

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

- I. **Call to Order:** President Scott Jarzombek called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.
Approval of Minutes: October meeting minutes approved by Mary Etter and Kate Sheehan. Three abstentions.
- II. **Old Business**
 - a. **President's Report** – See attached.
 - b. **Treasurer's Report** – See attached.
 - c. **Adopting Legislative Agenda**
- III. **New Business**
 - a. **Legislative Meet and Greet- Scott Jarzombek**

Representative Reports:

CT State Library: Deborah Schander: The state library has a new website. We have been running two parallel websites for some time but at this point, we have fully moved over to the new site. We also received approval from the Bond commission recently to conduct a study about the possibility of building a new State Archives facility. When I say new, I mean the first ever. The state of Connecticut has never had a stand-alone facility. We are hopeful that we will be able to build a facility that meets the needs of a modern state archives but that will be a fairly lengthy process. Finally, as we are leading into the legislative session, all state agencies have received directives to cut out any unnecessary funding for the remainder of this fiscal year. We're 4 months into the fiscal year and are being told to cut out anything we can. We have a follow up with our analyst to see what that means for the state library in particular. What the directives have not said is that there are cuts coming, it's just focusing on unnecessary funding at the moment. We're under a soft hiring freeze across the state and I will have more information on that and if it affects anything in terms of our operations in the future.

NELA: Scott Brill: NELA 2024 in Portland was well attended and there were excellent presentations by many CT Librarians. NELA 2025 will be in Rhode Island which affords great opportunity for CT Librarians to both attend and perhaps propose a program submission. I matched the NELS I: Emerging Leaders Connecticut cohorts (which includes Ann Victor, Co-Chair of Technical Services section) with library leader mentors. NELS II: Mid-Career Leadership (formerly what was once known as NELS) will be held in Spring, 2025 at the Von Trapp Family Lodge in Vermont. More details and information on how to apply will be announced in early 2025.

ALA: Kate Byroade: Absent.

ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau: No report.

ACLB: Denise Stankovics: Last month we had our webinar on the three-legged stool: directors, board, and friends working together. It was cosponsored with FOCL, and we want to give full credit to Pam Monahan of FOCL who came up with the idea and did a lot of the work to make it happen. Glenn Grube did the presentation on the director's portion of the program. Our webinar was a microcosm of the point we were trying to make with the three constituents working

together to make libraries work. Our next presentation will be at the end of March on hiring a library director. With any luck, our newsletter will be out in early December.

ACLPD: *Vacant*

America 250: Margaret Khan: The CT commission is in the planning process for a small conference in the Spring. They are going to have a conference at UConn on Friday, March 21st. They'll be discussing how we can recognize this event. I'd like to encourage you to have discussions with your staff on what you are going to be doing in your own libraries to recognize this 250th. Maybe you can incorporate this into your summer reading since this will be happening in the summer of 2026.

BCALA: *Vacant*

Bibliomation: Alessandra Casiello: Bibliomation is happy to be a sponsor for this year's CLA Conference where we will also be exhibiting. Alessandra will be going on maternity leave from November 25-February 20, in the interim Director of Member Services Jessica Woolford and Business Manager Debbie Daiss are available for any questions. Bibliomation just finished E-Rate bidding for 29 of their libraries. In November, Alison Boutaugh (Thompson Library Director) retired after 24 years there. We just had our annual audit completed and all is well.

Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie: No report.

Communications Task Force: John Casiello: No report.

CASL: Jenny Lussier & Gina Wiese: Our conference 2024 was a huge success. We had a terrific preconference and keynotes from author Mike Curato and school librarian Shannon Miller. We had over 400 attendees, and 35 authors at the authorpalooza. Nerd Camp 2025 will be on March 1st hopefully in the New London area. This will be an open event for anyone who loves books and literacy. We have been working this fall with Every Library's John Chrastka to prepare for advocacy work and legislative activity in the next 2 sessions. The CASL board voted to endorse the 2025 legislative agenda developed in conjunction with CLA and CLC.

CLC: Ellen Paul & Amanda Stern: CLC board meets this afternoon, and the legislative agenda is on our agenda as well. Book contracts are up at the end of this year. We have successfully extended all of our contracts with minimal changes. Watch your email over the next month or so, we'll be announcing new contracts and talking about the changes that there have been to the book contracts. We're also in the middle of evaluating our periodicals bid. We got a couple different responses from that, and they will go live January 1st. Thank you to everyone who came to the vendor expo on the 12th and the school library professional development day. We had over 100 school librarians spend election day with us, and we had a really wonderful vendor expo at SCSU.

FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek & Pamela Monahan: No report.

Library Connection: Laura Horn: Absent.

Region 1: Heather Aronson: No report.

Region 2: Lisa Miceli: See attached.

Region 3: Chonte Fields: Absent.

Region 4: Brenda McKinley: Working in the role of the legislative committee and a lot of outreach to our legislators to meet in Fairfield.

Region 5: Emily Rush: No report.

Region 6: Madhu Gupta: See attached.

SCSU: Cindy Schofield: Southern is having their third MLIS Research Forum where students present their capstone projects, sometimes their theses, sometimes their special projects. If you'd like to see them, it is a hybrid event. You can come to Southern where there will be food and

such, or you can attend online. The Curriculum Committee now has finale approval and has now sent these courses onto the college for final approval: we are now offering our first set of 1.5 credit courses. Public Libraries have been the default for students if they don't choose a concentration but now have concentrations focusing on public libraries. We have two short courses: public library services for children and public library services for teens. There's a new AI course that was approved using Artificial intelligence in libraries and a research methods course that will be required for students not writing a thesis. Interns are wrapping up and new interns will be starting in the Spring.

Sustainability Taskforce : Alessandra Casiello: Bylaws- We need to set up a meeting so that we can speak about the new membership levels and increases to membership which will be put forth at the Annual meeting for vote.

Strategic Plan- On the website, we will send out an email in December letting membership know that it was passed by the board and will be in effect 2025-2028.

Financial Plan- On the website if anyone needs for reference. Will review annually to make changes.

Trainings/Softwares- We haven't had any movement on switching softwares at this time. Still investigating options and costs. A reminder to board members- training documents can be found in the CLA Board Folder on Google Drive- if you need access email Alessandra. Region reps should be updating their director lists that are also located in this folder so that we have up to date information. Those that use the logo in their signature- as a reminder- the logo changed last year when we had to correct the date from 1875 to 1891 to match our inception date. Please be sure you are using one of the logos found in the board folder (the corrected logo with the corrected date) or the simple CLA book logo without a date.

Association Committee Reports:

ADA: Marilynn Lewicki: Absent. I created a survey for current committee members and new/other members so that I can get a feel for when interested members could meet/join the committee and what they would like more of in the committee and interests them. The survey closes on 11/30.

Archivist: Gerald Seagrave: No report.

Awards: Region Reps: Working on updating the form now and will send that to the region reps in the next week or so and will follow the normal schedule that will go out around January 1st.

Career Development: Amanda Stern & Rory Martorana: Absent.

- We are preparing for Scholarships. We will be offering (3) \$1,000 scholarships. Information and application materials will be released in early 2025.
- We are exploring new providers to help us update our compensation benchmarks. Along with this, we'd like to gather feedback from our community about a) who is using the compensation benchmarks and how, and b) how useful the compensation benchmarks are.
- Applications for the next cohort in our mentoring program will open in February. As a reminder, we are accepting mentor applications on a rolling basis and are in need of mentors at all levels and across all fields.

Conference 2025: We are well underway in the planning phases. Proposals were supposed to be sent in by November 15th. Program chairs are selecting and will let speakers know by December 1 if they are selected. Contracts will then follow and we will prepare a schedule of events.

Vendor/Sponsor and Ad registration started on October 22nd, we currently have 5 sponsors and

18 companies exhibiting. We have taken in just over \$25,000. We will open attendee and speaker registration mid to late January and hope to send out an interest survey on the sessions so that we can ensure popular sessions get ample space. We will be announcing our Keynote- Michael McCreary to the public in December. Final deposit for 2025 was paid in October and second deposit was paid for 2026.

Development: Alessandra Casiello: Our Fall Fundraiser with Meadow Farms ended on November 8- purchases of about \$1300 were made, which means we will see approximately \$500 of that when they cut our check (usually at the end of December). Our next fundraiser is our Giving Day Match Campaign. Once again Robert H. Lord Company has generously offered to match donations up to \$1000. Any donations made to CLA from November 12 through December 3 (Giving Tuesday) will be matched up to a total of \$1000. We will once again be doing our performer auction, and I am beginning to reach out to presenters/performers that would be interested in donating their services as an auction item. I have not set a date yet, but it will happen sometime in February.

Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan: Lindsay and Jenny from CASL met with 5 New England states to hear about training that was given by ALA in Chicago about the helpline grant. They will meet with reps from the Texas Library Association to hear about their experience of setting up their own helpline grant.

