

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

- I. **Call to Order:** President Scott Jarzombek called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** February meeting minutes approved by Sarah McCusker. Seconded by Lisa Miceli. No abstentions.

- III. **Old Business-** See attached.
 - a. **President's Report**
 - b. **Treasurer's Report**

- IV. **New Business -See attached.**
 - a. Nominations-Sarah McCusker
 - b. Marching at the Middletown Pride Parade- Mary Richardson
 - c. CLA Statement on IMLS- Scott Jarzombek

Representative Reports:

CT State Library: Deborah Schander: See attached.

NELA: Scott Brill: This year is the NELLs. Eight candidates from Connecticut are vying for four spots. I have until Friday to determine who they will be. It's exciting that that many people want to go. I think Maine only has one person going so it's possible that more than four people from Connecticut may be able to go. It will be at the Vonn Trap Family Lodge in Stowe, Vermont.

ALA: Kate Byroade: If you are an ALA member, it is time to vote for President, Treasurer and twelve counselors at large. I know that it took me a few days to find the time because you do really want to sit with the ballot. Then you can click on every person's name and read through their biography and so forth. You probably won't know all of these people. There are two questions as well and if you click on the question, you'll get the information including pro and con on the recommendation of changes to the bylaws. So please, if you are an ALA member, vote.

ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau: No report.

ACLB: Denise Stankovics: a week from yesterday, in the evening, will be our webinar on hiring a library director that is of more interest to board members than to librarians. But of course, anyone is welcome to attend. Something went out on Conntech about signing up for that and the information is up on our website. Another thing is, we are always looking for new member for our executive board. It meets on the second Thursday of the month in the morning, so I recognize that it eliminates people who are working at that time. But if you have people on your board who are team players, who might be willing to join us, we'd really love to have them. What we do is plan those webinars and keep up with what is going on in the library world so we can inform board members to be aware and follow up on what is going on. If you have anyone who you might be willing to serve, our email address is on our website. They or you can send an email, and we will follow up to see if they are interested.

ACLPD: *Vacant.*

America 250: Margaret Khan:

BCALA: Astoria Ridley: We had a CT chapter program at the New Haven public library on the Out of Obscurity movie about the Alexandria 1939 sit in at one of the libraries. We had a chance to have someone who participated not in this one, but in the North Carolina sit in. So, there's a lot of stuff going on. We're talking about having services accessible for all people and we realized some of the stuff we were looking at, even though it was 1939, are things that are still going on today.

Bibliomation: Alessandra Casiello: Alessandra returned from Maternity leave on March 3rd. Bibliomation will be a sponsor and exhibitor at the CLA Conference.

Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie: We had our full meeting of the commission last month. We do have some new members that have since joined. A lot of them are from the education area but it's also nice to see some people that are from school libraries too. We have representatives from public libraries and school libraries. There are a lot of discussions continuing about AI in schools and in libraries and how that can be used to help people as much as possible. Just a reminder that last week, the grants for the Community Wi-Fi have closed, so hopefully people should be getting announcements for that soon. On a personal level, I wanted to share that I have been asked to join a couple of ALA committees. I will be joining the legislative committee and chapter relations. We'll be getting some more stuff with Connecticut out there which is really good to see. Ellen and I will be in D.C. next week talking to our legislators. I have no doubt that there will be a lot of discussions about IMLS. I will report back on that next month.

Communications Task Force: John Casiello: Absent. He is hoping to have the discord up for the conference.

CASL: Gina Wiese: Absent.

CLC: Ellen Paul: I have really appreciated the partnership with Scott specifically, Jenny from CASL, Deborah from the State Library over the last few months. We've had an extraordinarily busy legislative session. And all of these extra things that keep popping up. It truly has been a pleasure to work with and partner with these folks. I didn't get to do a report last month, so I didn't officially welcome our new Special Events and Projects coordinator, Stephanie Smith from the Avon Public Library. We are thrilled to have her. We are planning on being at the CLA conference in a month or so and we hope that we have a very special surprise for you there. We're hopeful that we are debuting something new and exciting and that you all will be thrilled by it. We are in the midst of our furniture rebid. The 5-year contract expires at the end of June, so we are rebidding that. We hope to have additional manufacturers and dealers for you to work with. We are also working to extend our digital resource contracts, which are at the end of their 3 years. We are exercising our option to renew it for an additional 2 years. We hope to have more vendors for you by July.

FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek: Absent. No report.

LION: Joe Farara: Absent.

Library Connection: Laura Horn: No report.

Region 1: Heather Aronson: Nothing major but I am the head librarian at Southbury, so I thought I'd show you what we are doing. We moved into the Heritage Hotel less than a month ago. So, every morning we wheel things out and have offices, 3 rooms, and a browsing area, and that's about it.

Region 2: Lisa Miceli: See attached.

Region 3: Chonte Fields:

Region 4: Brenda McKinley: I'm sending a shout out to Erin for responding to my email just to

say she has no report but I appreciated that anyway. We had a great staff training day at Ridgefield last week. We did a couple different sessions- we had Randye Kaye at a FLAG meeting, and she was our morning speaker on “Happier Made Simple.” We all as staff had done a PLA webinar- creating more joy and resilience in the library. Then we had Randye speaking to that which was really effective. Then we always do customer service scenarios. We had trainers from CT SERC who did training on neurodiversity. They did a fantastic part 1 and will be coming back for our April staff meeting for a part 2. We also did an evacuation drill. A fun part of the day was that it was March 14th so our food the entire day was pie- quiche, pizza, and dessert pies. CT SERC - consult with school systems but also some libraries, terrific in-depth staff training on neurodiversity. <https://ctserc.org/>

Region 5: Emily Rush: See attached.

Region 6: Madhu Gupta: Absent.

SCSU: Cindy Schofield: Absent.

Sustainability Taskforce: Bylaws vote information will go out before the end of the month, vote will take place at the annual meeting on Monday, April 28th at 8:30 AM.

Association Committee Reports:

ADA: Marilynn Lewicki: Absent.

Archivist: Gerald Seagrave: Absent. No report.

Awards: Region Reps: John Casiello: Award nominations ended on March 14th, Region Reps are going through nominations currently and winners will be selected and notified by March 30th. The award ceremony will take place on Tuesday, April 29th at 8am. Scholarship winners will also be announced at this event from both CLA and FLAG.

Career Development: Amanda Stern & Diana Preece: Save the Date for the Library Leadership Institute - Friday, August 15 at Central CT State University.

Conference 2025: Early-Bird Registration has ended, and standard rates now apply. We currently have over 350 registered for Monday and over 300 registered for Tuesday. We are close to having to close Monday registration as we are approaching our capacity limit, so if you or staff have not registered yet, do so quickly. If we don't reach capacity before then, standard registration will close on April 15. We have 60 vendor representatives with us on both days, including 7 sponsor companies and 52 total exhibitors. Exhibit Early-Bird Registration will close April 1, and Exhibit registration will close completely on April 11. We had a little hiccup this past week as we learned our Keynote Michael McCreary will not be able to be with us in person due to travel limitations. Michael will be with us virtually as the keynote only on Monday and we are working it out in order to record it and share it with all registrants and CLA members for a certain period of time. Kristina quickly found a replacement for Tuesday's keynote, and we are happy to announce we now have a contract for Randye Kaye to join us as the keynote on Tuesday and then do a special book signing. We are hoping to get the final schedule out next week. It is very similar to the tentative schedule that has been out since registration began as only 1 session dropped out, we have a few additional sessions added including some vendor demos and extra library land fun, a few slight room and time changes, but nothing major. We are on track to have a small bit of income from this conference and may hit the goal for net income set on the budget.

Development: Alessandra Casiello: We will be sending out a separate email for our After-Hours: Closet Runway fundraiser that will take place on Monday after the conference from 5:15-7pm. Those that are not attending the conference or have already registered but haven't added a ticket will have a chance to purchase a ticket for this event through a separate link. The ticket is

\$25 and includes 1 free drink of choice and small snacks. We will have a special guest with us for the event and details will be in the email. We will also be having our annual Penny Social Auction; sheets will cost \$10 and can be bought in the exhibit hall. We are working on getting a sponsorship/in-kind donation from Janway to get some new shirts printed and will be selling those at the fundraising table as well.

Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan: Suffield has a policy subcommittee meeting tonight at the conference room in the police department. They are looking to push through one of the more reprehensible policies I have ever seen. The policy would essentially codify powers and authorities that the library commission doesn't have to censor the children's collection. It specifically calls out sexually explicit content. We know that's a wolf whistle for Queer materials. It goes on to specifically call out a lot of anti-trans materials. There is a statement that has gone out that we've been drafting I have the link for one. This is the statement that a group of people have been working on. Thank you to Ellen and Lyndsay and other people for pulling me off the ledge of trying to attack their policy line by line. Suffield meeting is tonight at 7pm. Tess McCool is a Suffield resident and school library media specialist at the high school. She has been following the shenanigans of the Kent Memorial Library commission for the better part of two years. She is also a member of CASL and went to Law for Librarians fly out with Lindsay back in the winter. She knows her stuff and has been watching all of this. Within 30 minutes of the library commission posting this on their website for their open meeting, she alerted us to what was happening. Tess will be there tonight and speaking out. We've had wonderful partners coordinated through Ellen with CLC with our accountability project who has since reached out to ACLU amongst other people. In the article that was mentioned, we expect the press to be there. If you are intending to go or have told colleagues about this and intend to go, consider making sure you have a statement in case reporters come to you because you look professional and librarian-like. One of the tools I like to give to folks is if they are going to a public meeting and are terrified of saying the wrong thing or not knowing what to say, I put a template on how to organize your thoughts there. Hopefully, best case scenario, I'm hoping there's such an outpour of opposition to this policy that we overwhelm the room, and they are forced to move the meeting to another day and larger location and open it to public comment. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XIDk592nOw0DP3aPVz7AxcyYOph26MV4/view>

The meeting information:

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1741970491/suffieldctgov/prmxnbxpfntdyvs33u2d/03-20-2025LibraryCommissionPolicySubcommitteeSpecialMeetingAgenda.pdf>

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1axS32WAF20p6RGijwAfUQq8zD3Ak_fWx/view

I think showing up in great numbers is showing the community how to advocate for themselves and making sure we're making those connections. And that people know that CLA is there to defend books to protect intellectual freedom and that we intend to work with partners who are being targeted when it comes to these challenges. All great reasons to show up.

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully: See attached.

Outreach: John Casiello: Membership is climbing due to the conference; we are over 660 members currently. I am still looking for a few volunteers to do an hour at the membership table during the conference. Email outreach@ctlibraryassociation.org if you can give up some time to man the table and chat up CLA to members and potential members. We will have a plinko board to win prizes as well as a community sticker board. Information on CLA will be available. Getting signage ready for the conference as well.

PEG: Mary Etter: The P.E.G. Committee unanimously approved a grant to allow Angela Ackerman to attend the CLA Conference next month. Angela is an MLS student at Simmons and is working as an intern at the Coast Guard Academy and at Yale New Haven Health in addition to her regular job. She is eager to become involved in professional activities and will be a student volunteer at the Conference. As a Legislative Committee member, I'll be working with Scott to create a template for planning and hosting our events for Legislators at the L.O.B.

Procedures: Lisa Miceli: I am working with John to get out an email to the membership about the revisions to the bylaws before the annual meeting. That should come out in the next week or so.

Section Reports:

Children's: Chonte Fields: Absent.

CLASS: Vacant

College & University: Rob Walsh: Absent.

JEDI: Mary Richardson: No report.

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 assembling a zoom on a very cool VR program that Gunn Memorial and Ridgefield are getting training on. VR as career exploration: <https://nevada.libguides.com/c.php?g=1196033&p=10320295>. It's looking like the time everyone is available is April 23, which is close to conference but since this is an ongoing project, I'm hoping to do a follow up program with them in the fall.

