

**MVLS/SALS Joint Automation Project**  
**JA Finance Fee Discussion Meeting**  
**December 11, 2024, 9:30 am**  
**Clifton Park Halfmoon Public Library**

**Present:** Christine Connell, Sara Dallas, Jim Foster, Alex Gutelius, Bob Jeffords, Michele Largeteau, Kathy Naftaly, Ed Roger, Tom Shaginaw, and Eric Trahan.

**Attending via Zoom:** Maria Cancro, Pamela DelSignore, Jen Ferriss, Deb Flint, Guin Forshey, Kristel Guimara Nicole Hemsley, Carol Kuhr, Janet Lindner, Ted Mirczak, Terry Pavoldi, Ike Pulver, Jill Ryder, Jack Scott, Rebecca Verhayden, Erica Wing, Russ Wise, Chris Witkowski, Kim Zimmer.

Committee Chair Eric Trahan welcomed all and opened the meeting at 9:35. We briefly discussed the 2025 JA budget, reviewing the impact of the SCPL exit from JA, the known and unknown impacts on JA expenses, and the use of fund balance in 2025. The 2025 fees were also briefly discussed, again highlighting the impact of the SCPL exit.

Concerning 2026 fees, Michele, Sara and Eric are recommending that the fee budget stay at the 2025 level of \$591,471 for 2026. The proposal is to update the formula for what the two systems pay into the JA budget for 2026. With that increased allocation from SALS and MVLS, we expect to be able to present a balanced budget for 2026.

Concern was expressed about years beyond 2026, and the need to have a balanced JA budget that does not deplete either the JA or the systems' fund balances. Bob Jeffords suggested a study and analysis of JA services in 2025. Concern was also expressed about potential losses to other system services if more is being put into JA. Sara and Eric emphasized that the systems both have adequate fund balances, that JA is consistently rated as one of the most important system services, and the JA does a great job of controlling costs. The attendees agreed that the JA Council and the two system boards would present a proposal to keep the fee budget flat for 2026. The proposed fee budget will be \$591,471 and the basis for the fee formula will be updated to 2024 data.

The group next discussed potential JA priorities and initiatives for the coming years. The first topic was a proposed upgrade to the next level of the Polaris software, which will include Vega Discover. Upgrading will cost about \$27,000 annually. In the survey, most respondents indicated that their libraries were interested in Vega Discover. The survey will be kept open, and the JA Council will discuss the upgrade at the January meeting.

Michele brought up the topics identified by the ILS features committee. These will be discussed by the JA Council and committees over the course of 2025. Sara brought up MFA, and the necessity to have all libraries implement that security standard. Several libraries were interested in trying the device that can replace personal cell phones.

The meeting was closed at 10:05