

Connecticut Library Association Board Meeting

June 15, 2023

10:00 am Business Meeting via Zoom

**Minutes**

1. **Call to Order:** President Doug Lord called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

**Approval of Minutes:** April meeting minutes

A motion to approve the April meeting minutes was made by Mary Etter and seconded by Alessandra Casiello Motion approved. No abstentions.

2. **Old Business**

- a. **President's Report** – See attached

- b. **Treasurer's Report** – See attached

3. **New Business**

- a. Rob Walsh is appointed CULS Chair.

- b. Ad hoc Sustainability Committee Vote – want to make sure CLA continues to do well with financials and Institutional knowledge, hopefully do some Strategic Planning, strengthening ties to benefit the Association. Starts in July 2023, no reports, updates to the larger board. A motion was made to start the Committee by Kate Byroade and seconded by Scott Brill. Motion passes. No abstentions. If you are interested, please email Alessandra.

- c. Communications Working Group. Motion for an Exploratory Communications Task Force was made by Olivia Scully and seconded by Stephanie Smith. Motion passes. No abstentions.

- d. Annual Conference Update – Alessandra Casiello– see attached

- e. Reports

Representative Reports:

**CT State Library: Deborah Schander:** Absent (See attached)

**NELA: Scott Brill:** Scott Brill has taken over as NELA rep. He attended NELLS 2 as the CT Mentor this year and it was great. There were very few people from CT who attended and he'd like to get CT more involved. He'd like to see a bigger CT contingent.

**ALA: Kate Byroade:** ALA Conference is starting next Thursday. Kate will be attending virtually. She will have more to report after that.

**ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau:** No report

**FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek:** Last Saturday they had their annual awards and meeting. It was very well attended.

**ACLB: Denise Stankovics:** They are now doing webinars throughout the year. In April they held their Board Basics program. If you or your Board wants a presentation in your own library, you can go through their website and they will do it for your Board. Sam Lee will be presenting on September 12 on Intellectual Freedom. Their next issue on the newsletter will come out after her presentation.

**ACLPD: Alyssa Dansinghani:** Absent

**Region 1: Karin Goodell:** Absent

**Region 2: Shana Shea:** No report

**Region 3: Leslie McDonough:** Absent

**Region 4: Erin Dummeyer:** See attached

**Region 5: Emily Rush:** See attached

**Region 6: Madhu Gupta:** See attached

**CLC: Ellen Paul:** Slack channel for ALA attendees for communications/meet-ups. Get in touch with Ellen if you want access to the channel. CLC is having a furniture expo at WPL in August. It is a great opportunity to come by and “shop” and get to talk to the dealers. There will also be contract training from CLC. They will also have some colleagues there who have done a great job uplifting their libraries to talk about it. The event is free for members with breakfast & lunch included.

**CASL: Mary Ellen Minichiello & David Bilmes:** Summer vacation has begun for many after a very stressful year for school librarians. They appreciate Doug’s advocacy this year. They had their Spring Fling, giving out awards. Mary Ellen Minichiello received a service award for her time in the field.

**Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie:** Absent

**Library Connection: Laura Horn:** Absent

**SCSU: Arlene Bielefield:** Absent

Association Committee Reports:

**ADA: Maria Bernier:** Absent

**Archivist: Gerald Seagrave:** If you have an annual report, please send a copy to Jerry.

**Awards: Region Reps:** No report

**Career Development: Sunnie Scarpa & Andy Forsyth:** Friday, August 11 is the Leadership Institute. Details will be available on the website. Registration information will be sent out in July.

**Conference 2023: Scott Brill & Andy Forsyth:** See attached for Conference 2023 report

**Grants/Fundraising: Alessandra Casiello:** See attached

**Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan:** Absent

**Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully:** See attached

**Outreach: John Casiello:** Publicity/Communications and Membership is transitioning to “Outreach” doing the same things they were doing, but combined. Looking to enhance what membership means and what will make people want to be members. John could use help with Outreach – if anyone is interested, please contact him.

