

System Services Advisory Committee
October 22, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Thea Schoep (Columbia)
Matt Pavloff (Columbia)
Mary DeBellis (Dutchess)
Carol Fortier (Dutchess)
Catherine Benson (Greene)
Christopher Leary (Greene)
Johanna Reinhardt (Putnam)

Michelle Capozella (Putnam)
Margie Menard (Ulster)
Julie Kelsall Dempsey (Ulster)

MHLS Staff
Rebekkah Smith Aldrich
Laurie Shedrick

Discussion Items

- 1) Attendance was taken. Minutes of the May meeting were reviewed and passed by unanimous consent.
- 2) The committee discussed the upcoming DA Luncheon to honor the MHLS staff. Reinhardt asked if DeBellis would be interested in helping organize the luncheon again. DeBellis agreed, and Fortier and Capozella volunteered to assist. Directors are asked to bring a dish for the dessert table.
- 3) Aldrich informed the committee that the final 10% of state funds for Mid-Hudson are now available, and all of the Central Library Program Aid has been received, a portion of which will go toward more purchases in Overdrive. She reported that the Division of the Budget is cautioning agencies to prepare for flat funding, and the NYLA will continue to advocate for more. Aldrich recently spoke before the New York State Assembly about the necessity of increased library system operating aid and construction aid, and reminded the committee that Advocacy Day is February 5th this year, earlier than it's been previously.
- 4) The SSAC discussed the DA's response to the 20% increase in membership assessment fees, and discussed if the committee felt funding was at the right level currently. The discussion will continue once the state budget is decided and committee members can discuss the assessment fee at the county level.
- 5) The Capital Fund Policy is reviewed annually and looks at the fund for large expenses, specifically should the DA decide to migrate to a new ILS. Aldrich recommended reviewing the services available through the current ILS in the Vega Suite, to determine how funds should be saved. It was determined that the budget sheet needed to be rebalanced, and the SSAC will review the updated sheet at the January meeting.
- 6) Schoep and Aldrich reported that the Road Trip Committee met and has been developing a plan for a road trip program in the summer of 2025. The Road Trip Committee is looking at prizes, routes, publicity ideas, and more to ensure that the program is successful for all libraries with minimal expense to individual libraries.

- 7) The committee reviewed the current officers, and Reinhardt noted that everyone was eligible for future years. The committee passed the 2025 slate of officers by unanimous consent. ACTION: This now moves to the DA for a vote to affirm the officers.
- 8) The committee discussed liaison dates for the MHLS Board Meetings in 2025. The committee agreed on the following schedule:
 - a) January–Mary Bellis
 - b) March–Catherine Benson
 - c) May–Michelle Capozella
 - d) July–Johanna Reinhardt
 - e) September–Carol Fortier
 - f) October (Annual Meeting)
 - g) December–Thea Schoep
- 9) A motion to approve that proposed 2025 SSAC meeting schedule was made by DeBellis, seconded by Schoep, and passed unanimously. The schedule is as follows
 - a) February 13th (online)
 - b) April 25th (in person)
 - c) June 5th (in person)
 - d) September 9th (online)
 - e) November 13th (in person)

MHLS updates

- 1) Shedrick reported that the contract with innovative has been signed, which will include a new mobile app, sms text service, and telephone notification system. The contract was the same that the SSAC saw earlier in the year.
- 2) Aldrich and MHLS trustees met with Union Vale representatives, including their new director. The new director has reached out and will be meeting with MHLS staff to work on getting established in the community and in the library system through the Path to Membership procedures.
- 3) Aldrich reported on a number of focus groups that she has conducted with various county library associations. From these conversations, she is hoping to determine areas that directors need the most support. The SSAC discussed the possibility for professional development opportunities on the topics of managing board and staff, budget planning and financial projections, benefits, and contributing to community resilience. The committee also discussed strategies for engaging library staff in MHLS, including bringing back paper bulletins and restarting tours of the MHLS facilities.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Schoep, seconded by Fortier, and passed unanimously.

Next Meeting:

TBD