

Connecticut Library Association Board Meeting
August 20, 2026
10:00 am Business Meeting via Zoom
Board Meeting Minutes

- I. **Call to Order:** President Brenda McKinley called the meeting to order at 10:08 AM.
- II. **Approval of Minutes from August:** 1. Devon Andrews 2. Erin Dummeyer
- III. **Old Business**
 - a. President's Report - See attached.
 - b. Treasurer's Report - See attached.
- IV. **New Business**
 - a. Conference 2028 vote for venue contract
 - b. New Board Services
 - c. [Legislative Agenda](#)

Representative Reports:

CT State Library: Deborah Schander: Just as you are all thinking about the legislative session that's coming up, we're also working on our regular processes for that as well. We are in the period in which all agencies are receiving instructions from the Office of Policy and Management, OPM, which is the budget arm of the state and that sets the budget on behalf of the governor for discussion during the legislative session. So we'll be working on the 28/29 biennial budget. So this will be discussed over the course of the upcoming legislative session setting the budget that would go into effect July 2027 through June of 2029. So we're in the process of receiving those instructions on behalf of agencies. All agencies are receiving those currently. Those instructions change every year depending on the priorities of the administration, external factors and so we don't know from year to year exactly what those instructions will look like. Sometimes they are guidance, sometimes they are very clear, determined sets of what we must do. So it might be it, those are essentially the guideposts that we have to work within in terms of proposals for increases, decreases, things like that. So we're in the process of receiving that information. One of the new wrinkles this year is you may remember that there is a relatively new secretary of OPM. So the person in charge of that agency, he took his position right at the start of the legislative session last year, but the budget priorities had already been set by the previous secretary. So in addition to receiving those instructions, everyone is just learning the way that he prefers to work, information that he wants to receive and what his guidance will be as well. So we are continuing to work through that more information in the near future. The last thing is just I wanted to remind you that our Connecticut's Revolution exhibit in the Museum of Connecticut History has been open and will remain open and free to the public to visit through July 9, 2027. We've gotten really great press about it, good response from the community and so if you're interested, you're welcome to do that. We are always open to hearing from groups who want to come and visit, and so if you would like any information about how to promote that to your library patrons, please do just reach out to Jen Matos, the museum administrator.

NELA: Sarah McCusker: Absent.

ALA: Kate Byroade: Absent.

ALA EDI Assembly: *Vacant*

ACLB: Denise Stankovics: Coming up this fall, we have some webinars planned. We're going to do a Legislative one, I believe we're in process of setting dates for that. We'll be doing board basics in December and we hope that a lot of new board members will sign up for that one. We're in the process of updating our trusty handbook, which is available on our website. The next issue of the newsletter is in process.

ACLPD: Robert Kinney: Absent.

America 250: Margaret Khan: No report.

BCALA: Vivian Bordeaux: Absent.

Bibliomation: Alessandra Casiello: Not too much going on right now at Bibliomation. We have had a couple of director changes. Frances McGrath is the new director of the Windham Free Library. Recently Scott Brill is no longer the director at Milford Library, so Suzanne Harrison Thomas is the interim director. She's worked there for many, many years, so she is interim for the time being. In other Bibliomation news, we just finished our 25/26 annual report and wrapping up summer, new fiscal year, all of the good things.

Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie: What Brenda was mentioning before about the possible e-rate situation. The Commission will be putting out a formal letter to the FCC. They currently have an open forum right now where people can respond from the public about how they feel about e-rate. So ALA has actually put out a great toolkit for that too, for kind of putting any information out there. So anybody who does do e-rate, if you can do a statement just stating how impactful it is to have it. But the commissions on top of it as well and looking into it. Our next meeting will be in September, which I'm sure we'll be talking quite a bit about e-rate and the continuing conversations about AI in libraries and schools.