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully: in our last meeting we had a great conversation about the sustainability of the committee, so we are currently looking into our governance structure and procedures around succession planning and membership to make sure we can continue as a committee over the long haul. We also talked about a strategic framework for the work we are doing to guide how we choose our legislative priorities and how we approach advocacy. We have a group working on putting together an advocacy training and that should be coming some time next year. We're really hoping to spread the word on how folks can speak up for libraries. We also talked about how to increase engagement in terms of advocacy and in terms of the committee.

Outreach: John Casiello: Please continue to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

PEG: Mary Etter: No report.

Procedures: Lisa Karim: No report.

Section Reports:

Children's: Alexandra Remy & Chonte Fields: Absent.

CLASS: Vacant

College & University: Rob Walsh: Absent.

JEDI: Mary Richardson: Sam is no longer a co-chair so we are looking for a co-chair. It is important for us to have a co-chair because between Kristina and me, we cannot do everything ourselves.

Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan: Absent.

Reference & Adult Services: Christie Mitchell: I have been working to contribute to the conference and developed two programs. One is on readers Advisory and the other is on Grants and Fundraising with Candid. Candid is the organization that maintains the foundation directory online. Other programs that would be sponsored include topics on a seed library, different genres of books, and legal research.

Resource Sharing: Matt Earls: No report.

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

Technology: Kate Sheehan & Christopher Knorr: No Report.

YA: Stephanie Smith: No Report.

Adjournment: 11:07 AM Motion to adjourn by Alessandra Casiello and seconded by Mary Etter.

Present: Scott Jarzombek, Erin Dummeyer, Sarah McCusker, Margaret Khan, Shannon Angelone, Deborah Schander, Alessandra Casiello, Allison Murphy, Ann Victor, Brenda McKinley, Christie Mitchell, Cindy Schofield, Colleen Bailie, Debbie Misiaszek, Denise Stankovics, Ellen Paul, Emily Rush, Gina Wiese, Heather Aronson, Jerry Seagrave, John Casiello, Kate Sheehan, Kristina Lareau, Lisa Miceli, Madhu Gupta, Mary Etter, Matt Earls, Olivia Blake, Robert Scheier.

President's Report

Scott Jarzombek

I went to NELA and met other section heads. It was great to meet with them and see what other library associations are doing. Some things I think they are ahead of us, but they are moving towards having a legislative agenda. We are moving in the right direction. I had a couple of meetings with separate groups mostly about our legislative agenda- that's mostly a focus for the president and vice president. We also finally have the correct signers on our bank accounts thank you, Margaret. Other than that, I am trying to get the next newsletter out by early December. We had our first legislative meet and greet but unfortunately, I could not make it. Thank you to those who attended. It is also under new business, and we will cover more dates. Other than that, things are moving well with the legislative committee and the conference as well. We'll talk about some stuff with intellectual freedom as well.

Treasurer's Report

Financials are good right now. We've brought in \$14,000 in membership dues so we are a bit ahead of the game at this point in the year. Year to date, we received about \$30,000 in revenue and have about \$23,000 in total expenses. Nothing too big this time of the year but gearing up towards conference. Next month we should have financials on the fundraising efforts for giving day. As Scott mentioned, we did finally get to do our banking, so all of our officers are on our bank accounts. We also set up a savings account and we moved \$60,000 into that savings account for the 3 contingency funds that we laid out in our financial plan. Our annual business report has been filed with the state of Connecticut.

C. Legislative Agenda

Olivia Blake- This is a continuation of the conversation we had 2 meetings ago where we discussed the budget proposal we wanted to bring to the legislature this upcoming session. It was approved at that time. This is just an expansion of what we'd like to see CLA bring to the legislature on behalf of Connecticut libraries for this upcoming session.

- We are looking for the state to restore funding. That is really the stuff we had talked about with the budget proposal with a few budget lines.
- We are also going to be looking to protect intellectual freedom in school libraries. This is a continuation from last sessions works. Ensuring that if school boards want to remove items from school libraries, that there has to be a reason for that and they have to let people know what that reason is. It is the school equivalent of what we pushed for SB 2 in the previous session where libraries will need to have collection development policies to get this grant funding. It's encouraging school libraries to follow suit and have policy around collections in order to protect materials on the shelves.

- We are also going to be pushing for eBook and eAudiobook legislation. We are really hoping for a win there and keep chugging along with that.

Ellen Paul - I would just say one clarifying thing for the school libraries bill. The bill requires the board of education to adopt a reconsideration policy. It sets parameters for what should be in that policy. It further states that the board cannot remove a book for reasons outlined in the bill like sexual identity, or because they don't like the ideas contained within that book. It's a bill we ran last year and it's a bill we hope to run it again this year.

