

Connecticut Library Association Board Meeting
March 21, 2024
10:00 am Business Meeting via Zoom
Minutes

- I. **Call to Order:** President Sarah McCusker called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the February meeting minutes was made by Kate Byroade and seconded by Doug Lord. Motion approved. Three abstentions.
- III. **Old Business**
 - a. **President's Report** – See attached.
 - b. **Treasurer's Report** – See attached.
- IV. **New Business**
 - a. Bylaws Revision Feedback- Alessandra Casiello
 - b. Public Libraries Letter to Beardsley Zoo- Jennifer Sullivan
 - c. CLA Officers for 2024-2025- Doug Lord

Representative Reports:

CT State Library: Deborah Schander: See attached.

NELA: Scott Brill: Absent. A reminder that the NELA 2024 Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland, Maine from October 20-22.

ALA: Kate Byroade: The big thing is that if you are an ALA member, the ALA, election is happening right now. You should have received your credentials via email. If you did not, please reach out to me. I'll be happy to connect you with ALAs membership office to get that. The election closes at midnight on Wednesday, April 3rd third. So, you have a couple more weeks but please get in and vote right now.

ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau: No report.

ACLB: Denise Stankovics: Absent.

ACLPD: Alyssa Dansinghani: Absent.

America 250: Doug Lord: The update for America 250: I hope lots of people went. I was not able to go myself. But if you did go to the Declaring Freedom day 3, portion of the 4-day conference that was last Friday. There were 200 resident registrants. There were more online. If you did go, I would be very, very interested in hearing what you thought because the feedback is incredibly important. Chat me or you know email me. It's hard not to find me with any kind of thoughts or feedback. The commission is working on approaching CGA for broader funding and longer term funding for this effort. It is difficult to do things even though it's under the auspices of CT Humanities, it's difficult to do things or try to do things with 0 money, as we librarians well know. My little committee is working on a little rubric for evaluating programs that might come our way in terms of DEI. We're going through a lot of iterations of that thing. There are also many more state level and academic stakeholders' kind of coming online-CSUs, the UConn's are becoming more involved and being encouraged to share lots of resources. I believe that is all my report. I did put a little link in the chat in terms of mail lists. Even if you don't plan to participate fully, I really encourage you to get on those mailing lists and at least get to know the work of the commission at least a little bit. Make sure that you place the library front and center in those efforts for your community and kind of wed yourselves or bond yourselves to your local historical commissions or other groups that might be interested in that sort of thing.

The work itself is really cool; makes a lot of bridges, there's a lot of education and learning that can happen. <https://ct250.org/get-involved/>

BCALA: Robert Kinney: Absent.

Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie: The last meeting was March 4th. I unfortunately was not able to be there, but looking at the minutes, the 24 to 28 state educational technology plan has been released and is on the commission's website and just a reminder of the Connecticut Education Network Conference will be May 8th and May 9th this year. So, the registration is out for that now.

Communications Task Force: Doug Lord: The Discord server is up. It's very happy. It is still in a kind of growth stage, an experimental stage, but Stephanie will drop an invitation to executive board members into the chat. We'll try that for a month, and we'll see what's what. We'll see if there's great things, if there's terrible things, what we can learn and then kind of go from there in terms of opening it up to the rest of the membership. I would like to thank Stephanie and Caitlin Augusta very, very much for their coordination and guidance as they explain lots of different kinds of things and entertain lots of different kinds of questions.
<https://discord.gg/tSbB7WA>

CASL: Mary Ellen Minichiello & David Bilmes: No report. Update is Legislative's Update.

CLC: Ellen Paul: CLC has 13 new vendors that we are working with- most of them digital resources, databases and the like. We are encouraging all of our vendors- we're up over a hundred now, to exhibit at CLA. They get a monthly email from us with a membership list and we've been saying "sign up! Here's the info." Amanda and I are meeting later today to plan our booth for the CLA conference. We are excited to exhibit once again and we're both presenting at different times. Amanda and I are both headed to PLA in a few weeks. Amanda is presenting on take your child to the library day with Caitlin Augusta and will be in the vendor hub. If anybody is going to PLA and wants to be kind of on a group, feel free to send me an email so we can all get connected. And then of course we continue to work closely with Kate, Olivia, Deborah on legislative things.

FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek: Absent.

Library Connection: Laura Horn: Absent.

Region 1: Heather Aronson: The only thing I have is the Huntington branch of the Shelton Libraries is going through a renovation and it's moving along well. And then many of the libraries commented that they're excited for the passport program to start in April.

Region 2: Shana Shea: Simsbury Library is partnering with the Simsbury DEI Council and the Human Library organization in Denmark on a Human Library event Saturday, March 23, 10 AM - 2 PM. There will be a number of human books available for borrowing. They've also begun a Makers-in-Residence program with two Makers-in-Residence who will work with the community in the Innovators' Workshop March - May teaching classes and facilitating hands-on programming. Each Maker will complete a community-based project during their time with the library as well.

Region 3: Chonte Fields: So, reach out to everyone and said, Hey, give me something.-Events; A ridiculous joke; anything. Booth and Dimmock in Coventry received a \$10,000 grant through the ALA called Libraries Transform Communities to implement services and resources for neurodivergent adults. Bob's discount front furniture also donated a thousand dollars to their library teen room for their furniture. They are hosting a library mini golf event on Sunday, April 7th. At Babcock Library, in October, we are having Ronnie Leblanc come and talk about the UFOs in New England. I'm not sure if anyone here watches Discovery Channel, but he's got a

show on there so that'll be a fun kind of spooky season thing to do. And Hebron sent in a ridiculous joke because they do one every week. So, their joke for everyone is. Why did the farmer name his horse Mayo? Because mayo neighs.

Region 4: Erin Dummeyer: CT Community College, Norwalk Campus will have a banned book panel discussion on Wednesday April 3rd, from 1-2 pm. This is a part program of the Academic Festival 2024 “Information-Literacy in an Age of mis/disinformation”
<https://norwalk.edu/academic-festival/academic-festival-2024/>.

The New Canaan Library is fully re-opened again after experiencing flooding in early February after a relief valve on the backflow preventer failed, causing water from the street to enter the first floor.

Region 5: Emily Rush: Absent.

Region 6: Madhu Gupta: East Lime library is undergoing a strategic plan. Christopher Larson is the new Assistant Director at the library. The Preston Public Library received a \$20,000 grant from the American Library Association's libraries transforming communities, accessible small and rural communities to improve library services for those with disabilities. Community conversations to focus on needs will be forthcoming. And I'm very excited to report that the Public Library of New London will be hosting its first annual gala on April 6th.

SCSU: Cindy Schofield: Just 2 quick things: One is that the advisory board is meeting tomorrow that some of you are on our school advisory board, and they will be reviewing the employee survey that's going to be going out. It's mostly a survey asking people who are going to be employing southern students, what you are looking for, how you hope they're going to be prepared and then that helps us in planning curriculum. So that'll that survey will be going out soon if you could watch for it. And then, just an update on curriculum, we have begun developing one credit courses that students can combine. There'll be a menu of one credit courses that are short courses that the students can combine to create their 3 credit groupings along with regular 3 credit courses. Those courses will be also open for like continuing education type opportunities and obviously they would be a lot less expensive than a regular full semester 3 credit course. So, because of the approval process for curriculum things, those won't be official until fall of 2025, but we will probably roll some out -it's a process for giving courses that haven't been fully approved in next fall. So just watch for those things, but mostly watch for the employee survey, please.

Sustainability Taskforce : Doug Lord & Alessandra Casiello: Trainings committee is looking into some different software's. It looks like a bunch of the software's are owned by the same company, so we're going to try and see if we can get some demos of multiple software's at the same time so John is contacting them right now. We will be doing our CLA training in lieu of the date for the May meeting, because we generally don't have a May meeting because of the annual meeting. The Trainings committee worked on setting up what that will look like so, that will be happening. And then strategic planning-Thank you all for your feedback. If you gave us feedback for our surveys, those servers are now closed, and we are just going through kind of compiling common themes that we are seeing. Our financial plan is pretty much done. We have Margaret right now looking into opening a second bank account for us, which will be a savings account, as well as opening a credit card because CLA does not have a credit card. Once those things are set up, then our financial plan will be finalized, and we can bring it to the board.

Association Committee Reports:

ADA: Maria Bernier: No report.

Archivist: Gerald Seagrave: No report.