Communications Task Force: John Casiello: We had tried to do a communication survey that was specifically for legislative and that was around conference time and we didn't get a great turn out for that. But I do want to try and do a membership-wide communication survey as we lead into the change in software with Zoom, G Suite, all these things changing for us. I think it's a good time for us to revisit all of that. So I'll be working on that survey to hopefully go out in the fall.

CASL: Gina Wiese/Valerie DiLorenzo: Absent.

CLC: Ellen Paul: I'll do first a kind of an update for CASL, because it's a joint CASL/CLC initiative. We're glad to see that CLA has passed their legislative agenda. CASL is working on their own legislative agenda, which includes potentially putting forth a bill this session that would require schools to employ a certified school librarian at a certain ratio according to the number of students in that school. So we are working together on a draft piece of legislation. It will ultimately be up to CASL whether to advance that. But we are partnering in assisting them in that initiative. Moving to CLC, the biggest thing that's on the agenda right now is the book bid. The RFP went out; the proposals came back. There were 28 proposals, which is a really healthy number of proposals. We are in the middle of evaluation at this point. We have internal evaluators from the CLC staff. We also have five external evaluators from libraries across the state of Connecticut for these folks. They work in technical services; they work in acquisitions; they do it every day, so it's really amazing to have their help and support. New contracts will go live January 1st. Once we make awards I'll share with you who has been awarded that likely is probably going to be at our next CLA meeting. I'll be able to share that. Otherwise, regional roundtables, in person regional roundtables are coming back for the fall. We did this last fall and they are on the calendar. There's too many of them to put a link to each one. So I'll just drop a link to the event calendar on there. Lastly, probably this week or next week, we're going to start

advertising for the Vendor Expo that is November 10th and has a really good variety of different vendors who are going to be there this year, including a lot of book vendors. No surprise there. So I'll drop that in the chat. Thanks for giving me the opportunity.

FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek: No report.

LION: Joe Farara: Absent.

Library Connection: Laura Horn: Absent.

Region 1: Heather Aronson: Absent.

Region 2: Lisa Miceli: Absent.

Region 3: Drusilla Carter: Julie Styles in Columbia says "In Columbia, Cait Orlomoski has been promoted to Assistant Director and Adult Services Librarian. Cait was hired at Saxton almost 13 years ago as the Adult Services Librarian, and has taken on more of a leadership role over the years--so we made it official! Also, I don't have the final numbers yet, but our summer reading attendance this year is ~34% higher than it was last year. Liz Thornton in Bolton says she has nothing to report but appreciates the check in. Here in Hebron, we are trying to balance the major cut to our building maintenance line item with the fact that our building is doing its best to fall apart. But we did have 839 registered for summer reading in a town of 9000 people, so there's that!

Region 4: Kiera Parrott: See attached.

Region 5: Emily Rush: See attached.

Region 6: Katie Huffman: I heard from Chris Bradley at the Mystic & Noank Library. She'll be retiring at the end of this calendar year. She's been in that position since 2020. Like many of you, Jessa Franco at Ledyard reported six really successful summer reading numbers. Their adult registration more than doubled and they're still finalizing their final numbers. They plan to begin strategic planning in a few months later this fall. Finally, here in Old Lyme, we're also preparing to start searching for a children's librarian. Our current librarian has decided not to return after maternity leave later this fall. So we're back at that as well.

SCSU: Cindy Schofield: Absent. Summer interns have wrapped up their hours and their final projects indicate that they all had wonderful experiences, so big thanks to all who hosted! Fall interns will begin their hours soon, as the semester gets underway next week.

Sustainability Taskforce: Alessandra Casiello: Just a reminder for all of our sections and committees to take a look at the website. We are going to be redoing the website when the new software comes. If there are things that you would like to see on there, please send them over to John. You will all end up having your own pages on that website. We just want you to see what's currently on the website, what we're missing, what you would like to see, what you would like moved over. This is especially important for legislative committee because you have many pages on the website right now. So we need to know what you would like us to move over. Then the other thing, the Financial Policy should be reviewed next month. So I'll be meeting with Brenda, Margaret, Devin and Shannon on that and then we'll report on that the following board meeting afterwards.