**PEG: Mary Etter:** Looking to publicize the availability of PEG funds to the membership.

**Procedures: Lisa Karim:** Lisa recently gave the updated bylaws to John to put on the website.

Section Reports:

**Children’s: Sage Gentry & Alexandra Remy:** Alex Klaus thanked everyone for her time on as a co-chair of Children’s. Sage introduced the new co-chair, Alex Remy.

**CLASS: Vacant**

**College & University: Rob Walsh:** Absent

**JEDI: Mary Richardson & Sam Connell:** They had a great time at Conference. Mary thanked Kristina for selling shirts. Mary spoke at Hartford Pride on behalf of CLA.

**Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan:** No report

**Reference & Adult Services: Christie Mitchell & Rachel Leff:** No report

**Resource Sharing: Matt Earls:** Absent

**Technical Services: Vacant**

**YA: Stephanie Smith:** No official report, but request/idea is that there is a Discord Server for the YA Section of CLA. Stephanie thinks that the communication and understanding of Discord would be a positive thing as a lot of YA departments have Discover Servers for their patrons. Stephanie is also still looking for a co-chair of the YA section.

4. **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn at 11:23 am was made by Kate Byroade and seconded by Mary Etter. Motion passed. No abstentions.

**Present:** Douglas Lord, Danielle Valenzano, Erin Dummeyer, Sunnie Scarpa, Ellen Paul, Jerry Seagrave, Daniel Bilmes, Madhu Gupta, Andy Forsyth, Kate Byroade, Debbie Misiaszek, John Casiello, Alessandra Casiello, Lisa Karim, Kristina Lareau, Sarah McCusker, Olivia Scully, Scott Brill, Scott Jarzombek, Shana Shea, Mary Etter, Margaret Khan, Jen Sullivan, Bob Scheier, Stephanie Smith, Alex Klaus, Mary Richardson, Allison Murphy, Sage Gentry

## President's Annual Report 2022-2023

First, a great big 'thank you' to members for a great year as president! The Association progressed with six key goal areas of focus:

- EDI | The Association welcomed Kristina Lareau as a regular reporter on ALA's EDI Assembly Representative and combined two committees into a more-powerful JEDI Section which offered a worthy Spring workshop featuring fresh voices.
- Funding for libraries | The Association succeeded in revitalizing long-dormant state funding for public libraries. I was incredibly happy to be a part of this team and encourage members to help the [Legislative Committee](#) with advocacy initiatives. It is rewarding and surprisingly simple.
- Financial health of the Association | The conference earned \$19K, fundraising earned \$9,350 and the efforts of the committees and sections earned \$6,750 (special props to Career Development). Funds were much-needed, are much-appreciated, and the Association is committed to safeguarding this stability (see below)
- Board vacancies | During the course of the year I was able to fill most of the vacancies as well as reduce the number inactive committees. Still outstanding are [CLASS](#) and [Technology](#).
- E-materials costs | While the efforts of CLA on two bills failed at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, the path for future advocacy and education is set. This was a massive, but rewarding, amount of work. Legislative champions were from both parties and included Eleni Kavros DeGraw, Matt Rosenthal, and Tony Hwang.
- Intellectual freedom | Advocacy has never been more important in our lifetimes for intellectual freedom in libraries. The Association assisted with many challenges and strung together an excellent series of educational workshops for members and interested groups. The [Intellectual Freedom Committee](#) could use your help.

As a group we accomplished a lot and I hope that this year might start a transition to bigger and better things for CLA. I'll certainly work hard as past president to make that happen.

Special thanks to outgoing Past President Collen Baille for three consecutive years of service, Danielle Valenzano for her hard work as Secretary, the entire Executive Board, Deborah Schander and Ellen Paul for their amazing contributions to this work, and the Legislative and Conference committees.

As Past President I look forward to helping President Sarah McCusker, Vice President/President-Elect Scott Jarzombek, Secretary Shannon Angelone, and Treasurer Margaret Khan with a good year.

