

MHLS Directors Association | Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 13, 2025 | MHLS Auditorium

Columbia County			Dutchess County			Greene County			Putnam County			Ulster County		
	Chatham	Bachrach		Amenia	Herow		Athens	Benjamin	X	Brewster	Loprinzo	X	Esopus	Chance
X	Claverack	Schoep		Beacon	Murphy		Cairo	Tatavitto	X	Carmel	Martens		Highland	Gill
	Germantown	Place	X	Beekman	Fortier	X	Catskill	Leary	X	Cold Spring	Reinhardt	X	Hurley	Powell
X	Hillsdale	Gaskell	X	Clinton	Bancroft	X	Coxsackie	Benson		Garrison	Farabaugh	X	Kingston	Menard
X	Hudson	Chameides	X	Dover	Smith		Greenville	Flach	X	Kent	Perolli		Marlboro	Jankovitz
X	Kinderhook	Pavloff		East Fishkill	Salierno	X	Haines Falls	Elmo-Emel	X	Mahopac	Capozzella		Milton	Fonfa
	Livingston	Stork		Fishkill	Spann		Hunter	Johnson	X	Patterson	Harrison	X	New Paltz	Middleton
X	New Lebanon	Hoffman	X	Hyde Park	Palmer		Windham	Begley	X	Putnam Valley	Chaudhri		Olive	McHugh
	North Chatham	Wert	X	LaGrange	De Bellis								Phoenicia	Potter
X	Philmont	Whittaker	X	Millbrook	Tsahal							X	Pine Hill	Vella
X	Valatie	Buono	X	NorthEast-Millerton	Leo-Jameson							X	Plattekill	Lansperly
				Pawling	Fisher							X	Rosendale	Scott-Childress
			X	Pine Plains	Campbell							X	Saugerties	Russell
			X	Pleasant Valley	Pulice							X	Stone Ridge	Esposito
			X	Poughkeepsie	Lawrence							X	Ulster	O'Meara
			X	Red Hook	Geller								West Hurley	Keene
				Rhinebeck	Savolainen							X	Woodstock	Gocker
				Rhinecliff	Bartlett									
				Staatsburg	Rothman									
			X	Stanford	Cerul							MHLS Staff		
			X	Tivoli	Farley							X	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich	
			X	Wappingers	Campbell							X	Laurie Shedrick	
												X	Laura Crisci	

Meeting Called to Order by Chair De Bellis at 10:00 am.

A. Action Items

- Approval of the September 9, 2025 minutes. **Motion made by Lawrence, seconded by Menard. Passed by unanimous consent.**
- The System Services Advisory Committee recommends the 1) the continuation of the established pattern of the annual contribution from this fund to MHLS to contribute to the cost of the ILS using the same schedule of a 2% increase each year, and 2) confirming that MHLS may use the interest earned on this account for MHLS Operations, as needed. **Recommendation from the System Services Advisory Committee. Recommendation is from a committee, no motions are needed. Recommendation passed unanimously.**
- The System Services Advisory Committee recommends that all identified unserved areas be coded with their own ptype to allow libraries to track them for accuracy purposes to ensure either county funds that are being advocated for to underwrite Overdrive are adequately covering these patrons' usage or provide

necessary data for neighboring libraries to approach a municipality to make a case for contribution toward library services or to pass a municipal ballot option in an unserved area that has a critical mass of patrons using a neighboring library/libraries. **Recommendation from the System Services Advisory Committee. Recommendation is from a committee, no motions are needed. Recommendation passed with one abstention.**

- The Resource Sharing Advisory Committee recommends revising the last two parts of the Resource Sharing Standards section entitled Data Entry and Management and Reports to remove outdated language and provide clarity. **Recommendation from the Resource Sharing Advisory Committee. Recommendation is from a committee, no motions are needed. Recommendation passed unanimously.**

B. New/Proposed Business & Information

1. Information: 2026 DA/SSAC Officers

Chair (serves as DA Chair): Catherine Benson (Coxsackie)