Association Committee Reports:

ADA: Marilynn Lewicki: Absent.

Archivist: Gerald Seagrave: No report.

Awards: Region Reps: John Casiello: Nothing major but just a heads up to region reps: I'll be sending you an e-mail shortly inviting you to our next conference meeting, which will be in

September, just to introduce that process and get that going. We don't really do much until January, but just to get everybody on the same page, so look for that e-mail.

Career Development: Diana Preece and Mirja Johanson: We've pushed the date for the Leadership Institute a little bit later to accommodate the media specialists and the children's services staff. Summer's a little crazy. So our top date that we're looking to confirm is Monday, October 19th, and I did my best to check various organizations and calendars to make sure there weren't any scheduling conflicts. But if anyone knows of something major scheduled on that date, now is the time to tell me before I lock that down and send out the save the date invitations.

Conference 2027: Conference committee met earlier this week. We have chosen a theme for the 2027 conference and the theme will be "Every Connection Matters." We will send out our save the date next week and then there will be follow up emails every other week with little nuggets of things coming for conference: logo, vendor registration, and rates, all of that good stuff, Keynote. It's kind of the same way we did it last year with little pieces coming out bit by bit. We will be opening our proposal submission form in mid-September and this year because of the software migration, as well as the fact that Massachusetts has their conference the same date as ours, we will be offering an early bird registration time for vendors to lock in a lower rate before we move softwares. Then we will open it back up for regular registration once the software is moved over in January. So that will open a little bit earlier this year in September as well. And then it will close mid-November for a little portion of time and reopen in January on the new software. So, vendors will get a little discount as well this year.

Development: Alessandra Casiello: Our first fundraiser of the year is our Meadow Farms fundraiser. It's a virtual online fundraiser. You can buy gifts, wrapping paper, chocolates, things like that. That will run for a month from October 15th to November 15th. The other thing that we're working on right now, now that we are 501(c)(3), many of you who were here on the board last year may remember that we had a donor from the Hartford Foundation who wanted to connect with us about creating a scholarship fund. However, they can only do it with a 501(c)(3) organization. So they were willing to wait for us to get that determination letter. So I am trying to work things out with the Hartford Foundation so that we can move forward with that hopefully and get that in it locked in for later this year. So more to come on that, but we are very happy that we'll finally get to move forward with that.

Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan: Absent. So that folks are aware Brave Books are coordinating "See You At the Library" again for Saturday, 10/3. Please consider planning programs or otherwise occupying your library's meeting room spaces with library sponsored events that day instead. Otherwise prepare staff for inquiries about room usage and library sponsorship of programs. [Book Riot/ Literary Activism](#)

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Rebecca Harlow: Now that we have a legislative agenda, we are going to be holding a planning session in the fall. So this will be an opportunity for everyone to come together and strategize for how we get our legislators to care about the items that we've identified for public libraries. So we are still working on setting the dates for that and once we have that, we'll select a central location and notify everybody. So anyone who's interested in helping to strategize on that work is welcome to attend. We also are going to be planning sometime in the fall, I'm one of the law for librarian's trainers in Connecticut, We're going to be planning a law for librarian's session, I think around meeting room policies sometime in the Fall. So just keep an eye out for that as well.

Outreach: John Casiello: Nothing that hasn't already been covered. Long term planning for you know, website update and all the various things working with Bob. Thank you very much for all

your work with I'm excited about G Suite and Canva and things like that and sort of bringing the entire board under the same umbrella. I think it'll be a very helpful for sharing assets and things like that. So as that develops, we'll be in contact and create more of a plan for it.

PEG: Mary Etter: No report.

Procedures: Lisa Miceli: Absent.

Section Reports:

Children's: Vacant

CLASS: Vacant

College & University: Vacant

JEDI: Mary Richardson and Rosie Luther: We are working on an in person gathering and a workshop for the fall.

Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan: Absent.

Reference & Adult Services: Noel Sander: Absent.

Resource Sharing: Matt Earls: Absent.

Technical Services: Ann Victor & Christine Rinaldi: There's still time to register for our summer meeting tomorrow, which will be hybrid both in Middletown and on Zoom.

Technology: Kate Sheehan & Jessica Wolford: We have our field trip coming up on September 14th. We are headed over to Margaret's library to see their delightful computer lab running on Linux. I'm super-duper excited and can't wait to see it. So we are doing that at 10 AM. So send your tech people or just your tech curious people, have them come and look at their cool setup.

YA: Danielle Murray & Jackie Bush: Absent.

Adjournment: 10:56 AM. Motion made by Alessandra Caseillo. 2. Kiera Parrott

Present: Brenda McKinley, Devon Andrews, Shannon Angelone, Erin Dummeyer, Deborah Schander, Denise Stankovics, Margaret Khan, Alessandra Casiello, Colleen Bailie, John Casiello, Ellen Paul, Debbie Misiaszek, Drusilla Carter, Kiera Parrott, Emily Rush, Katie Huffman, Jerry Seagrave, Diana Preece, Mirja Johanson, Rebecca Harlow, Rosie Luther, Ann Victor, Kate Sheehan, Robert Scheier.

Old Business

a. President's report- Brenda McKinley

First thing I want to do is shoot it over to Erin because I feel like she needs to share this news.

Erin Dummeyer: We were finally approved to be a 501(c)(3), which just to refresh your guys' memory, I think the membership voted to move forward with that back in 2022 or 2023. Then because of some kind of clerical challenge, it didn't end up happening. So last year shortly after I started my presidency, I was like, all right, let's get this done. We can apply for grants; we can get discounts through QuickBooks; there are more things available to us as a 501(c)(3). So I made it my mission. I did not expect it to be such a journey. I've learned a lot about switching to be recognized as a 501(c)(3). It took like 9 months, but I was very thrilled when we received that letter.

Brenda: A huge kudos and thanks to Erin for seeing this to the end. So the work is happening as Erin said, and we're trying to redo all of the software. Whatever agreements, canva, Zoom, maybe Google Workspace is still in the works. QuickBooks was a question mark, I think. It's great to be able to move forward with that.

The other thing I had just wanted to let you know that the last meeting, we had talked about the CLA e-rate statement. I submitted that statement and sent it out to our federal delegation and I got acknowledgements of my outreach. But I did get more of a letter from Senator Blumenthal, which was just pretty much stating it was more customized letter preservation of e-rate is a priority for him. We'll see what happens. That's continuing. We see that ALA and other state associations are at doing advocacy around that issue.

b. Treasurer's report- Devon

Seems like a pretty uneventful month. We had a good amount of membership dues, but I compared it just for my own curiosity to July of 25 and it looked like we had about \$3,800 in membership dues that last a year ago versus about \$1,800 this time, but I thought that was at least something I was curious about. So you can see we're a little in the in the negative, but I'm sure we're in good shape overall.

As an aside, Devon, Margaret, and I had gone to the bank. I can't even remember if that happened before our July meeting. We've gotten all the signers situated and the online access needed situated I think right. We're in good shape with all that.

