (MHLS); Linda Vittone (MHLS)

**Others Attending:** None

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Julie Kelsall-Dempsey began the meeting, with extending her appreciation with a big THANK YOU to Linda Vittone, MHLS Financial Manager & Personnel Officer, for all she's done for us, and wishing her well on her forthcoming retirement at the end of the year.

**1. Minutes from the May 28, 2020 meeting were reviewed. Tom Lawrence made the motion to accept them as presented, they were seconded by Mary DeBellis and the motion passed unanimously.**

**2. Pandemic-Related:**

a. Tech Ops: Thresholds for Extending Due Dates and Expiration Dates

In order to make global changes to extend due dates and extend patron expiration dates, there needs to be a point at which MHLS can make changes and it is recommended when 44 of 66 libraries close. MHLS would automatically extend the dates by 14 days. This would help with information management. Individual libraries would have to opt out of this mass batch extension, to say they are open and dates should remain untouched. Onus is on the open libraries. When the pandemic struck in March, changes were made, due to the majority of library closures, with the tipping point that was more to the delivery. The next library closures, should they come, may have a cluster approach, rather than a whole system closure, and it may be for a shorter period of time. MHLS wants to keep delivery going as long as possible. Consensus was reached agreeing that if any library is open, they should be more easily be able to let MHLS know they are open and they don't need changes to their item due dates and expired patron records. It is harder for MHLS to track down responses from closed libraries.

**ACTION ITEM:**

**Title: System wide global extension of due dates and patron expiration during wide spread closures**

**Background:** In the event of unplanned extended closures, there are items that will become due and patron records will expire. Managing that task can be done by individual tickets, but when many libraries close at once, managing the extensions in batches becomes more efficient to implement and easier to update when the re-open schedule is unpredictable. During COVID-19 closures in March of 2020, most libraries were closed. Until the directors agreed to extend globally, there were many libraries who did not request extensions, or did not manage further extensions as their library remained closed.

**Issue:** Providing extensions eliminates uncertainty and loss of services for patrons. Once staff are no longer reporting to the library for work, they are difficult to reach by both patrons and staff. Updating records globally is more efficient once a large number of libraries have closed.

Maintaining those extensions globally can be predictably managed globally by MHLS staff.

**Recommendation:** When unplanned closures reach the agreed upon threshold of 67% closed, MHLS staff is authorized to globally extend the due dates of items checked out, and expiration dates in patron records by 14 days. The system staff will post that the update will take place 1 business day prior on the MHLS-Alerts list, citing the time that the update will be completed. Any library who would like to not extend either due dates or the patron expiration dates must open a ticket to alert MHLS that they would like to not be included in the global extensions. MHLS will continue to manage the global extensions as long as the threshold remains in place at 2-week intervals.

### 3. DA/SSAC Officers & Board Liaisons for 2021:

- a. *i. [Bylaws of the Directors Association of the Mid-Hudson Library System](#) – Approved by MHLS Directors Association 11/15/18*

**Amendment to Article V: DIRECTOR ASSOCIATION MEETINGS; Section 1. Frequency:**

*Both regular and special meetings may be held virtually in the event of a weather, civil, or public health emergency. Authority to make this decision rests with the Chair of the SSAC or the Chair of the DA and the Executive Director, both of whom need to agree to this action. Votes taken during virtual meetings shall be done by a roll call of those present. All virtual meetings shall be recorded and MHLS shall email the link to said recording to each member library director's email on file within twenty-four (24) hours after the conclusion of the meeting.*

- ii. **Amendment to Article V: DIRECTOR ASSOCIATION MEETINGS; Section 3 Voting:**

*Issues that arise at a special meeting that are both time sensitive and caused by the civil or public health emergency but not a weather emergency can be voted on at that meeting. All votes shall be done by roll call of those present.*

The [Bylaws of the Directors Association of the Mid-Hudson Library System](#), needed to be amended, rather than change the wording of the Pandemic Policy, so it is more permanent. Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of scheduling of meetings and giving directors ample time to review changes and to make comment. The committee felt 3 months for a review of changes before voting is a very long time. If we kept the Pandemic Policy and it states we may hold a special meeting. The [Pandemic Policy of the MHLS Directors Association](#) – Approved by MHLS Directors Association

3/27/2020 will sunset in November 2020. The SSAC recommends an additional amendment to the current bylaws to be presented to the DA for approval to allow voting to take place in a timelier manner than currently permitted. The motion to change the bylaws with the addition of the said amendments was made by Julie Kelsall-Dempsey, seconded by Mary DeBellis and all were in favor.