Scott Jarzombek- This part of our agenda is fully supported by CASL. We're not foisting an idea onto another association in our field, so this is really driven by them.

Mary Etter: I make a motion to approve the latest program and suggest that we use the latest title from the document that Ellen shared.

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Seconded by Margaret Khan.

Sarah McKusker- Were there any changes to this document or thoughts about change in tactics in light of election results?

Scott: No. We moved our meeting to a few days after the election and I think it was a good candid conversation, and we decided to move forward.

Mary Etter: We did talk about strategies for supporting this legislative program and how they can be phrased in a way to provide assistance to state library services particularly if dreadful cuts or changes do occur.

Scott: Yes, Mary, you are right. There was a good conversation around that. We also discussed changing some language just looking at how the state has changed in terms of makeup. I think we may need to change our approach more towards advocacy and less of activism because I think we need to be careful in making ourselves pitted against people in the end to vote in a way that's positive for libraries. We're advocates for libraries, and we have to be careful in our approach in that regard.

Erin: Are we prioritizing anything?

Olivia: I don't know that we have a 1, 2, 3, priority here but I will say the eBook bill we have been pushing for a year so legislators are familiar with that and can be the easier one to speak on. The budget ask is a big one and unprecedented coming from this organization so that might be a harder conversation to have. The school library bill is also a carryover from last year. That doesn't help prioritize things, but they are going to be going in different directions anyway. If you have a legislator who is particularly interested in certain tactics or about fiscal responsibility or consumer protection, talk about eBooks. If they want to talk about physically supporting your library, talk about budget stuff. When these are introduced, they are going to go to different committees and they will focus on different subject areas.

Scott J: You have to pick your audience and who's in front of you and who you think can make an advocate for whatever bill. It's a good reminder that a bill can take 3 to 5 years to pass. I'd love to see the eBook bill get passed this year.

Matt Earls: Thank you for this. In terms of resource sharing, I'd love it if the Connecticut libraries invested more in our resource sharing on eBooks and audiobooks. If this legislation went to eBooks and audiobooks, I think that would go a long way towards improving eBooks and audiobooks for the state.

Kate Sheehan: In terms of the eBook thing, years ago I was on a state committee to look into this topic and one of the things we wanted to avoid at the time was a solution that was essentially a giant overdrive collection. Having that collection doesn't solve the problem, it just spreads the expense. I will send the paper that I have.

Scott: For the sake of time, I'm going to call a vote:

Unanimous- 21 vote yes.

New Business

Legislative Meet and Greets

We had our first last night at Babcock.

Wednesday, 12/4/2024 at Noah Webster Library (West Hartford) at 6 PM

Monday, 12/9/2024 at Cragin Memorial Library (Colchester) at 6 PM

Wednesday, 12/11/2024 at the Public Library of New London at 9 AM

Thursday, 12/12/2024 at Fairfield Library at 7 PM

Monday, 12/16/2024 at West Haven Public Library at 6 PM

Thursday, 12/19/2024 at Silas Bronson Library (Waterbury) at 6 PM

Please, if you can make it, it's good to have people there.

CLA Region 2 Report
November 2024

Avon Free Public Library

- Features the ALA traveling exhibit Exploring Human Origins: What Does It Mean to Be Human December 1 - January 15 in partnership with many local organizations.

Library Association of Warehouse Point in East Windsor

- Central CT Woodturners and Carvers will hold a Pen turning event Saturday, December 7 from 11 AM – 2:30 PM

Windsor Library

- Offers a once-a-month Maternal Health group facilitated by a Nurse Midwife.

Granby Public Library

- Held their Children's Book Festival earlier this month.

East Granby Public Library

- Offers the Gavel Club, a junior affiliate of Toastmasters Club, for grades 4-9 the 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month which helps kids improve their public speaking & leadership skills.

Southington Library

- Will reopen in its new library December 2nd. Its grand reopening will be Saturday, December 7th at 10 AM. Congratulations to Southington Library and Best Wishes in their new home!

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East Lyme Public Library: Recently held their first annual cosplay event and it was a big hit!

Cragin Memorial Library –received their official certification as a Family Place Library!

Otis Library: They are in the process of developing a strategic plan as part of the third cohort working with CLC and Maureen Sullivan.

Our collaboration with SCADD, begun in February of 2024, has been very successful. SCADD holds office hours at the library on Wednesday afternoons.

Otis Library was chosen as a featured stop on the **AgeWell Across Connecticut** tour, "recognizing the library as a top local effort prioritizing inclusivity and accessibility for aging residents, people with disabilities, and those with dementia."

Public Library of New London:- The annual fundraiser Adopt a Book kicked off this past week.