

Connecticut Library Association Board Meeting
February 20, 2025
10:00 am Business Meeting via Zoom
Minutes

- I. **Call to Order:** President Scott Jarzombek called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** January meeting minutes approved by Sam Lee. Seconded by Olivia Blake. No abstentions.
- III. **Old Business**
 - a. **President's Report** – There's a lot going on behind the scenes when it comes to this legislative session. A big shoutout to Jenny from CASL and Ellen from CLC and members of the committees that are involved in this. We did sit through a lot of testimony that makes you not want to sleep when you finally get home. It makes things seem quiet when they really are not. My goal is to get communication out to the membership just saying this is what we are working on but between this and work, it's not always as easy as it seems. I just want to thank everyone in our circle for the work that they're doing. A lot of you have done some really great testimony. I am cautiously optimistic about the eBook bill this year and I'm sure that the committee will discuss that. We had our hearing yesterday and got to leave Hartford before 9 o'clock at night and it went really well. There was very limited opposition in the discussion. Shoutout to everybody is keeping the boat afloat: the conference committee, Shannon, who is the goat of board secretaries, there's a lot of work being done and I really appreciate it.
 - b. **Treasurer's Report** – I'm hoping by the end of next week to have the budget proposal form for the 2025-2026 CLA budget up on the website and I will be emailing our committee and section chairs that form once its available. I'm anticipating a deadline somewhere mid to late April for your proposed budgets for the next fiscal year. Once it's available, let me know if you have any questions, but it will be similar to last year's form so that we can start our budget prep for next year.
- IV. **New Business- See attached.**

Representative Reports:

CT State Library: Deborah Schander: Absent.

NELA: Scott Brill: Absent.

ALA: Kate Byroade: Last month I went to Phoenix for ALA LLX, which is the new name for the old ALA conference, Midwinter Conference. Since the pandemic, attendance had fallen off a cliff and it was a smaller exhibit hall than we have at CLA. It was the last LLX/Midwinter. The Youth Media Awards came out and there have been other things associated with this January conference, so they are looking at how they are going to do those again. The Youth Media Awards in particular are a very big deal. It's very exciting to be in the room when they are awarded. All of the members of the committees are often there. They give off their knowledge and wear funny hats and wave pompoms, things like that. The biggest thing I think people should

know about is that we approved certifying two programs that are virtual educational programs. One is a Library Management staff certification program, and the other is a Library Support Staff certification program. These are programs that will be offered by ALA and will be a case of 3 core courses for each of them plus a couple of other courses. People will be able to earn a certification, and it will be a revenue stream for ALA. More information will be coming out. Some states, not Connecticut, are actually going to be paying for a certain number of seats for participants every year. Some of you may know that two years ago, we worked to restructure ALA council significantly with the goal of reducing the total number of counselors. Executive Board was also restructured, and part of that restructuring was to come up with some dedicated seats, such as a school librarian, a tribal representation. There were several proposals that were put forward that will be voted on at Annual Conference to square the circle. One would reduce executive council back by 2 seats to what it was before, which would reduce the cost to ALA. There would not be these dedicated seats. If you were in any of these dedicated groups, it would be helpful to speak to me and talk about it. I came into ALA as a general member then was elected by you so, if you have thoughts about how executive council should look and what its distribution would be, I would love to hear from you.

ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau: No report.

ACLB: Denise Stankovics: Just want to remind everybody that at the end of March on the 26th we will be having another webinar on hiring a Library Director. This is probably of more interest to boards than librarians, but we hope you encourage your boards to participate in that webinar if they are in a position to help hire a director. The only other thing is that the newsletter went out recently and directors and board members should have received their copies.