## News

1. A tribute to the career of long-time Russell Library (Middletown) library director Art Meyers and a joint statement from CLC, CASL, and CLA about censorship are on the CLA [website](#).
2. June saw CLA voting to reconstitute an ad hoc **Sustainability Committee**. This one-year committee starts in July with a clear charge and deliverables. The intent is to protect assets and funding after a profitable 22-23 year and take a good look at long-haul financial stability, retaining institutional knowledge, clarifying roles and responsibilities, strategic planning, coalition-building, and training/documentation for new board members. With this in hand the Association confidently move into the future.
3. CLA is exploring a means of communication for our members that is independently run for the purpose of deeper and more meaningful engagement between members on areas of concern. CLA has a small working group of Executive Board members that is coming up with a plan within a couple/three months. Some points:
  - a. CLA will be in charge of this
  - b. Discord is the tool most discussed at the moment (there are other tools)
  - c. Moderators are a topic of discussion to ensure fairness to all
  - d. Sustainability of the effort is a factor
  - e. Guidelines will be promulgated and followed
  - f. If you want to volunteer, let me know. I have a lot of volunteers already, but this is something that lends itself to a community of people.
  - g. As transparency is important, here are the people involved with the group: Stephanie Smith, Douglas Lord, Glenn Grube, Jen Sullivan, Trish Tomlinson, Elizabeth Lane, Janet Flewelling, Caitlyn Augusta. Other special guest stars may be involved (and named) as time goes on.

## Announcements

### CLA president's June Report

1. Rob Walsh (University of CT) has been named chair of CULS and Alex Remy (Windsor PL) is new co-chair of Children's.
2. Intellectual Freedom Committee meets next on 7.11 & 9.12.
  - a. Be on the lookout for summer Banned Bands events, these are really fun. If you know of a viable location for such a party, let [Alessandra Casiello](#) know.
3. Danielle Valenzano completed her term as Secretary – many thanks to Danielle for keeping us on track, on time, and well-informed!
4. Trish Tomlinson has rotated off Outreach and I thank John Casiello for stepping up to fill this role, which is still new – and for which help is needed. Trish said, “It is simply a good time for me to explore other professional volunteer opportunities, and make room on the stage for our younger colleagues to grow into leadership and service.” Trish is remaining available as the reins are switched. John said, “It is time to enhance what membership means. It's not ‘just’ conference, it's relationships, connections, and a lot of other benefits.”
5. Two proposals for the CT Conference of Municipalities conference were submitted for this November, 2023 event: 1.) Fine free; and 2.) Censorship/Intellectual Freedom.
6. Lastly, a couple of in-person CLC meetings are upcoming, so mark your calendars –
  - a. A furniture expo on August 17 at Wallingford PL CLC.

b. A vendor expo on November 14 at SCSU.

Thank you again for the opportunity to lead CLA!

Douglas Lord

## Treasurer's Report

June 2023

Margaret Khan

- \* As of 5/31/23 we have received \$37,000 in membership dues, exceeding our budget of \$30,000
- \* Received \$154,000 in conference revenue, exceeding our budget of \$130,000
- \* Received over \$9,000 in donation
- \* Drafted and reviewed the FY24 budget with the executive committee. The next budget follows the current year's goal of executing a realistic and sustainable budget.
- \* Met with Alessandra, Bob, and Michelle to restructure and reorganize the budget, including creating account numbers for budget lines, standardizing expenses, and making sure repeated expenses (such as our salary study) are properly accounted and budgeted for.
- \* Updated FY24 Expense Form will be on the website in July.

## Conference 2023 Report

June 2023

Alessandra Casiello

We had a very successful conference, thank you to the entire conference team, special shout out to our Exhibits team of Sam Lee and Kym Powe who went above and beyond and helped us far exceed our expectations with our vendor hall and sponsorships. Thank you to Andy Forsyth and Scott Brill on our Programs team for selecting wonderful programs- one of the only negative feedback items we had was that people could not find seats in rooms that they wanted to attend a session and while it is a problem, it is a good problem to have and goes to show that people were highly interested in the topics. Huge thank you to our committee and section chairs, and our speakers for the programs they put on and to the Executive Board.