YA: Stephanie Smith: I am getting ready for the annual conference. Now that I am at CLC, I will be stepping down as chair. I'd love to be able to guide the next chair so if you have any great adult or teen librarians, push them my way. I can tell them what we do here and hopefully we can get somebody in, and this isn't vacant when I step down.

Adjournment: 11:34 AM Motion to adjourn by Kate Byroade and Brenda McKinley.

Present: Scott Jarzombek, Sarah McCusker, Margaret Khan, Shannon Angelone, Deborah Schander, Alessandra Casiello, Allison Murphy, Amanda Stern, Ann Victor, Brenda McKinley, Christie Mitchell, Christine Rinaldo, Colleen Bailie, Denise Stankovics, Ellen Paul, Emily Rush, Heather Aronson, Kate Byroade, Kate Sheehan, Kristina Lareau, Laura Horn, Lisa Miceli, Mary Richardson, Olivia Blake, Robert Scheier, Samantha Lee, Scott Brill, Stephanie Smith, Vivian Bordeaux, Sarah Kline Morgan, Kara Canney.

Old Business

- a. **President's report-** There is a lot going on. IMLS, which we will discuss later, is a mystery to us as to what's going to actually happen. We are trying our best to come up with a way to communicate with our members about what the impact will be on us. Of course, the State Library who receives the majority of this funding- we do need to follow their lead on this. So, this hasn't been easy for us to come up with a statement. We are getting requests from the press for information. We are getting there but it's a little more difficult than it should be. We will get through it. Just know that there is a lot of work being done in the background. Suffield, which we will talk about later, is more of a dumpster fire. It's really a fascinating study in how not to do local municipal governance. We will update you later on that as well but there have been some small meetings happening. Other than that, we've hit a snag with conference which you will hear about later. I just want to give a shoutout to everybody involved because you are all really putting it together when I would have been like "alright I'm done" and just run out the door. So, thank you everybody. The other thing is Erin has appointed Shannon as chair for Exhibits for 26-28 conference. She will be the co-chair with Olivia, so we are in great hands for next year's conference as well.
- b. **Treasurer's Report-** Scott- I will tell you that we do need to start working on our budget now. My hope is to have a discussion around it at the next meeting. I do want to say that the one thing I have taken from this presidency, we are deeply in need of a lobbyist. We lucked out this year because we had Ellen, who has really been keeping tabs on stuff that is going on; we've had the legislative committee keeping tabs on things; we've had an advocate with another organization who has been very good because she is a lobbyist and has given us a heads up as to when bills are where and who to talk to. If we're going to do this again, maybe not the coming year, but the year after, we need a lobbyist. We need someone who is going to be there all the time and coordinate us by being there. I know there's a history, I was not here for that history, but I thoroughly understand it -everyone has explained why membership may be uncomfortable with it but seeing what other state associations are doing-they all have lobbyists. We really need to think about that when crafting next year's budget.

Alessandra Casiello- In case Margaret doesn't come, the budget request form is on our website that each committee and section needs to fill out if they are requesting any money for a budget. You do not automatically get money in the budget, so the request form is on our website. If you go to the "About" section, it will be under "Financial Information." It has been updated and is due mid-May. The date is on there. Please make sure you get that to Margaret otherwise you do not get a budget. We get this every year. So, fill it out and send it to Margaret before the due date.

Margaret: the entirety of my report for today is just prep for the fiscal year 26 operating budget. I'm going to drop a link into the chat that has our new budget submission form on it. This is going to be due on May 15th of this year. If you have any questions about the form or filling it out, please let me know. Please refer to our financial reports to fill out your figures. It's going to ask you for your actuals and estimated from this year. I really would like for everyone to take a look at what you have been spending and bringing in so we can get accurate estimates for our future budget. If you need help finding those numbers, again just reach out to me. We are looking for people to at least break even,

ideally making money. This is something that all sections and committees need to do. We are looking to make some money. We've gone through this whole sustainability plan and taskforce that we set up. And we have a financial plan with the goal of increasing our savings to eventually return to the point where we are able to invest money. And we need to make money in order to do that. Let me know if you have any questions about it. It is due on May 15th. Even if you are zeroing out, I need to get that. So, everybody needs to submit a form. We're going to try to up the ante now to bring in some money.