New Business

a. Conference 2028 vote for venue contract- Alessandra Casiello

We have at the moment 2 venues that are able to fit us comfortably. That's Mystic and the Connecticut Convention Center. So we reached out to both of them, as usual, asking for a quote. The quote that we got from Mystic came in with the same quote that they've given us for the past two years. The only change was a change to the hotel block booking. The room fee went up by \$3 a night. That was the only change. Everything else stayed the same. Room rental fee, they're offering \$6,600 and a food minimum of \$69,000. We always spend more than that. So those things from Mystic are the same. Connecticut Convention Center asked us what our budget was for this year. They basically said so that we don't waste our time and yours, "What budget do you have for your current conference?" I said if it's in within \$15,000, I think we'd even consider it. They came back and they said that they wouldn't be able to make that that budget. So they did not want to provide us for a quote. So our vote is right now we can accept the quote for Mystic or we can continue searching for a different venue. We did find out about another venue option, but they were not able to get us any information or get us to see the space it is. Quinnipiac University now has function space off campus that they use for conferences and they are trying to promote that for other organizations. So they will eventually, hopefully get back to us and let us see that space. But at the moment we just have our one option. So there's a vote to accept the quote for the venue for the 2028 conference at Mystic Marriott. The dates that they gave us aligned with what we've been doing the last couple years, it would be April 23rd through 25th, which is a Sunday to Tuesday. They gave us two options that week or the week after, and the week after would bump right up to CEN if they stay within their normal time frame. So we opted for the 23rd to 25th dates with the quote. So we would need a motion to approve 2028 venue so that we could get a formal contract signed with them.

Motion made by 1. Margaret Khan 2. Devon Andrews. Motion passes

b. New Board Services- Alessandra Casiello

So what Brenda was talking about before, I just wanted to let the board know kind of where we stand on that. Bob wasn't able to be here, but he is working on getting us nonprofits, software changes to some of the things that we use. We did not have a CLA provided Zoom in the past. We do now have that. So we are just talking about where to put those credentials for people to access. What would be the best way to do that? But if you do need a Zoom for an upcoming event, reach out to Bob and he can give you those credentials. He is working with Google Workspace. This would allow us to hopefully have emails for all of the board members and also share a Google Drive right now. If you don't have Google e-mail, you're not able to get into our drive so it would be very helpful. John is working on the Canva nonprofit, so if people want to do flyers there, he is working on that and QuickBooks, which will save us some money as well on our operating budget. I just wanted to let people know kind of what's coming for the board. Hopefully we can get those things up and running for people along with when our new membership software and website comes.

Bob: The Google Workspace is making its way through the processes. It's been approved. Then I got a request to select the things that we were interested in. So I

selected the workspace that has to then go for review. So it's kind of a process, but I think we're at the end part of this process and should have that account soon. And at that point I'll let the board know and can move from there. QuickBooks is real mess in that it's not the data the new process they have I was able to get that to work but the data came over not 100% and then they keep having me try it again and it's the same result. I'm working on it if I have to use what I have, it's not terrible there. I have identified the things that came over incorrectly and I couldn't adjust them, but I had to make the decision of whether I would continue to work with them and fail or does it make sense to fix everything. So bottom line is I'll work this out and we'll have it soon moved over. It doesn't really affect anybody else anyway except for me. So just working that working that problem through. We have zoom: I think we should just share it on the drive and let people log in.

Alessandra: If that works for now, as a document in the drive for those that have access to the drive. Again, if you don't have access to the drive because you don't have a Google account, just reach out to myself or Bob and we'll give you the credentials for the zoom.

Bob: In the meantime, I could just share it with the board group mail and you can store the information in the document that I send out. So I'll do that today. The only drawback of having a single account is that you know the two. Authentication is an issue, so one of our accounts is used for Zoom, so you can log in and get that code when it gets sent. So I'll share that all in a document. So you'll be needing to log into both Zoom and to Gmail to the account so that when the code gets sent, when you're logging into Zoom, you can go into that account and get the code. They don't really want you to share an account like this, but this is a workaround.

c. [Legislative Agenda](#)