ACLPD: *Vacant.*

America 250: Margaret Khan: We have constant discussions on what's going on with federal funding initiatives. The idea right now is to just hang tight but the Trump administration did through an executive order establish an America 250 task force. They're requiring all federal agencies to participate in celebrations. So, it is being recognized, and we are status quo for now and continuing with our regular plan. In Connecticut, this includes a lot on EDI, and we are continuing to maintain that as part of our priorities until we are directed otherwise. The America 250 conference is going to be held on March 21st. Link will be in the chat. The Annual Report for America 250 has also been published. Here is a snippet of the report as well as the full fledge report. (See links). I am hoping to set up something with the commission and the Connecticut Library Association to have an information session targeted at libraries and librarians to see what we can be doing. I personally would like to see something incorporated into the 2026 Summer Reading for all of our libraries since July 4th, 2026, is a big day. We'll have a big commission meeting in April and we're hoping to get more information on that and get something back to CLA. I'm sharing one more link with an event called "Two Lights for Tomorrow" that is taking place this April. It's a nod to the famous Rider Paul Revere. There's a "Two Lights" day where we are hoping to have State houses shine two lights in the windows to recognize the event and also a day of service on the 19th with volunteering and community activism.

BCALA: Astoria Ridley: I am now representing BCALA. We just wanted to be here to let you know we are still around. We have been dormant for a while, but we are in the process of putting together programming that you should see invites to on various venues. I just wanted to say I am glad to be here. I am a retiree, and I was working at the State of CT Judicial Branch Law Library, but I also worked at the New Haven Free Public Library back in the early 2000s.

Bibliomation: Alessandra Casiello: I'm still out but I go back on March 3rd. My team has been doing a really great job while I've been gone. This month our ILS system had a big update, so that is what we were really concentrating on. We are looking forward to being an exhibitor and a sponsor of the CLA conference.

Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie: Absent. The full committee will meet again in March. The Infrastructure Advisory subcommittee met on January 10th and talked about the CENs new initiative with the Community Wi-Fi grants which are open now for applications through March 11th. CEN is holding office hours that you can sign up for through their website if you are interested. The committee also talked about the potential of AI being used in schools and libraries and how that affects education. The committee also brought up bills being watched both on the library side and with education and AI.

Communications Task Force: John Casiello: I'm doing the final touches on a mechanism to help somewhat regulate who has access to the discord. It's a way for us to confirm they are a CLA member before jump in just to make sure we don't have anyone running rampant. We should be able to launch this, I hope next month for the membership and have it fairly active at conference. That is the goal.

CASL: Gina Wiese: Scott mentioned earlier that SB 1271 happened last Thursday. We're really thankful for all of the support from school and public librarians, all of the written testimony we received. We are holding out hope for that one. We are announcing our Southern New England Rosen winner for January was Liz Wright from East Hartford for her annual wellness program that she does with her students before her exams. She was my teacher mentor as a student teacher, so it was incredible to see. Next time Connecticut will be issuing that award because we are sharing that with Massachusetts and Rhode Island in April. CASL is continuing to work with the Department of Education on reading collaborations in 2025. This grant allowed us to bring together families and authors to give away tons of free books. We collaborated with public libraries as well as groups like the Boys & Girls Club of Hartford and the Early Childhood Center at ECSU. We also had tables at community events like the Puerto Rican Festival in New Haven and a block party at possible future book sellers in New Haven. We will be reaching out to public libraries to work with soon.

CLC: Ellen Paul: We'd like to welcome Stephanie Smith as our new Events and Special Projects Coordinator!

FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek & Pamela Monahan: I'm happy to report that for our Leadership Roundtable on 3/27 we have about 20 friends' group that have signed up to participate. On 6/21 we are going to have our annual awards and meeting, and both of these will be held at the Avon Community Room.

LION: Joe Farara: 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: See attached.

Region 5: Emily Rush: See attached.

Region 6: Madhu Gupta: See attached.

SCSU: Cindy Schofield: we've been reviewing in preparation for our ALA 10-year review, we've been reviewing our core competencies and baseline core competencies, making sure we've gotten things covered. In response to S.B. 1271, the collection development legislation,

we've made it a resolution to make sure collection development is included in core course work. We have a collection development course, but it is an elective. There will be another research forum that we've been doing at the end of every semester. I'll get that date out to CLA as soon as it's finalized, but it will be in May. These are events where our students are presenting their capstone research, which is getting more and more impressive. We've had students go on to present at ALA, NELA, CLA and they will be in touch about posters for this coming conference. It's becoming a well-received research forum. Related to that, I just wanted to say in response to the makerspace request for a report about all of the makerspaces in Connecticut- things like that could be great capstone projects for students if someone wanted to be in touch with us about that, we could get a student or a couple of students to do that sort of report for you. I'm just putting it out there that those are great opportunities for ILS students to work with CLA on hands-on projects.