New Business

a. Nominations-Sarah McCusker

I'm going to preface this by saying my town email, which is the one most of you have, has been messing up and there are emails that I am not receiving. I only know this because sometimes I receive a "reply all" email but not the original that was sent to me. So, if I have reached out to you and I haven't heard back from you, maybe you just ignored me, but if you did email and haven't heard back from me again, please try this other email address that I am dropping in the chat. For nominations, this year we have to do the 3 odd number region reps, the secretary, treasurer if we determine where Margaret is in the middle of her second or her third term, and of course, president-elect. Heather is willing to stay on as Region 1; Chonte does not want to continue in Region 3, Shannon is willing to run again for Secretary, Margaret is willing to stay on as treasurer.

Alessandra- I can answer this for you- we put in the bylaws last year. We have to elect the assistant treasurer who is going to oversee for the next 2 years and then become the treasurer. The vote isn't for Margaret but for the person after Margaret. Her term technically ends in 2026, so the year before it ends, we elect the new treasurer.

Sarah- Alright so that leaves me with a Vice President/President-elect; Region 3, Region 5, and a co-treasurer. I am really hoping that someone will jump up and say I am willing to do those things. I am going to send out an email to the membership because we need to get the slate in place 10 days before the annual meeting which takes place at conference. If you have ever thought that you'd like an executive board position, this is your chance. I am happy to talk to anyone about the positions, I am sure Scott would as well, so please reach out if you are interested.

Emily Rush- I was under the impression that because this is the end of my second term, I am unable to run again. So, I'm not really sure what will happen next.

Alessandra- I believe you can run, but it has to be an election. It has to be put out that other people can run against you, because technically, your term is done. But if you wanted to set up for another term, you can run within an election.

Emily- so there's not a limit on how many terms you can run?

Lisa Miceli- you can run for 2 terms.

Emily- this is the end of my second term, but I was initially filling in for someone.

Lisa- The bylaws are silent on that, but it makes sense.

Emily- I am happy to run again.

Sarah- So, treasurer-elect, VP, and region 3; please contact me. I will be sending out an email to the CLA Membership in the next couple of days.

b. Marching at the Middletown Pride Parade- Mary Richardson

I've had this idea for a little bit and since I'm co-chair of JEDI, I wanted to know if anyone wants to march in the Pride parade? I feel like we keep having to defend LGBT books. It only costs \$50 and whatever we have to pull together if we want to have a banner that we use for when we walk. Let me know if you want to do that. I don't know if we want to do it as just the JEDI section or as CLA together. How do we feel about that?

Scott- I would love for CLA to do it as an organization. We've definitely built a coalition where we are getting a lot of support from groups that would align with Pride parade. I've marched in plenty, so I think it's a great idea. I would love to have a really nice banner for us to walk with. I think it's important to show the community that we are really supportive.

Lisa- Simsbury would be very happy to create the banner as long as you give us what you want on it.

Alessandra- I have a question because this has come up in the past. There was one reason we have not done this. We've never come up with a statement for an application for when we walk in things because this will come with a lot of asks. If people see that we've done it at one place, we will be asked to do it elsewhere. In the past, we knew we didn't have people to do that. We need to come up with some plan. If one town asks us to walk in their parade, we need to know how to respond. I would just have that in place so that we know what we are saying yes to and what we are saying no to.

Mary- That seems reasonable. I was suggesting Middletown because they have the "Pride" in Connecticut. I know Hartford has their pride parade but it's a little lackluster. Middletown has a really good setup, and they put a lot of attention and community organizing behind it. A lot of towns do their own smaller things and stuff, but I don't think it's a bad idea to say this is what we are willing to do but also have you worked with your local library and if they are walking as well. I'm very happy to work with you on that Alessandra.