First Vice-Chair (serves as SSAC Chair): Matt Pavloff (Kinderhook)

Second Vice-Chair (fills in for Chair, in lieu of 1st Vice Chair, takes minutes in absence of the Secretary):
Thea Schoep (Claverack)

Secretary (takes minutes of DA meetings): Michele Capozzella (Mahopac)

Assistant Secretary (takes minutes of SSAC meetings): Christopher Leary (Catskill)

2. Information: 2026 DA Meeting Dates:

Thursday, February 26, online

Friday, April 24, in person at MHLS

Wednesday, June 24, in person at MHLS

Thursday, September 24, online

Wednesday, November 18, in person at MHLS

C. Reports

1. Advisory Committee Reports

i. System Services Advisory Committee [met on 10.23.25]

Action items presented.

ii. Resource Sharing Advisory Committee [met 10.20.25]

- Some reminders: a staff member at each library should be checking online card records that are sent from MHLS, local holds should be clearly noted in the catalog, and barcodes should be placed prominently on items and not hidden.
- The Resource Sharing Standards review has been completed. Many thanks to Carol Bancroft for her leadership.

iii. Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee [met on 10.2.25]

- Contingency funds have been moved to OverDrive.
- Funds will be spent evenly across the year in 2026 to support the shared OverDrive collection
- Databases will be reviewed in June before their renewal dates.
- Online card applicants should not have immediate access to OverDrive to give time for review and ensure the patron is part of the library's service area.
- The Committee is considering patron education regarding e-materials including conducting a patron survey based on a model survey done by the Nassau Library System.

iv. Ad Hoc OverDrive Committee [met on 11.12.25]

- The reports the member directors will be receiving were reviewed.

- Some libraries are consistently not meeting their spending thresholds, triggering a violation of the Resource Sharing Standards. Therefore, the committee is recommending that the Resource Sharing Committee send letters to the directors not meeting their spending requesting a corrective action plan.
 - The Committee will meet early in 2026 to review the plans.
 - Laurie recommends libraries add 10% to the e-resource line item for budgeting purposes.
- v. Road Trip Committee [will meet in December]

2. MHLS

i. Report to Member Library Directors

- The delivery service began a new era in leadership in September after the retirement of Tom Finnigan. Chris Herron, Operations Manager, and Dave Haspel, Assistant Operations Manager, have been focusing on maintaining the high level of service already being provided with an eye to the future and what improvements can be made. Please don't hesitate to contact Chris or Dave with any questions or concerns.
- The MHLS Board of Trustees met on September 12th and approved the recommendation of signing a delivery service agreement with Valley Courier and Delivery Service, Inc. This new agreement will continue our relationship with Valley Courier, the current delivery vendor, through December 31st, 2028. We will be able to provide current service levels to members through the summer of 2026 when circulation numbers and funding considerations will be reevaluated to ensure delivery is right sized and providing the best service possible.
- Established in 1828 and the largest supplier of books to libraries, Baker & Taylor announced closure in January of 2026 after a failure to sell creating a huge disruption to the way our libraries do business. The MHLS Cataloging Team has recently been working with member libraries that have set up new accounts with other vendors to help with MARC record configuration for their orders. MHLS staff have been able to work with records from Ingram, Brodart, Abdo Books and Amazon Business. Those interested in setting up on-order records with any of these vendors, or even other vendors not listed, please open a ticket with cataloging@midhudson.org
- We now have more bibliographic information in the record display, including full MARC records. As long as there's a requestable item, you will now see two request buttons on a resource card: Request Any Edition and Find Specific Edition. The latter will open and take you to the Editions table, where the expand/collapse arrow has now moved to the right and the search box has also been enlarged. In the editions list, you will see cover images for every edition, when available. The Details button has been moved under the cover image and turned into a more obvious button. Click on the cover image or the Details button to see more bibliographic information, much of which was not previously available in Discover. This can be useful for finding track listings of music albums, additional contributors like audiobook narrators and film actors, technical specifications, additional notes fields, and more. From there, the full MARC record can be viewed with the link in the top right of the display.
- Innovative Phone Alerts launched on Thursday October 30th. This service is a subscription service used by roughly two thirds of our member libraries to make automated calls to patrons with overdue items or items to be picked up. What you can expect:
 - You can expect a faster turnaround on calls
 - The new system is not limited to 2 outgoing lines and can make more simultaneous calls
 - We expect that the reporting in Sierra will be more