Sustainability Taskforce: We just have the bylaws for this month, but we've already went over it.

Association Committee Reports:

ADA: Marilyn Lewicki: We had our first meeting, and we will have another one this month where we will be talking about a fall workshop.

Archivist: Gerald Seagrave: No report.

Awards: Region Reps: John Casiello: We will send out another eblast this week since we haven't had a huge response. But we do have another month to go. I'll increase the promotion as we get closer and closer. But if anyone here wants to nominate or promote the nominations to their libraries, please do so. We do amazing work around the state, and we want to recognize that. This will go out tomorrow on Conntech as well.

Scott J.- Just for everyone to know, we got a slap on the wrist twice in a row for putting legislative emails on Conntech that is no longer allowed. It was allowed in past practice, so please, if you are sending out anything political for CLA, please do me a favor and think about it before you send it on Conntech if you are representing CLA.

Career Development: Amanda Stern & Diana Preece: We are welcoming Diana, who we are really excited to have on board. We also have several new members on our committee, and we are really excited to have them. It is scholarship application period, so if you know of anyone who is currently enrolled in any kind of library program and wants to apply for one of our scholarships, the application is on our website and the deadline is the end of the month on the 28th. We ask that if you are going to apply, please apply early because the application comes in several pieces, and we need time to make sure everything is in and complete. There is the application, the letter of recommendation, and the transcripts. We also need to confirm that the applicant is a CLA member. If you know of anyone who is thinking about applying, please nudge them to get it done in the next couple of days. Also happening is mentoring. Mentoring applications are also open and we are accepting folks who want to be in our 6th mentoring cohort. Whether you are looking to have a mentor or be a mentor, it is a really great opportunity to learn and grow and share experiences, no matter which side you are on. Those applications are available on the website as well. I wanted to remind folks that we will be at conference doing resume reviews, so as you are talking to folks and anyone expresses that they need any kind of help, members of our committee will be doing resume reviews. You can sign up at conference

through a QR code- everything will be hush hush. We know everyone doesn't want to broadcast their job search to the world. We are also in the planning process for our Leadership Institute. We do not have a date yet but hope to have everything locked down by the time we are at this meeting next month. We are targeting a Friday in August after Summer Reading is over.

Conference 2025: Things are well underway for us. Registration opened in January. If you haven't registered yet, you can do so. Early bird goes until March 15th. We have 42 vendors right now signed up to exhibit in the exhibit hall. We have 5 sponsors and registrations are coming in. We are getting back contracts from our speakers. If you are a speaker or a lead planner, please make sure those are being sent in. Right now, we've taken in about \$62,000 between vendors, sponsors, ads, and registrations. Everything seems normal money wise so that's a good thing. If anybody has craft supplies for the fundraiser that is going to happen at conference, let us know. Thank you to those who have reached out to me already.

Development: Alessandra Casiello: We had our planned auction which happened last week. Thank you to everybody who bid; it was very successful. We will get about \$4,200 from the performer auction and libraries got really great performers and events for their patrons. Right now, I am doing contracts with those libraries and making sure those payments come in. On the other part of what's going on- Last year Mychal Threets was our keynote speaker, and our JEDI committee gave him one of our JEDI shirts. He has worn it on social media before, but he posted it alone sometime last week and it started a commotion. I won't go into a lot of details but there are a lot of trolls out there who took our design and started selling it and posting links to it on his post. To combat that, we quickly started the bonfire campaign to make the shirts because we can no longer make the shirts. So, we did it through bonfire and within a day, we made \$4,200 of selling shirts as well as people from across the nation donating to us. Bonfire shut us down due to their fear of copyright, which is why we can't make the shirts either. Kristina is currently working on a revised design even though we own the design that was being made on the shirts- it had been commissioned for us by a friend of Kristina's, but I had talked to a lawyer about it last year who said you can sell this but don't be surprised if Disney comes after you. So that is why we can't print it on our own and why bonfire's copyright team will no longer print it for us. They are fulfilling the orders that we have, and they are working with us and trying to help us create designs so we can continue to sell them. But we will not be able to sell that design anymore. We got a lot of money for CLA but if you're active on social media, you've probably seen these posts and people did steal the design and are trying to sell it. There's no way to shut everyone else's stuff down. For people still enquiring about the shirts, we are pointing them to the new design once that happens. Our final fundraiser happens at conference where we will have our penny social auction. If you have any gifts you don't want and would like to make a donation so we can get bids on it, please reach out to me. We will also have our Closet Runway fundraiser on Monday night. We've had people buy tickets for it. Kristina came up with the idea, so I am letting her run with that. You can buy tickets during registration or at the door.

Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan: A big thank you and props to the legislative committee because they have been doing amazing work and laying the groundwork for the freedom to read bills. The committee is here to provide support for whenever needed.

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully: See attached.

Outreach: John Casiello: We are getting ready for conference. I will put a link in the chat. For anyone who has come to conference before, you know there is a membership table where we give out prizes, do fun things, and recognize members. I'm putting a link in there for anyone who wants to volunteer and sit at that table. I would love to have as many people as possible. It's also

a great chance to meet the members and talk about your section or committee or what you are doing. Please sign up.

PEG: Mary Etter: Legislative Breakfast: I am working with the new caterers serving the Legislative Office Building to confirm that our menu for the Legislative Breakfast on March 13 will please this year's attendees as nicely as last year's did. I have a meeting scheduled with the Chef-Manager this afternoon: think tasty thoughts!

P.E.G.: I have received an inquiry regarding a P.E.G. grant for attendance at our Annual Conference in April, but the actual application has not yet arrived. Given the need for attendees to complete conference registration quickly before space runs out, I plan to contact the P.E.G. Committee (Regional Reps) as soon as the application comes so we can respond promptly. I would ask the Board's understanding that we will consult with the CLA Executive Committee (per our established financial procedure) for approval of any Conference-related grants, reporting to the full Board at the next regular meeting.

The P.E.G. Committee has not used any budgeted funds yet this year and P.E.G. grants adhere to eligibility guidelines and grant limits (\$400 each). While the full Executive Board usually hears about grants before they are awarded, our financial procedures assign *approval* of the expenditure to the Executive Committee.

Procedures: Lisa Miceli: No report except to thank Alessandra for all her work on the membership fees and the bylaws.

Section Reports:

Children's: Chonte Fields: Absent.

CLASS: Vacant

College & University: Rob Walsh: Absent.

JEDI: Mary Richardson: Kristina did an amazing job at spearheading our discussion last week with "We Need to Talk About It"-a discussion about protecting our patrons, our professions, and our society. Also, a shoutout to Sam, Lindsay, Kate, and Olivia from Legislative and from Intellectual Freedom. You were all great on our panel. We had over a hundred registrations. We had 186 registrations. It was a much-needed conversation that a lot of people needed to have about next steps and actions, particularly in our professions as well as the dividing line as a librarian and what you need to be doing as a private citizen. If anyone has any questions, reach out to us. I also finally created the JEDI discord. I'll post the link to that. It's basically an information sharing aspect for us as well as also trying to push legislative and Intellectual Freedom happenings as well.

Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan: Absent.

Reference & Adult Services: Christie Mitchell: No report.

Resource Sharing: Matt Earls: Absent.

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

Technology: Kate Sheehan & Christopher Knorr: We are getting a couple of possible presentations together as quarterly sessions.

YA: Stephanie Smith: We are focusing on getting ready for conference. Also with my new position, I am going to take a step down after conference, but in the meantime, I'd love to have a co-chair come on so I can help and give them information about what we do here. When I first came on years ago, it was very confusing and knowing what's going on and what's expected. If you know any great teen librarians who might be interested, please send them my way.

Adjournment: 11:20 AM Motion to adjourn by Alessandra Casiello and Olivia Blake.