I am happy to announce that we had estimated a net income of \$1500 and ended up with a net income of \$19,202.65. This number shows the most successful in terms of income since 2014. We had a total of 854 people attending conference over the 2 days, including 537 different attendees and speakers and 91 vendor representatives. We are looking forward to next year and hope to see that number increase and are excited to start the planning process, so thank you to the conference team and everyone who attended and helped us for making this such a successful year.

## Grants/Fundraising Report

June 2023

Alessandra Casiello

We held our final fundraisers of this year at conference. This included an after-hours Trivia night, Penny Social Auction and lots of merchandise for purchase. We took in another \$2800 over the 2-days through these fundraisers. Huge shout out to JEDI for their awesome t-shirts that sold out and especially for Kristina Lareau who helped man the fundraising table and get people to buy things and promoted everything for us, as well as Sam Connell who helped us man the tables. We have gotten inquiries from across the US of people who have seen pictures of the JEDI shirt and want to purchase and are working on setting up a presale and putting all of our t-shirts: JEDI, Intellectual Freedom, Freedom to Read and our CLA: We work for you shirts up so they can be available to purchase all-year round.

We have currently secured 2 sponsors for the Leadership Institute 2023: Danosky & Associates, and Drumming About You with Bob Bloom, each at a \$250 level. We are hoping to secure a few more before their August event.

We are working on our Banned Bands events that will take place in September/October so if anyone knows of a Brewery or Restaurant that would host us, please let me know.

We will once again be holding our Costume Contest in the fall- this is an easy passive fundraiser that people had fun with last year so look for that coming in the fall.

For our Holiday Fundraiser we have had to move from Boon Supply to MeadowFarms and it will be held November 1-December 8<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, we will be planning to do another Giving Tuesday match in the fall so look for more information about that coming.

## State Librarian Report

June 2023

Deborah Schander

The legislative session ended June 7, finalizing the State Library's FY24-FY25 biennial budget and bringing several successes: an inflation increase to support existing resources in the CT Digital Library; \$500,000 per year in passthrough grants to support three literacy initiatives in the state; and \$225,000 per year for the restoration of grants-in-aid to public libraries. In addition, the cap on state support of public library construction grants increases from \$1 million to \$2 million per grant, and funding was secured for a renovation at the Middletown Library Service Center. Thanks to the joint efforts of CLC, CLA, and the State Library, we succeeded in adding statutory language that supports public libraries facing book challenges. And although we did not see final passage of legislation to address the high, unfair costs of eBooks and eAudiobooks for libraries, we gained the understanding and support of key legislators, already keen to raise this issue again next session. Thank you to everyone who spoke and acted in support of libraries this session!

## June 15, 2023 Legislative Committee Report - Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully

4. **We'd like to give a big "THANK YOU!!"** to everyone for the team effort during this past legislative session. There were lots of moving parts, we had lots of participation, and a number of librarians and directors put a TON of work into reaching out to their local legislators, starting the conversation and responding to legislators' questions & concerns, and leaving lines of communication open. We really came together across the state to speak out for libraries!!
  