So the legislative committee has been working for several months on our suggested CLA agenda for the next legislative session. This year, the committee identified 3 budget priorities, all of which provide direct benefits to public libraries. The first item that you see is grants to public libraries. That is the line item that was restored a couple of years ago with SB 2 and that funding currently is at \$225,000. The committee is proposing a pretty significant change to that line item and we're asking for \$2.00 per resident and direct aid to public libraries and an increase of the minimum grant from \$1200 to \$2400. That grant is distributed, I'm sure most of us know, based on a formula that is in statute. So the base grant applies to everyone and then the rest of the money is distributed from the larger pool based on a formula that tries to equitably distribute that funding. So taking into account angelic rank and municipal funding and things like that. The next line item is Connecticard. We are asking for about \$1.4 million in funding for the Connecticard borrowIT reimbursement grant. This is a restoration of the highest fund previously funded level, which in I think 2015 was \$950,000 with an adjustment for inflation. So that's \$1.4 million for Connecticard reimbursement grants. The last line item is supporting CLC's requested increase from \$124,000 to \$500,000. There is one item that the committee did identify as important to public libraries that we are still working on and that is delivery. So if you are looking at this and thinking where is the requested money for delivery, we are still actively working on developing that request, but we don't

have the complete picture of what is needed to make meaningful change to the delivery system. But we didn't want to hold up work on these three line items, so there might be an amendment to this legislative agenda in the future. But we wanted to get moving on these three items.

Colleen Bailie: One of the issues with delivery is also seeing about how we do have one consortia that is not getting equitable service to compare it to the other two. So, it's seeing what the cost also may be to make sure that we're getting the same equitable service as the other two. That is one of the things we're also working on to get some of that information from the state.

Rebecca: I should have said this in the beginning, but I'll just add thank you to everyone who is on the legislative committee who has worked on this and all of the people who are on the subcommittee to develop this request. We put a lot of work into finding out both what was important to the library community and doing the research and connecting with our legislators to see what might be supported.

Motion by Katie Huffman 2. Kate Sheehan. Motion passes.

Region 4 News

August 2026

Norwalk Public Library:

Norwalk Public Library is now a passport facility. The government closed some facilities, making Norwalk one of only 16 acceptance facilities located within 15 miles of zip code 06850. Evening and weekend passport appointment availability is limited, and Norwalk Public Library offers both. Stamford ran a model passport program; Norwalk is increasingly busy after their closure.

Norwalk Public Library remodeled their Greater Norwalk Literacy Volunteers Department to add an additional classroom. They now have three classrooms, instead of two. The new furniture has arrived, and they will add Jabra videoconferencing equipment to each classroom for hybrid classes by the end of August.

They are also updating their study rooms with modern and functional furniture that is set to arrive August 27. Jabra videoconferencing equipment will also be added to the rooms for hybrid meetings.

Norwalk has a “Read on the Green” program that takes place on the Norwalk Town Green at 8 Park Street for quiet, community reading. Just bring lawn chairs or blankets, your favorite book, and family and friends. The next event is scheduled for September 16, 2026, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Free to all ages. This will be an on-going event spring and summer. Check their calendar for future dates.

Ridgefield Library:

Lots of staffing changes at Ridgefield. They recently had two retirements and one department head moving to a position at another library. These changes have had ripple effects as three of the positions were filled with internal candidates, which then opened up their positions. Long-time Ridgefield Library staff member and former Collection Management Department Head, John Casiello, is now the new Assistant Library Director. Kate Hellman, who came from Derby Neck Public Library, is their new Adult Services Department Head. Carolyn Gillan, who was a member of the Circulation Department, is now the new Circulation Department Head, and former Collection Management Assistant Shiao-Lan Haines is their new Collection Management Department Head. John, Kate, Carolyn, and Shiao-Lan look forward to working with colleagues across FLAG and CT libraries.

CLA Region 5 News: August 2026

Derby Public Library, Derby

- We are in the process of recruiting for a new Children's Librarian, interviews are scheduled next week.
- On the facilities side, our HVAC project began during the last week of July. While the work continues, we remain open to the public and have been operating under our summer hours: Monday through Friday: 8am to 5pm, and Saturday: 8am to 1pm.

Shelton Library System, Shelton

- Josephine Sembrat is retiring as a fulltime Library Assistant (after 53 years!) and will return as a part time Library Clerk on Sept. 11th.
- We recently hired Michael DeGirolamo, Jr as our new Reference Librarian.

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