Present: Scott Jarzombek, Erin Dummeyer, Sarah McCusker, Margaret Khan, Shannon Angelone, Alessandra Casiello, Amanda Stern, Ann Victor, Astoria Ridley, Brenda McKinley, Christine Rinaldo, Cindy Schofield, Debbie Misiaszek, Denise Stankovics, Ellen Paul, Emily Rush, Gina Wiese, Heather Aronson, Jerry Seagrave, John Casiello, Kate Byroade, Kate Sheehan, Kristina Lareau, Lisa Miceli, Madhu Gupta, Marilyn Lewicki, Mary Richardson, Olivia Blake, Robert Scheier, Samantha Lee, Stephanie Smith.

New Business

a. **Programs Co-Chair for the CLA conference, 2026-27 Erin Dummeyer**

It's my job to appoint folks to the conference committee and to do so out loud in the meeting so it gets recorded in the minutes. I am appointing Vickie Otis as Programs co-chair for the CLA conference. I did want to put it out there that we are still looking for a co-chair for exhibits for 2026-2028. I think there is someone who is thinking about it and they would be joining Olivia. If there is someone interested in working on exhibits for the conference, please reach out to me, Olivia, or Alessandra.

b. **By-Laws Change- Proposal for Joint CLA/CASL membership- Alessandra Casiello**

I was made aware that CASL wanted to do a Joint Membership the way that we do our NELA Joint Membership. Which means people would be joining CLA and paying us and they would also get a membership to CASL. We would give them a portion of that payment, which is what we do for NELA right now. So basically, the bylaws were revised last year with everything, so this is a very small addition. There are about 2 sentences that would need to be changed.

This is what would be put into the bylaws under membership. It's the exact same wording that we use for the CLA/NELA Joint Membership. This is what we would propose to go into the bylaws and be approved by the membership at the Annual Meeting.

Joint Members, CLA/CASL

- i. *Students: full rights of membership in CASL and CLA.*
- ii. *Individual members.*

The board would have to approve this part and then it goes to the membership. We'll send it out at the end of March, the month before, and they vote on it at the Annual Meeting.

Bob Scheier: I have a question. In terms of the office procedure, would this be a similar report that we send to NELA?

Yes, it would be the same report that we send to NELA except we would send it to the president of CASL.

Bob: And in turn, they would send us an invoice and we would pay them.

Alessandra: the easiest way would be for us to do it the same way as NELA, so that's how we put it into the bylaws.

Scott J. :Since this comes out of a committee, does someone want to second this?

Seconded by Kate Byroade.

Scott J.: I just want to thank everyone for their work and for getting this done.

Alessandra: I will send that draft to Lisa with the new wording and that will go out in March to the membership, and it will be part of the annual meeting on April 28th for the membership to vote on.

No oppositions or abstentions.

c. New member rates proposal- Alessandra Casiello

Refer to Meeting Packet for Membership Rate Increase Draft

Erin Dummeyer: If you could share the philosophy behind increasing the rates; not that I'm challenging it, just for us to be able to tell people why they are increasing.

Alessandra: This has come up many times when we were making the strategic plan for sustainability purposes. Our membership rates have not changed since 2011. At that time, only the institutional membership rates changed so that's the need for this. Our costs have increased, and it's been nearly 15 years since member costs have gone up. The way that we based the pricing, we tried to do very small increments- \$10 to \$25 based off of the tier that they are. Personal members are based off of salaries, but we do also have retired, students, and first-time members, which we didn't want to increase too much since we know costs can be difficult for them. Institutional memberships don't really make us money, they actually cause us to lose money. If we look at what the institutional members get for any workshop or conference, they can sign up a certain number of their employees with the member discount. So, I just look at the conference, since it's our biggest one, and that alone causes us to lose about \$10,000 a year for the institutional memberships using that. Because their costs are so low, and we don't get these people to become members.