Awards: Region Reps: (Alessandra) John just wanted to remind the awards committee that he has sent you the nominations that were sent in and to vote on them by Friday, if you have not already. He's heard from a few of you, but he said he was still missing 3 people, so, it's your duty to vote on the CLA awards. You do not have to vote on the publicity awards-That is his publicity committee that does that. You don't have to vote on the children's awards because the children's section votes on those. But the CLA awards, please get him your votes. And again, the award ceremony will be on Tuesday, so that we can allow for our awardees and our scholarship winners to be there.

Career Development: Andy Forsyth & Amanda Stern: We have a bunch of news to share. The first is that the compensation benchmarks are up on our website. It is both a revamp of the positions that we did last time and then also some managerial positions library directors, assistant directors, and department heads, I believe. So, those are now up on the website. We are in the process of scoring our scholarships. We had 8 applications for scholarship. So, our committee is scoring them and those will be awarded at the conference. Our mentoring program: we're about to start the next cohort. Beth and I are getting together tomorrow to make the matches and then that cohort will start April 1st and run through October. So, the next round of mentoring matches will be in September after that. So, if you are thinking about being a mentor or getting a mentor, just keep in mind that is your timeline. Also, getting ready for the conference, we've got a number of programs that we are doing and sponsoring, and we will have resume reviews as well.

Conference 2024: Everybody is already aware, which is great. Monday is sold out, which means 2-day tickets are sold out. We are over capacity on Monday, so it's a blessing and a curse. This is probably the largest conference we've had. I went through numbers- I only have numbers back to 2012, so it's the largest conference since at least then. We currently have just under 900 people coming to the conference. So, if people would like, we still have tickets available, we are not at capacity for Tuesday and people can still buy tickets. We may have to shut that down eventually because we are getting close. We also only have a few tables left for our vendor hall. So, if you know of vendors that wanted to join and haven't, this is the time because we're very close to closing that down as well. I always like to think that everybody is going to pay their bills, so if we get everybody to pay, we are taking in about \$163,000 and our estimate of what we actually get as income is around \$12,000. That's with me just ball parking expenses, that we haven't received yet. So, we're in a good place. The committee is working moving forward. And if you're there on Monday, the things that we have had to change because of the reaching capacity, the award ceremony is no longer on Monday because we wanted the people getting the award to be able to come to the conference if they so choose and to be able to bring their guests. We generally allot them two guests to come to see them get their award. So, it has been moved to Tuesday. So, we will have our annual meeting on Monday, and then our keynote before the annual meeting on Monday in order to accommodate the award ceremony. Kate and Olivia have been so gracious to move the legislative update to Monday morning. So, Monday morning we will do our legislative update then move on to our annual meeting and keynote. For our keynote, there will be multiple rooms where the audio will be playing- we cannot broadcast the video. It is a Q&A with Mychal Threets, so when the ballroom fills up, it's kind of a first come first serve. When that room fills up, you can go into another room and hear that keynote there. He will be with us. Again, he is battling his own mental health things, so we want to make sure that he is comfortable, but he will be there with us for breakfast and his keynote and through lunch. So, if

you can't see him during the keynote and you really have something to say to him, you'll have a chance.

Sarah McCusker- As far as the Q&A goes, we'll be sending out an email, I believe, closer to the conference. But if anyone has questions that they would like to ask Mychal, please email them to me because I am, I'm going to be studying up on how to moderate a conversation. So, please send me questions because There's a reason I am a librarian and not a journalist. I have no questions, so help me out there.

Grants/Fundraising: Alessandra Casiello: So, for fundraising, our final fundraisers will be at the conference. You can buy tickets for the trivia day of, but you can buy them in advance if you want- They're \$25. Kristina Lareau and John Casiello are going to be doing trivia "Other duties as assigned." Your ticket gets you a free drink or it's included with your ticket and even if you're not coming on Monday, you can still buy a ticket on Monday night and go to the trivia. So, if you have to work that day and you can't make it during the day, you weren't able to get a ticket before we sold out, you are still able to come to Trivia. We will also have our silent auction and fundraising table. If anybody has an option item they would like to donate, please let me know.

Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan: So, on the intellectual freedom front, Jenny Lussier, Barbara Johnson, and I did a presentation to the Connecticut Bar Association. That went really well. They reached out to us to talk to their membership about book bans and what's happening in libraries, public libraries, school libraries just to get the lay of the land. Once we told them what was going on with censorship attempts, both challenges and the like, they were really interested and fired up about supporting CLA and CASL. They work with all sorts of people too, so, we talked to children's advocates, lawyers, they are councils to school boards, and the like, I know who work for, cities and towns across the state. So, they were very interested in hearing what was going on and also about the case law relevant to book bans. So, they were very interested. They seemed really receptive and supportive and so that was great. So, the Washington Post reached out Jenny Lussier and I to talk to Connecticut librarians about the protective legislation that's going through that Olivia and Kate already mentioned, HB, 5417. So, we had that interview. The story should be coming out either this weekend or early next week. So, keep an eye out for that. There will be covering, the protective legislation as well as punitive legislation, hostile legislation, there's a better word for it. But they're going to cover all of that. I was also reached out too by the International Festival of Arts Ideas out of New Haven. They are doing a panel; a little bit on book bands, but more encompassing than that and that'll be at the end of June 29th out of New Haven.

One last thing I wanted to mention is the incident that happened at Brookfield a few couple of weeks ago that was really disappointing. It was wonderful that the school board voted to retain the challenged book in their collection by one vote. However, it led to a bomb threat at the school, the library, the public library, and the town hall. It was investigated and luckily, they found that the threat wasn't credible. But it did disrupt a lot of peace there. So, if you haven't already reached out to library director Caroline Ford out at the Brookfield Public Library, please do. She's a lovely, wonderful person and that rattled her staff along with the school librarians there. One of the school librarians reached out to Intellectual Freedom a few years ago regarding a book challenge. I reached out to her after seeing the bomb threat closing and she said it's awful, she's feeling super anxious. The other part of that is she was a school librarian in Newtown during Sandy Hook. So, she was quite shaken about the bomb threat. So please, please check in

on your colleagues. If nothing else, let them know that you're supportive of that because these are awful things to have to go through.

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully: See attached.

Outreach: John Casiello: (Alessandra): He is still looking for volunteers for the CLA.

Conference days. So, if you are willing to give up a half hour or an hour and you are going to the conference, please contact him. It's important that we have people at that table in case people have questions about membership. We'll have a fun game at that table, so he still does need some volunteers for it. And right now, due to the conference, this is the time that we get a lot of influx in memberships getting renewed and right now we have 719 members so we're up there.

PEG: Mary Etter: We have had no communications from anyone requesting PEG grants. At the moment, we appreciate the fact that it is mentioned in the material for the conference. But so far nothing, So. That's all.

Procedures: Lisa Karim: The only thing I have to report is that if your section does not have bylaws or if they need to be revised, please revise them, and send them to me.

Section Reports:

Children's: Sage Gentry & Alexandra Remy: We, had our annual workshop last month and it was pretty successful we had 45 registrations. After that, no report. Thank you.

CLASS: VACANT

College & University: Rob Walsh: Absent.

JEDI: Mary Richardson & Sam Connell: No report but wanted to remind everyone that we are accepting nominations for officer positions. Any questions, please send them our way.

Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan: So, Passports is starting on April 1st as many of you have seen in your inboxes as many of you have seen in your inboxes. Everything will be sent by tomorrow and everybody that's waiting for stuff and that's been emailing me. I've been in and out the past week and a half with other work things. And of course, the town put me on a huge commission for something else that's taking place in April. So, I'm not going to be around. I'm hoping to have a really good experience this year. Since it's in every other year thing, it Sort of slips everybody's mind, so hopefully everybody has a lot of visitors and gets a lot of traction for public libraries in general.

Reference & Adult Services: Christie Mitchell: No report.

Resource Sharing: Matt Earls: No report.

Technical Services: Ann Victor & Christine Rinaldi: No report.

Technology: Kate Sheehan and Christopher Knorr: Hi, we're new. So, thank you all for re-establishing the technology section. I appreciate it. This is something I was on CLA board a bazillion years ago as the editorial chair when the technology section was first established and had not realized it had gone away. So, I'm glad it's back and we're just trying to get our ducks in a row and figure out what people are interested in. If we want the technology section to be more of an outreach about technology subjects for everybody or a panic group for the technology people, a support group for the technology folks in CLA. So, TBD, but looking forward to it.