5. **Legislative Session Debrief**
  - **ebook Bill H.B. 6829** was killed on the House floor on the last day of the session. You can watch the recording of exactly what all went down here:  
<http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=21885&jump=6:32:40>
  - In brief: State Rep. Gale Mastrofrancesco (R-Wolcott) asked a number of questions, and then another House Republican introduced an amendment that had not been filed; the House did a temporary pass which generally means they'll come back to the bill a bit later - but being the last day of the session, there was no time to revisit. Of note: the amendment had zero relationship/relevance to libraries, ebooks, etc.
  - **"Sanctuary Libraries" Bill S.B. 2 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY!** One senator and two representatives were absent from their respective chambers during the roll call voting. Importantly, the Senate amended the bill to remove the language specifying "sanctuary libraries," which was a win for us. Instead, the bill ties incentive grant funding to a requirement for libraries to have collection development, collection management, and collection reconsideration policies approved by their local governing body. The reconsideration policy must provide a clear process to request reconsideration of materials, and "in the instance of a book challenge, these policies shall govern."
  - This is a big win for Connecticut and protecting intellectual freedom in the face of increasing book bans across the country.
  - This is also a big win for library funding: the incentive grant line is being restored & re-funded, making it a great place to start building that funding back up to have an even greater impact!
  - The final language can be found in this amended version of the bill:  
<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/amd/S/pdf/2023SB-00002-R00SA-AMD.pdf>
  - More info about the bill here:  
[https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&which\\_year=2023&bill\\_number=2](https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&which_year=2023&bill_number=2)
  - The Hartford Courant published an excellent writeup explaining the bill as well:  
<https://www.courant.com/2023/06/07/ct-passes-bill-requiring-play-based-learning-addressing-book-bans-and-increasing-mental-health-care/>

- OLD statutes re: library incentive grants: [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_190.htm#sec\\_11-24b](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_190.htm#sec_11-24b)
  - As of June 15, 2023, we are waiting for this to cross the Governor's desk and hoping to see it enacted into law.
  - **Overall, we had a very successful legislative session!!** Thanks to our regional legislative events as well as lots of individual conversations, more legislators expressed interest in libraries than we've seen in a long time; we rallied even more librarians and library supporters than last year; and we joined in on wider discussions on these issues with our regional neighbors and beyond.
  - **Next stop:** Our champion legislators are already talking about re-introducing ebook legislation in the next session. We have our work cut out for us but we'll take all these lessons learned this year into the next session.
  - Please **thank your legislators** for supporting S.B. 2, as well as for any support they showed for H.B. 6829. It's OK to express disappointment that the ebook bill didn't make it over the finish line: you can offer to answer any questions your legislators might have, and express interest in discussing the issues with them!
6. **Looking Ahead**
- We'll try to get a "wrap-up" and suggestions for next steps onto the CLA website soon, so we can start getting thank-you notes out to all the legislators who voted for and spoke up for libraries this session.
  - Keep an eye out for an event coming up in the next few weeks: we'll be doing a debrief on what happened with the ebook bill
  - We're planning on hosting fall legislative events to keep building relationships with CT legislators.
  - Look out for additional CT ebook bill info sessions in the late fall
  - We're building up our advocacy resources, including getting started with ALA's free tools: OneClick Politics & BillTrack50
  - Outreach: We're looking to continue coalition-building w/ other CLA groups, CAS-L, and other orgs & allies beyond library-land
7. **Thanks again to everyone!** S.B. 2 was a smash hit that we didn't even know was coming, thanks to the passion and efforts of Senator Ceci Maher, and everyone who had conversations with their legislators about this bill. And even though we didn't get the ebook bill over the finish line this session, it was still a roaring success to make it to the House floor - and we learned SO MUCH! We're going to keep this momentum going and take all the lessons learned this session into the next.

Region 4 Report  
June 2023  
Erin Dummeyer

The Norwalk Public Library will begin the renovation of the adult floor of their SoNo branch in July and the renovation of their Greater Norwalk Literacy Volunteers (GNLV) department at their Main Library in July, as well. The GNLV dept. will add an additional classroom to the existing two. They have such a demand for meeting rooms, this will help to alleviate some of the strain.

In Newtown the Board of Education voted to NOT pull two titles off the high school shelves.

This month the library is beginning a partnership with NASA's Space Science Institute in bringing a museum display about exoplanets to Newtown in March of '24.