The other part of this is we do have new tiers that went into the bylaws last years which is the enhanced institutional which allows staff members of an institution to actually be individual members, but their institution is paying for them. This came up because we got a lot of questions about whether it could be made easier so that an institution can pay one bill for people who want to be members. We did 6 tiers for enhanced institutional based off of having a certain amount of members, a certain amount of staff become members. The amount that it starts at is over the regular institutional affiliate which is up to 6 people that can get the membership discount for just workshop and conferences. They are not allowed to vote on anything, they are not allowed to be a voting member of a section or a committee, they can't hold a board position. For the enhanced institutional, it starts at up to 8 staff members and you can have any of them become members. We tried to base that off of it being lower than paying an individual membership if you are just by yourself. That's what you see with the numbers. If you have questions, I can try and answer them. This went back and forth with the bylaws committee and outreach. This was the best we could do to try and figure out a way for us to be sustainable with our costs going up as well as putting in our new costs for the enhanced institutional. The cost that we figured out for CASL/CLA joint membership is the exact same cost for the CLA/NELA joint membership. I tried to look at CASL's membership rates, but they are very different than ours. It's somewhere between their lowest rate for an individual member and their student membership rate.

Lisa Micelli: I'll jump in and say what Alessandra really tried to do, and I thank her for all of her work which was very detailed and intricate, was balance that the fact we always hear from library staff that it's too expensive to join with CLA and that we need to be sustainable. Since rates haven't gone up since 2011, it was way overdue for that to happen, so I'm glad we are doing it now.

Sarah McCusker: I know this was a lot to put together so thank you for all the time you've put into it.

Erin Dummeyer: Yes, thank you. It sounds like a no-brainer to me.

Alessandra: Since this comes here, we do a motion and then this would be fully voted on at the annual meeting by the membership.

Marilynn Lewicki: when you are reading it, basically, all of the enhanced memberships would not be allowed to be on the executive board.

Alessandra: The enhanced membership would allow them to be an individual member. They would choose the staff members and give us the names. The institutional memberships would just be the library itself. The enhanced allows us to know which staff members would like to create an individual membership for them and they would be marked as enhanced institutional and a member. This would allow them to vote, be in sections, and be on the board. That's why we put in enhanced institutional as well as our regular institutional affiliate.

Marilynn: That doesn't change on the other end of the spectrum like a personal individual if they were to renew their membership, that wouldn't affect their committee?

Alessandra: They would only be able to be one. If they have an individual membership and that's what they want to keep. If they want to go onto the institutional and keep that, it would be marked that way. Its more for the libraries that have a professional development budget and want to make it easier for their town and say, "here's one invoice with all of our professional development included in one." Some libraries want it that way and some do not. We had some questions on why their staff couldn't be on a section or vote for something, so this differentiates those two things.

John Casiello: Just to add, if this goes into effect, it will affect everyone at the point of their renewal. It's not like their existing membership will change. It will actually be a year and a half until we actually see the end of the previous ones because it will take that long to cycle through.

Alessandra: Fingers crossed that this will be approved by the membership in April. The newest tiers will not go into effect until July, which is the new fiscal year. What people will see is that when they go to renew, their old tier isn't there because these have to be entered all separately now. They would have to select the tier that they fit in or want to select.

Bob Scheier: How is that going to look on our end as far as marking these members?

Alessandra: it will look the same except you may have a group of people who are marked as two things rather than just one. That's just for us to know if someone wants to renew, we can tell them your renewal is under an enhanced membership, and we have to create the enhanced code in StarChapter.

Bob Scheier: How will we get the names?

Alessandra: The institutions will have to send it to outreach or Michelle to enter those numbers. The way we do it now is that if someone asks us to add them as a member and they are sending a check, we would bypass the payment and ask them to send us a check once they get the email.

Scott Jarzombek: I'm going to bring this to a vote. Anyone opposed?
Motion coming from the committee. Seconded by Sam Lee. No discussion or oppositions. This goes to vote at the annual meeting.

CLA Region 2 Rep Report February 2025

Avon Free Public Library

- J. Courtney Sullivan will be featured at their Author Luncheon Friday, April 25th, at the Farmington Polo Club.