informative for staff The calls will be documented in the patron record by clicking View/Teleforms. The status, number of attempts and time stamp will be updated. • Cloud based service without interruption The service is in the cloud and monitored for continuity-not affected by power or internet loss at MHLS • Improved AI generated voice quality • Patron names are not announced in the call • No duplication of calling to the same household/number Any library who would like to add this service should open a ticket by emailing techsupport@midhudson.org

- Preparing for Internet or Sierra Downtime: On October 20th, the Northeast experienced a significant disruption of services hosted in the Amazon Web Services Cloud. While we were fortunate not to feel this disruption in our Sierra and other related services, which are hosted in the cloud with Amazon, and it begs the question, “Is your staff ready for Internet disruption?”. • Do you have the offline client downloaded and set up correctly for your location? Instructions and Links to download and setup the offline client • Are staff able to launch and use the offline client? Documentation • Are staff familiar with uploading transactions once the internet is restored? Is someone at the library authorized to process the files? Documentation We also offer: Training on Demand/Technology: Intro to Sierra Offline Client.
- Nina Acosta leads the MHLS Cataloging Team, which also includes full time cataloger BJ Vickery and Rebecca Hagan, who splits her time between Cataloging and ILL. Essentially, we have 2.5 full time FTE assigned to the task of importing, updating, and removing the bibliographic data that supports our catalog and ILS. This work also includes maintaining a dizzying array of indexes within our Authorities file for authors, subjects, locations, etc. that support searching. There is also the work of providing support to members with their local collections and items, as well as 3 the documentation of workflows and continuing education for staff. By the way, the cataloging team fields more ticket requests than any other service area covered by Technology Operations because of the day-to-day nature of loading records and managing local collections.
- The new rules on accessibility of Web content requirements will take effect April 24, 2026 for any state and local government with 50,000 or more people. All sites will need to comply by April 26, 2027. <https://www.ada.gov/resources/2024-03-08-web-rule/> . Libraries are responsible for the accessibility of the content added to MHLS-hosted websites. To better highlight possible issues, we will be rolling out the WP Accessibility plugin to hosted sites. This can be used to quickly check color contrast levels and will highlight images that are missing alt text. We have hosted a web series on Web Accessibility with other Library Systems and DLD. The recordings of the first two are available on YouTube. The 3rd part will be on Thursday Nov 13th at 10am.
- **Professional Development & Continuing Education**
 - a. Create List webinars: Elevate your reporting with two consecutive webinars on Sierra’s Create lists. Beginners (November 20th) and Create List Advanced (December 11th).
 - b. Training on Demand: Technology has a new category for Reports & statistics plus additions to and modifications to the Create List series.
- **Trustee Education**
 - a. Two more live Trustee Education events this year: Trustee Handbook Book Club: Next Level Trusteeship: Building an Effective and Impactful Board with Dr. Terry Kirschner | Tuesday, November 18 | 5-6:30pm | online and MHLS Trustee Education Series: Board Development – Recruitment, Orientation, Education, and