YA: Stephanie Smith: No report.

Adjournment: 11:09 AM Motion to adjourn by Alessandra Casiello. Seconded by Kate Byroade.

Present: Sarah McCusker, Margaret Khan, Douglas Lord, Shannon Angelone, Alessandra Casiello, Alexandra Remy, Amanda Stern, Ann Victor, Chonte Fields, Christie Mitchell, Christine Rinaldi, Christopher Knorr, Cindy Schofield, Colleen Bailie, Deborah Schander, Ellen Paul, Erin Dummeyer, Heather Aronson, Jennifer Sullivan, Jerry Seagrave, Kate Byroade, Kate Sheehan, Kristina Lareau, Lisa Karim, Madhu Gupta, Maria Bernier, Mary Etter, Mary Richardson, Mary-Ellen Minichiello, Matt Earls, Olivia Scully, Sage Gentry, Samantha Connell, Same Lee, Stephanie Smith

President's Report

Sarah McCusker

It's continuing to be our busy time of year. We've been hard at work at conference, strategic planning committee. It's also budget season. I've also been working with some libraries who have been having library board issues. Sam Lee and Lindsay Delligan has been working with some of these libraries. We also just had two meet and greets with the ALA presidential candidates. They both reached out to have a session with us and hear about our concerns and what is going on in Connecticut. More about what's going on in Connecticut. One of them is from California, the others from Iowa. As you all know, we all have very different environments to the ones that we're working in. We had the one with Sam Helmick last week and the one with Ray Pun was yesterday. We had a small group for each of them, but really good conversations. I was really encouraged that both of them reached out about it. To the best of my knowledge, that's the first time any ALA presidential candidates have had this kind of event with us. It makes me feel really optimistic for the future that between the training thing that they ran back in the fall that Jenny Lussier and I were able to go to and then this reaching out. I'm hopeful that this is going to lead to some more collaboration rather than just everyone being kind of siloed into their own thing.

We are also moving ahead on the America 250 commission. I'm sure Doug will talk about that later but last week they had an event that several people in this room were at which is kind of the first convening of the various stakeholders in the upcoming celebration. I got the impression that that's going to be taking off over the next few months. I know that I've spoken with Jason Mancini, who's the executive director of Connecticut Humanities he's looking to convene a kind of taskforce of librarians probably starting the summer or fall to start brainstorming for planning and how we can best get people involved all the events. So, there's a lot going on and we are going to hear about all of it today. It's a busy time of year.

Treasurer's Report

Good morning, everybody. I will be brief to get the meeting going along. I do apologize, we don't have financial reports ready. Today, our administrative team is sick, but I can tell you that over that last month there hasn't been anything out of the ordinary going on. We are really ramping up for conference and we have some income coming in from that from registrations and vendors. I'm sure Alessandra will have more to say about that. My big thing though is that budget requests are due in one month on April 19th. That is the day after our April meeting. So, all sections and all committees need to submit a budget request even if you don't plan on doing anything, please at least give me a form that says 0. If you have any questions at all about that please don't hesitate to reach out to me. I'm more than happy to help and tell you about past years or what to expect if you're new. So that form is linked online. I'll put that in the chat and again, if you have any questions, please let me know that will be due on April 19th, all sections and committees.

<https://ctlibraryassociation.org/Finance>

New Business

a. Bylaws Revision Feedback- Alessandra Casiello

So last month, we showed you the draft document of the bylaw's revision. We had asked the board to take a look at it and bring back any questions or concerns you may have before we put this out to our membership as the vote will be at the conference and we have to put that out a month in advance. So, here's your chance if you have questions or comments, I did not get any email to me so, If you did email them, let me know and I can go through my email again. Did anybody have questions, comments, concerns about any part of the revision?

Mary Etter: I don't have any concerns about it. I thought it was a really excellent job. I have a couple of just grammatical or typo type changes and I didn't remember that you were looking for email feedback, but I'd be glad to send those to you.

Alessandra: Yeah, absolutely. And, a lot of like the grammatical things is formatting so we obviously know we're going to need to do formatting.