West Hartford Public Library

- Sunday hours will begin on February 23

East Hartford Library

- Had a mobile mammography van visit last week at the Raymond Library

Windsor Locks Library

- Are raising funds to add a bench to their outdoor garden space

Welles Turner Library/Glastonbury

- Their Friends of the Library will be holding their Children's Book Sale on March 1, 9-4 at the Library

Lucy Robbins Welles Library/Newington

- Offering Morning Tech Talks led by library staff to discuss new and relevant tech topics
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Region 4 Libraries Report

MARK TWAIN LIBRARY, REDDING:

Library Director Erin Dummeyer shares:

Mark Twain Library has just finalized a strategic plan for 2025-27. We were grateful to participate in CLC's Strategic Planning cohort which enabled us to go through the process.

EDITH WHEELER MEMORIAL LIBRARY, MONROE

Library Director Nicole Cignoli shares:

Luca Bartlomiejczyk (they/them), Adult/Teen Services Librarian, was interviewed for an article about AI in libraries and specifically Hoopla <https://www.404media.co/ai-generated-slop-is-already-in-your-public-library-3/>

Questions: could CT State library add questions about makerspaces? What a library has in it, personnel, hours, degree requirements to name a few categories. With 29 makerspaces in the state, it's time to capture this. And maybe add Library of Things as a CT question on the annual report.

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Town Librarian, Scott Jarzombek shares:

The Fairfield Public Library had a successful fundraiser friends. We hosted a sold-out (140) comedy show on the main floor. Huge success.

CLA Region 5 News: February 2025

Henry Carter Hull Library, Clinton

- The HCH Library is very excited to share that we have promoted Nicole Kent to Head of Reference and Teen Services and have hired Brian Walls as a new Reference Librarian.
- Also - The HCH Library Board of Trustees have partnered with the town to fund updates and upgrades to the library building, hopefully in the near future.

E.C. Scranton Memorial Library, Madison

- The Library is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year – stay tuned for programs and celebrations!

Huntington Branch, Shelton

- At our Huntington Branch in Shelton, we have hired Leanne Pagluiso as our new Children's Librarian. She was previously a library assistant there.

West Haven Library, West Haven

- West Haven had a retirement recently. Our longest running employee of 22 years, JoAnn Martin retired on February 2nd. JoAnn was a library assistant at our Ora Mason Branch.

Region 6 Libraries

Slater library is holding their 3rd Annual Open House Art Show on April 12th 2-6pm. We invite local artists from the surrounding towns to set up and show their work. We have found this to be a great event!

Public Library of New London- Hosting our first annual gala on April 6!

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully

Olivia: A lot is going on with legislative stuff. I'll start with what is upcoming which is our Legislative breakfast in Hartford. That is going to be an informal networking event. It is a great opportunity to meet with library professionals, advocates, elected officials, staff, and to share your library stories with legislators and spread the word about CLA's legislative agenda. That is going to take place on March 13th starting at 9am at the legislative office building in Hartford in the atrium. We have two bills that are active. The very first bill that was introduced is a nonstarter. The first bill that there was a hearing on was S.B. 1234, which was raised in the government and administration and elections committee. The hearing for that was two weeks ago and there was a lot of supportive testimony for that spoken and written. The majority of the legislators in that committee are hearing us loud and clear. It seems like there is a lot of support there as well but in that specific committee there is also a lot of pushback from opposition. The other bill that is on eBooks is H.B. 6958, which was raised in the Planning and Development Committee and that hearing just took place yesterday. It was a much shorter hearing but the folks who spoke about eBooks did a great job and shared the need about this. Legislators heard us loud and clear, and I think in the Planning and Development committee there is a lot of bipartisan support for this bill which is great. A lot of folks have mentioned S.B. 1271- the Freedom to Read legislation; it was introduced in the Committee on Children and there was already a hearing on this. It got ugly- there's a lot of opposition to this bill. My sense is there is a lot of extra opposition to this bill because of S.J. 35, which is a joint resolution that has been introduced in Connecticut that would open the door to a Connecticut constitutional amendment that would protect against discrimination based on gender and pregnancy status. A lot of the opposition is bringing up anti-trans rhetoric as well as prolife rhetoric. Because of the controversy from that, I think there is a lot more controversy around the Freedom to Read bill. That hearing lasted until midnight. But there is a lot more support for this bill than there is opposition, which is a beautiful thing. We saw a lot of Connecticut community members come and speak in favor of this bill so that was awesome. New as of this morning, out of the education committee is H.B. 7014 which is just for public school libraries. I'm not really sure what this bill is about or what is happening with it- I just found out about it right before this meeting but stay tuned for more on that. But I believe it is a pro-library bill. Our next committee meeting will be Tuesday, March 11th. I encourage everyone to come and join us. Our team is doing a lot of active work around this legislative stuff and its hard work but also very rewarding. I will drop stuff in the chat.