- b. The 2025 MHLS Sustainable Funding Series sessions have been added to Training on Demand
- A new edition of the Handbook for New Public Library Directors in New York State by MHLS Executive Director, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, is now available. This edition has been endorsed by the Public Library Section (PLS) and the Leadership & Management Section (LAMS) of the New York Library Association. The new edition is greatly expanded from the 2010 edition and includes new resources. Rebekkah stressed each library should have a compliance calendar and a starter kit to do so is included in the new edition.
 - The MHLS Advocacy Ambassadors program will kick off on Thursday, December 11th. We thank the library boards who have identified their Ambassador for 2025-2026! If you haven't had a chance to do this year, please identify your Ambassador by November 30.
 - NYLA Library Advocacy Day will be on Tuesday, February 3 in Albany. Please reserve the date and plan to wear purple!
 - The primary source of operational funding for the New York State Office of Cultural Education, including the New York State Library, State Archives, State Museum, Summer School of the Arts, and Public Broadcasting Program, is the Cultural Education Account. The account is funded by the Cultural Education Fee, a one-time fee collected by county clerks and clerks for the City of New York for the recording, entering, indexing, or endorsing certain instruments. The current fee of \$15 was set in 2002 and has not increased in 23 years, despite core costs like wages and employee benefits more than doubling in that period. As such, the account runs a chronic deficit, forcing the state to offload responsibility for 55 of the NYSL's 84 positions to funding received via the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Grants to States program. We support increasing the Cultural Education Fee to \$30 per transaction as a way to stabilize the Office of Cultural Education and maintain a fully operational State Library, both now and in the future.
 - Road Trip • Feedback Surveys In addition to the data survey we sent to Library Directors, we are asking anyone who participated in the 2025 MHLS Road Trip Challenge to complete this evaluation survey. This survey is open to anyone who attempted to complete the challenge, regardless of the progress they made. This includes member library staff that participated. Anyone completing the survey can choose to be entered into a drawing to win 1 of 10 coupons for a free car wash at Foam & Wash. Please help us get the word out about this survey – we've created a flyer you can post to encourage participants to respond. [View/Download Participant Survey Flyer](#). Staff Suggestions/Feedback Welcome! We also want to know about your experiences with this program as a library worker. Please take a few minutes to complete this staff feedback survey. This feedback will be used to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of this program and may possibly shape future programs. We'll use the findings to help the advisory committee analyze the effectiveness of the program. ALL RESPONSES ARE ANONYMOUS. Both surveys will close November 19.
 - Award announcements for the NY State Construction program should be happening soon. If you plan to apply for the next round of grants, start thinking about it now!
 - Community Services: Links to get the most up to date information including partner organizations for your region were provided in the MHLS Report: • Community Services:

Social Care Network, SNAP, Survivor Access Financial Empowerment (SAFE), Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) etc. • Immigration Services • Social Security

- Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley: Applications are open to Mid-Hudson Library System member libraries. You must be currently employed or have regular volunteer hours and have the support of your institution.
 - Baker & Taylor owned the software that powers the Annual Report to the State. With the imminent closure of B&T, the State Library has issued a directive to ensure that you have downloaded your data from the software no later than the end of the year. As to how the annual report data will be collected in 2026, the State Library does not have an answer yet but has advised that there will be an annual report to the state mandated for all member libraries and MHLS therefore we will proceed as usual in producing reports to help you complete this report as well as be at the ready to provide training to new directors once the State Library shares their solution.
 - During 2026 we will conduct a series of activities to help inform the development of the next 5-year Plan of Service for the MHLS in order to comply with the rules from NYS as to how we go about producing this Plan. This process has been vetted by the System Services Advisory Committee, Central Library / Collection Development Advisory Committee, and the MHLS Board and follows the same development path as the current Plan of Service which was approved by NYS.
- ii. Board Liaison Report [met 9.12.25 at the Beekman Library] Carol Fortier, Director, Beekman Library
- a. The delivery contract was discussed.
 - b. The HVAC on the third floor of MHLS will be replaced.
 - c. The Board approved the NY State Construction grant applications.
 - d. Additional MHLS funding options were discussed.

Board Liaison Report [met 10.24.25] Mary De Bellis, Director, LaGrange Library

- a. The slate of officers was confirmed.
- b. The date of the January meeting was changed from Saturday, January 17 to Saturday, January 31.

There being no further business, motion to adjourn at 11:45am was made by Fortier, seconded by Schoep. Passed by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted by Michele Capozzella, Secretary

Next:

- DA Business Meeting: February 26, 2026 via Zoom.