Mary: I had just 2 questions looking at it that actually were questions of how it was decided. I just wondered if in the membership description it was intentionally eliminated or if the mention of trustees and friends might be added to the support groups. I understand that it's not up top. But it seemed as though it was taken out and then it wasn't replaced.

Alessandra: Yes, so, we basically put it into this like support group, general support, feeling that we've tried to get the idea across to the public that we want their support as well. But there's this feeling that if they're not involved in the library in some way. So, we put our trustees, our friends, and our supporters all in that same category. Cause it's going to be the same pricing.

Mary: Yeah, well at least as I read it and maybe I wasn't seeing the most recent version. They weren't identified in that. I agree that putting them in the support group is perfect and even if it's added to that.

Alessandra: Yeah, we can identify them.

Mary: I just think it's a gesture of respect for a group that actually has liaisons to the board or 2 groups and then the other thing just was a question on termination of sections. I wondered if we wanted to acknowledge in the document that members of the section may petition the CLA executive board for termination of the section or the topic may be raised by the executive committee if no section activity has occurred within a certain period of time.

Alessandra: To add it in that the committee or section can terminate?

Mary: Yes, that they can petition to terminate, which I realize doesn't happen very often, but it has happened once in a while.

Does anybody have any other things they wanted to bring up? No. All right. Well, you all will see it coming through your email sometime next week and then hopefully you will be able to vote on it as a member of the association. I appreciate your feedback.

b. Public Libraries Letter to Beardsley Zoo- Jennifer Sullivan

So, there is some Conntech discussion about the Chaotic way that the Beardsley Zoo had unrolled a new pass program and a lot of people, I don't think Woodbridge was involved actually. I don't do museum passes, but a lot of people were given the runaround from the zoo. They were made to do some sketchy things, like leave their personal info on voicemails, mailboxes. They had to resort to buying gift cards and trying to pay that way and the zoo's response continuously was, "oh, it must be on your end." Which I think is just straight up as a customer service experience is poor, especially when you have people from all over saying "I keep having this issue. I keep having this issue." At some point you need to go to your IT, your tech people, whatever your website people, it sounded like it was some kind of bad plugin. I know that if I got repeated issues about our website. I wouldn't keep telling patrons it was them, I would be taking it up a notch. So, after the unsettledness and the upset feelings of a lot of people. I wrote a letter that I felt was pretty fair, it's a little long, but I didn't know if I was supposed to have a full board approval, CLA sign off with whichever to be able to send it on to the zoo. I don't know if they're going to care. Don't know if they're going to do anything, but I and a lot of other folks that were involved felt that it needed to be at least addressed with them because if it's not them, then who else are they going to do it to or what other museum might try to pull this. I don't think every library in Connecticut has a zoo pass, but I think almost all of them do and that's a big chunk of their membership. So, I think that's the short version.

Sarah: Does anyone have any comments on the letter or thoughts about it? I agree, we did get our pass in the mail after I left a very detailed voicemail with all of our information on it. So, I do think they resolved it. If you are a library that doesn't have access to a credit card for example, this was complicated. It's only in the last couple of years that I've had a credit card that I can use for work. So, it would have been a question of do I pay for this on my own and get reimbursed or do we just not get it anymore if they are no longer accepting checks. And I do agree that I think we'll be seeing more of this kind of thing as more and more places go to credit card only. I think it's partially on them but then it's also partially on our finance departments. Like, why do we still pay everything by check? I don't know, but I have no say in that, right? So yeah, I think it's important that they get the feedback And I think that what you wrote is fair. I don't think you sound angry.

Jennifer: Yeah, that was one of my concerns that there might have been a tone because, as those who know me, I can get the tone. and sometimes it comes across in writing also. But I kept to the facts, and I use people's direct quotes from Conntech. Please be aware to anybody that may have been in on that, that is also in on this conversation. No names or libraries were used. I used Very vague geographical references and just said, you know, a staff member at a Northwest Connecticut library. Just trying to protect everybody from any backlash.

Sarah: So, I don't think you need Board approval to send it- someone who knows more about this stuff than me can jump in if I'm talking about that. But I think it's good just that everyone knows that it is out there. If you want me to cosign it, I'm happy to do that.