Thanks to an LSTA Summer Enrichment Grant, the Stratford Library is hosting the *Forest to Shore StoryWalk Tour*, which features StoryWalks in five locations in Stratford throughout the summer. The Library will host a guest speaker at each StoryWalk. Locations (and speakers) include: Jared's Dog Park in Roosevelt Forest (CT Humane Society), Sterling House Community Center (Stratford Historical Society), Stratford Veterans Museum (SV Museum), Clover Field at Jonosko Park (Avia Flight Academy) and Stratford Point (Audubon Society). Participants may choose to attend each program or visit the StoryWalks on their own, and can punch their Storywalk passports to be entered in a prize drawing at the end of the series.

In Wilton their first Pride Festival, co-sponsored by the Library - was a huge success. They estimate that over 400 people attended the festivities at the Library from 1-3pm, and it was a great opportunity for them to demonstrate their new vision that is based around being "an environment where everyone is made to feel safe and welcome."

## CLA Region 5 News: June 2023

### **James Blackstone Memorial Library in Branford**

- Our new Children's room mural has been installed and hung (painted on large canvas and hung like wallpaper) – finishing touches are happening this week and we plan to have an opening reception soon.

You can see the mural here: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/6361298700625109>

- Our seed library has given out over 700 packets of seeds since March, and now we will spend the summer sharing information with the community on seed-saving. We hope to get lots of seeds back at the end of the growing season to give out next year.
- Our mini golf weekend fundraising event at the end of April raised over \$19,000 for the Blackstone.

### **Essex Library Association**

- We had a kerfuffle over the weekend with a couple of Pride displays being disassembled. The books were placed in an out-of-the-way cupboard in the building but were found and restored to the displays. Here's the Library's official statement:

*On Saturday, June 10, 2023, approximately 20 books were removed from curated displays by an anonymous visitor to the Essex Library. We are disappointed and troubled by the unauthorized disassembly of the displays and removal of the materials and are actively investigating the matter.*

*Essex Library is committed to providing free access to information for all individuals and families in our community and supports each person's and each family's freedom to choose what they want to read and to decide what is important or relevant for their own lives.*

*Materials in the Pride displays have been found and restored.*

- Anastasia Wilson, M.L.I.S. has joined our staff as a Community Engagement Specialist and will be working on programs in all age groups as well as on special publicity materials.
- Programming Librarian Ellen Miller, received her M.L.I.S. degree from San Jose State University this month.

### **Milford Public Library**

- Emily Hartnett has been hired as a full time Library Assistant in our Children's Department. Emily had been on our part time staff, and we are thrilled for her to join us full time!
- Our Friends of the Library are busy planning their annual fundraiser, *Party in the Stacks*, to be held October 21. This yearly event is an adult only party held in the library, featuring music, cocktails, and silent auction and raffle. Volunteers decorate the library based on the theme, and partygoers are encouraged to come in costume (optional). This year's theme is *Party in the Stacks! Where Mystery and Romance* meet. It is a wonderful, fun event for library lovers - we hope our colleagues can join us!

## **Wallingford Public Library**

- Jane Fisher's last day as Library Director at the Wallingford Public Library was June 9<sup>th</sup>. Julie Rio, the Library's Assistant Director, will serve as Interim Director until the library hires its next director.

Respectfully submitted,  
Emily Rush  
Region 5 Representative  
E.C. Scranton Memorial Library

CLA Board Meeting  
June 15, 2023 Meeting  
Region 6 Libraries

East Lyme Library-Just opened a new, hi-tech conference room.

The Public Library of New London- Summer Reading Kick off Concert on June 23. The Library will be a center for Summer Meals for children 18 years and under.

Ledyard Public Library has been selected to receive the American Library Association's Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities grant in the amount of \$20,000! This exceptional opportunity is focused on improving library services to those with disabilities. The Library will be hosting community conversations in the coming months to better understand Ledyard's needs so they can begin to enhance library services.

Cragin Memorial Library- Colchester is kicking off a busy summer of activities this week. This June the Library has an exhibit of nature photography. Members of the community submitted to up to three nature photographs that they had taken to the Library. The Library had them printed and they're on exhibit for the month of June. One new program this summer is a series of monthly subscription boxes for teens with June's theme is "sporty." Each box will contain two books, candy, stickers, bookmarks, and other goodies.