- b. 2020 DA / SSAC Officers:
  - i. Chair (serves as DA Chair): Margie Menard (Kingston)
  - ii. First Vice-Chair (serves as SSAC Chair): Julie Dempsey (Highland)
  - iii. Second Vice-Chair (fills in for Chair, in lieu of 1st Vice Chair, takes minutes in absence of the Secretary): Mary De Bellis (LaGrange)
  - iv. Secretary (takes minutes of DA meetings): Tom Lawrence (PPLD)
  - v. Assistant Secretary (takes minutes of SSAC meetings): Catherine Benson (Coxsackie)  
We will assign someone if the First Vice-Chair is not available.
  
- c. 2021 Board Liaisons:
  - i. January—Catherine Benson
  - ii. March—Mary DeBellis
  - iii. May—Michelle Capozzella
  - iv. July—AnnaLee Dragon
  - v. September—Julie Kelsall-Dempsey
  - vi. December—Tom Lawrence

#### 4. Annual DA meeting calendar

- a. 2021 Meeting Calendar: (attachment) (ATTACH UPDATED CALENDAR FROM REBEKKAH SMITH ALDRICH) See previous notation for 2.B.
  
- b. DA Workshops for 2021—Through consensus it was decided there will be NO DA workshop in March after the DA meeting, but workshops will be scheduled for July and October. This motion was made by AnnaLee Dragon, seconded by Michelle Capozzella, it passed unanimously.

#### 5. MHLS Staff Reports

- a. [Budget Update](#) & 2021 Financial Forecast:  
Rebekkah Smith Aldrich gave us the report with income for this year 22.6% down, with all categorical aid now in-hand. They are seeing some cash come in to fill the \$430,000 hole in the budget. Luckily, the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) filled in half, acting like a grant, with no interest charged and MHLS is not required to pay the sum of it back. MHLS instituted a hiring freeze, their construction budget is on hold, they renegotiated several contracts, pursued several grants, and found cost savings in other areas. MHLS suffered a tsunami cut this year. They cannot expect to count on state aid in 2021, nor PPP next year. Ever see Federal aid restored? They are planning around an anticipated 22.6% cut, with that in mind. Our NYS leaders are still referring the amount not being a “cut”, but rather a “withholding.” Federal

stimulus money may become available after the election. MHLS has thoughtfully planned, and Rebekkah Smith Aldrich gave special thanks to Linda Vittone, Laurie Shedrick and the staff of MHLS.

MHLS does not anticipate service cuts for 2021 at this time. The contribution that was authorized from the Members Capital Fund is being used for 2021 financial planning purposes. MHLS is monitoring the economy and anticipates a quicker recovery than the recession that was endured in 2008.

- b. CARES Act funds: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act is the first Federal stimulus package for museums and libraries through the U.S. Department of the Treasury. MHLS applied for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant and was not successful, funding came from the state level, with the State Education Department giving an allotment to each library system based on population. For MHLS this amounts to \$52,000, and it covers PPE and COVID costs, digital inclusion and partnership with museums. Money is guaranteed to our system. But, in order for MHLS to re-grant the money to individual libraries, it is more difficult given federal guidelines. Rebekkah Smith Aldrich is looking for feedback from members. It was agreed by consensus that we all benefit from money that goes to MHLS, through services all the member libraries use. There are restrictions as the funds must be used to recoup the costs for COVID costs incurred, PPE, to help bring stability, and there must be documentation for reimbursement. It can be used to accumulated costs from April 21, 2020- June 30, 2021. These funds will be able to offset operational expenses not anticipated.
  
- c. 2022-2026 System Plan of Service Development: We will convene a committee to address the Fee Direct Access Plan. The SSAC will be involved in renewing drafts/input for the System's Plan of Service. Previous SSAC meetings covered this. We will move forward looking at three topics:
  - 1. Plan of Service based on 14 areas, with staff and stakeholder input
  - 2. Central Library Plan: Process will be discussed by the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee
  - 3. Free Direct Access Program (FDAP). This group will consist of MHLS staff, director representatives, and volunteers will be requested at the DA meeting.Rebekkah Smith Aldrich drafted a timeline (December 2020-October 1, 2021) to craft a plan for success and keep the plan's development on track. Information will also go out to the counties for their input also. There is impact on all stakeholders and others, for example, Union Vale. This Plan of Service will be developed using a modified Turning Outward approach, a program through MHLS, and this will be used to shape their thinking, before the plans get presented to the DA and the MHLS Board. An early item to be included will be the ranking of services by surveying stakeholders.
  
- d. 2020 Salary Survey: We will look at the survey in November/December, sending it out to members for updated salary information.

**6. Other:**

Poughkeepsie library is used as an early voting site. They have about 500 people who come just to vote. It's a large enough space: everyone is masking, is able to social distance and the Board of Elections says it's a good location.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm with motion made by Julie Kelsall-Dempsey, seconded by Mary DeBellis, and all agreed.**

Respectfully submitted:

Catherine Benson

Assistant Secretary