Jennifer: Thank you.

c. CLA Officers for 2024-2025- Doug Lord

So, the slate of officers for next year. I do have the very pleasant and I mean I'm really happy about this. Erin Dummeyer of Mark Twain has thrown her hat into the ring. And if no one challenges her, she will be the vice president/ president-elect. So, the slate will be Erin; Scott as president; Margaret, who will be in the first year of her second 2-year term and Shannon who will I believe be in the second year of her first term for the officers. Then, there will be Sarah who will be the immediate past president. So that's your slate of officers. I'll send a little round a little email to the star chapter membership and that should be enough to set the agenda for the annual meeting.

Alessandra: I do believe we have a few region reps rotating off, which means we also need people for that because they get voted on as well.

Doug: Yes, region 2, we are in the works and since Erin is region 4, we'll need a region 4. So, Erin, that's you know your first unofficial duty as vice president/president elect is to find your replacement.

Sarah: Do we need to open it up? Like via email to nominations from the floor as it were.

Lisa Miceli: Yes, so we'll be sending an email through StarChapter to the members.

Sarah: Okay. I'm sure people won't be knocking down the doors?

Doug: I don't know, you never know. But, I mean, would it be healthy to do that? Yes, would we be incredibly fortunate to have the current slate? Yeah, it could be great.

Mary: Yeah, I just had an observation. That since the bylaws are clear that it is at a vote at the annual meeting or electronic because the annual meeting happens to be on the day that the registration for the conference is closed. In effect, now you could say that that some members who might want to be there.

Sarah: We have updates on that. Stay tuned.

Alessandra: There's still an electronic vote, regardless if we don't have a majority.

Sarah: We'll be back in touch with the region rep candidates and then the full list of everybody.

State Librarians Report

Deborah Shander

Two quick updates for today. We are obviously in the legislative session, and you'll hear a lot more about that from Olivia and Kate later, but I wanted to highlight two things. One is the State Library has finished its budget conversations with appropriations. We found them to be very collegial conversations, very interested in the work, and they had many positive things to say about the state library and the work of libraries across the state. So, I just wanted to share that. We anticipate that our very simple request of a ledger transfer will go through, but, of course, we'll find that out when the budget is released. And then also yesterday there was a hearing with finance revenue and bonding related to 2 bills that would provide funding for the arts and culture and tourism roadmap as well as for the America 250 initiative so, we are very hopeful that there will be funding coming in from the state to support both of those initiatives, which would involve libraries, historical societies, museums, and many others across the state as we head into the 2 years leading up to the 250th. So again, it was a hearing. There were a lot of conversations yesterday, but we are hopeful that that will move forward as well. So that is my update for today.

Legislative Report:

Jenny Lussier, Kate, and I attended a meeting with a Connecticut progressive Facebook group of people called Not Just Us. Brian Donahue had connected with us. They're basically a kind of a hub for many different progressively minded organizations across the state and we were able to speak about some of our advocacy initiatives that are going on right now. It was just a really good way to connect with different folks across the state, different grassroots advocates. I have a note here about the advocacy strategy session playbook with John Chrastka but basically that happened; there was a lot of good coalition building especially among CLA, Castle, and CLC. I'm still kind of processing a lot of the takeaways from that, but just really good practical suggestions for how to improve our advocacy game.

We had our legislative breakfast. I know it was a little touch and go as to whether that would happen, but that took place the morning of March 14th, pie day at the LOB. There were about 15 legislators or their aids in attendance and about the same number of librarians. As our very first legislative breakfast or at least first in a very long time, it was success and it was a good learning experience and we're super grateful for all of the library folks who showed up and advocated for the ebook bills, for libraries, for school libraries. There were a lot of great conversations and that's really going to help us this year and going forward. So big thanks to Scott and everyone else who helped pull that together.

And now getting into the meat. So, the legislative session is still going. There's a school library bill, HB 5417. It wasn't exactly the language that we wanted, but it's something and they're still tinkering in the process. The bill is intended to help protect school librarians and school library collections. From discriminatory censorship attempts, especially by school boards. I will drop the link to the bill. In the chat, just see. Stay apprised of it. And Kate, feel free to jump in at any time if you want to expand on anything here. We also still have the ebook bills going. Remember there are 2. One is SB 148 that was introduced in planning and development and the other is HB 5312 that was introduced in government administration and elections. SB 148 has been reported out of planning and development and it has also been reported out of the LCO. It has been filed with substitute language. Just a little bit different from the initial bill. And it is now on the Senate calendar. This means that it could be called to the Senate floor very soon for a vote. Hb 5312: It's the same bill basically, but that one we're still waiting for movement on that. And at this point, this is where I make my creed occur. The Legislative committee has really done all that we can do on these bills. We're really grateful for everyone who has submitted testimony and reached out directly to your local legislators. We have an uphill battle with these eBook Bills.