Kate: The hearing last week around 1271 was contentious, however, I feel that this bill or a revised version of this bill will probably make it to the floor at the end of the session. I feel like in the past, there are a bunch of legislators are like "No, we are not putting up with this censorship stuff." It would create a state level task force to develop a model collection development and reconsideration policy, and school districts would be required to create and adopt a policy following this model. As public libraries needed to do this two years ago, this would strengthen that, but essentially, no real change for public libraries. There are some school districts that do not have policies and one of the problems that have come up from CASL is that some school librarians are saying they can't get their district to do this policy because the superintendent, board of Ed doesn't want to open controversy but not realizing that having a policy will protect them. The eBook bill 6958 was an excellent hearing yesterday. Many of the legislators in the room were telling us and sharing our arguments with us. It was really good and there was no one actually testifying in opposition. There were only a couple of letters submitted

in opposition. For all of these bills, you can still submit written testimony on those hearings but what would be really great is if you sent a letter to your own legislator directly. If you think they are hostile to the bill, I'd recommend putting in a call saying I'd love to talk to you about this bill, I support it, and here are the reasons why. In these fights, we are the rational people and the opposition is unhinged. We are working hard and have advocacy information on the CLA website with guides to doing all of this. But if you need help, do not hesitate to reach out to anyone on the committee. Olivia and I are here to help get you going. The session finishes up at the beginning of June and things will be hitting the floor in mid-May. There is time to build support with legislators around these issues. This is the long session, and this is what we are looking to do. I will say that the reason Deborah was not here is because she was at the exact same time due to present the State Library's budget request to the appropriations committee, so it's also a good time to send in a letter to appropriations. There is concern that the Trump Administration will try to wipe out IMLS funds, the salaries of almost everyone in the Division of Library Development, the people that we work with, and our jobs. Deborah says that Connecticut Office of Policy and Management is aware of the situation. We don't know if we will have a sudden funding crisis for the people that we work with at DLD. So just be aware of that possibly coming down the road.

Important links:

America 250:

https://ct250.org/events/2025-conference/?blm_aid=4657153

https://ct250.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025-America-250-CT-Annual-Report.pdf?blm_aid=4657153

https://ct250.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025-Annual-Report-to-the-Governor.pdf?blm_aid=4657153

<https://ct250.org/events/two-lights-for-tomorrow/>

Legislative:

Legislative Breakfast in Hartford: an informal networking event. A fantastic opportunity to meet with fellow library professionals, advocates, elected officials, and staff – as well as to share your library stories, and spread the word about CLA’s legislative agenda!

March 13, 2025 || 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM (drop in when you can!)

Legislative Office Building

300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106

<https://ctlibraryassociation.org/meetinginfo.php?id=619&ts=1739394198>

E-books

SB 1234 – Government Administration & Elections Committee

HB 6958 – Planning & Development Committee

It’s not too late to submit written testimony!

Freedom to Read / School library legislation SB 1271 – Committee on Children

NEW today! HB 7014 – Education Committee

Next Legislative Committee meeting- Tuesday, March 11, 2025 – 3:00 PM (Zoom)

Meeting link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85977241801?pwd=T0RCc0V2eU1JUINLNC9hYjFIMkVLUt09>

This link does not change! Save it for future reference! :-)

Stay tuned for legislative updates and find more info, including toolkits:

<https://ctlibraryassociation.org/Advocacy>

<https://5calls.org/>

Outreach:

Sign up for CLA Membership Table

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17qUX9Rv_r8W5pdHa2bADpHLRx42x0eyeNDa6IfPZ83o/edit?usp=sharing

JEDI:

Discord Channel: <https://discord.gg/WN3xZW8m>