So, every library worker in the state really needs to talk to their local legislator whether it's the folks in their hometown or the folks that are in the town where the library that they work in is located. Really need to hear from the library folks that this is something that we need, that this is something that they need to co-sponsor or vote yes on. There's really no path forward that involves bystanders. So please, please get the word out. We have our speak up page on CLA website with templates, talking points there's a form that you just enter your name and address, and it will automatically connect you with your legislators so you can just paste your letter in. We've tried to make it as easy as possible. That all said, I know it's really hard sometimes. And it

feels daunting to connect with these elected officials, but we're all on the same side and it is critical that they hear from us. So, please, please reach out. Please ask your friends and family to reach out. Like I said, there's just, there's no path forward on this that involves bystanders. Our next meeting is on Tuesday, April 9th at 3 PM. Kate, if there's anything you want to add. I'm sure I left some stuff out.

Kate: I'll just echo everything that Olivia just said and when you look at the bill, you can see who has signed on to co-sponsor it already and I recommend checking that because there are a lot of co-sponsors now. So, those Legislators need a thank you letter. Even if you didn't reach out, urging them to do it, if they did it on their own, please send them a thank you for doing so because if the bills don't go forward this year, don't pass this year, they need to know that you saw them do that and that you appreciate them doing that. So, some of you don't even have to ask your legislators, you just have to thank them. If you know patrons who use your overdrive collections, you can talk to them about it. They are tired of long waits. If they are tired of books disappearing before they can get to them. Those are residents of Connecticut; those are library users. This is a group that's hard to reach because if they're only using us virtually, they're not stepping across our door. So, the ones who are using us for both things that we do we can build relationships with, even a couple of sentences from them to a legislator will make a huge amount of difference. I can't emphasize this enough. We are cautiously optimistic. We did make it to the floor last time, but we do have some opposition. We know that the publishers are spending a lot of money on lobbyists combating these bills. Which is you know kind of great but kind of terrible at the same time. So, we want them to be hearing from Connecticut and not from New York. That is the difference. And by New York, I mean New York, New York publishing dollars. I can't thank everyone who worked, and I think we actually saw 18 legislators and staff stop by. We had a lot of really good conversations at the legislative breakfast and now we know what we're doing. So next year we expect to have a lot of a lot more people in attendance, but it was well attended.

Olivia: Just a quick note about writing to legislators about this ebook stuff if you don't feel comfortable reaching out as a staff person it's totally okay to just reach out as a user of your hometown library. They don't have to know that you're a librarian if you don't want to, or if you don't feel comfortable talking about that. If you're a user of your own library, that's a very valid perspective to be coming from too.

Erin Dummeyer: I have a quick question: I have a legislator who has not co-sponsored the bill yet, I'd love to reach out to her. What is the process for her to co-sponsor. Does she have to wait for another hearing?

Kate: She can just do it anytime. They know what to do and they can just do it. Just write, call, and ask "can you please join on as a co-sponsor?"

Ellen Paul: I feel like if you can only reach out to one person and you have a Senate Democrat, the senators are really key here.

Sarah: Thank you to everyone who came to the legislative breakfast. We had some new faces there, new library faces, which I thought was really great. It was a lot of us in the room, but also

some people who I had never actually seen in person. So that was exciting. And I would just like to note, just because I'm a nerd and I like this stuff, representative Kana who represents parts of Stamford and Greenwich not only signed on as a co-sponsor to this bill, she's the only person who was there who noticed that I had on a pie scarf on Pi Day.

SB 5417:

https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabilstatus/cgabilstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&which_year=2024&bill_num=5417

SB 148:

https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabilstatus/cgabilstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&which_year=2024&bill_num=148

SB 5312:

https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabilstatus/cgabilstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&which_year=2024&bill_num=5312

Templates, talking points, a form to send your letters:

https://ctlibraryassociation.org/speak_up