Alessandra-I think it's important to have something to say if we have people, we are willing to do it. Unfortunately, we are a volunteer organization, and I think it came up that because it was going to be a lot of pride parades, it's going to be a lot on you to respond to people if they are asking.

Mary- I will work on that and send it to you. This is the biggest one too, so I'm not as fussed about it. These are all good points.

c. CLA Statement on IMLS- Scott Jarzombek/Sarah McCusker

Scott- We all know the IMLS is on the chopping block. It seems like today it was chopped. This will not affect us directly monetarily- none of us get federal funding but we do know that it will have a ripple effect down in one way or another. Either through the state library, which hasn't been clarified yet- but also just all the studies that are paid for that we use for the operations of our libraries. No matter what, this will have an effect on us, but we do have to work on the organizations within CLA and then maybe take the lead if they want to. But we're still not sure how they want us to. We had a meeting about this the other day. I asked sarah to write something up and I'm going to let her talk about it.

Sarah -(screen share image below): what I did when I wrote this was go directly to the IMLS site and pulled from there where the money goes. I put that together with the document from the State Library webpage that talks about what they do with the money. This is not very long, but as what Scott said, we are trying to follow the lead of others on this, so I tried to keep it to things that are without questions. Connecticut has gotten \$90,000,000 through IMLS. I wanted to point out some of the things that are supported by it and wanted to highlight the tribal libraries and the Library for Accessible Books. So, I wrote this up on Scott's behalf. We haven't done anything with it yet, but here it is.

Scott- this isn't coming from a committee- this is coming from CLA Executive Board. Does anyone object to this? Of course, we will do a little wordsmithing and changing things but are we all comfortable as a board with this?

Kate- I'm very comfortable with this statement. I'm just wondering where this is going and is there a role for us in terms of reaching out to say the attorney general's office because I think to put \$1 million dollars that the state was getting- that is running my library twice. Just knowing that many positions and many other state agencies run through federal grants are also on the chopping block. I am very worried that the state cannot pick up the dime for

that \$2.1 million at the State Library or will step away from it and then will be funding other things that are perceived more critical.

Scott J.- What I am going to ask of Deborah when she comes is if she would be willing to answer these questions since the group has some of these concerns. But I think you are right.

Scott Brill- I am wondering if other state organizations are crafting a similar letter and not to make it boiler plate, there may be other ideas, wordsmithing. I can check with NELA and see if those things are happening with other state agencies as well.

Sarah- I did pull a lot of what I wrote from the ALA. I reworded it so I wasn't copying it, but that's where I got the layout. There was also a letter from the Freedom to Read foundation that I referenced when I was writing it.

Scott Brill- I thought just because we are part of a larger thing than just CLA, I just wondered if it was worth seeing that.

Mary Etter- I like it very much and think Sarah did a great job with it. Just on the practical end of what would happen to it, as Kate mentioned, I would suggest sending it to our whole congressional delegation, so we've made it something that is going to Washington as well. Would you like to motion to approve it?

Motion made by Mary Etter. Seconded by Kristina Lareau. No oppositions. Passes unanimously.

New York's statement:

<https://nyla.memberclicks.net/assets/ADVOCACY/Legislative-Initiatives/NYLA%20-%20Statement%20on%20EO%20to%20eliminate%20IMLS.pdf>

CLA Statement on IMLS

On March 14, 2025, President Trump issued an Executive Order intended to dismantle seven federal agencies, including the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

IMLS is the only federal agency dedicated to funding library services. Since 1997, Connecticut's libraries and museums have received more than \$90,000,000 through IMLS.

In Connecticut, IMLS funding for libraries is used to support statutorily mandated library infrastructure, support, and services. These services directly benefit all of Connecticut's residents, but particularly the most vulnerable. IMLS funds are used to support a number of initiatives and institutions, including but not limited to the Connecticut Library for Accessible Books, the libraries of the Mohegan and Mashantucket Pequot tribes, services for veterans and military families, digital connectivity and navigation, early literacy programs, summer reading and enrichment programs, and statewide database and digital library services. Connecticut's statewide reciprocal borrowing and interlibrary loan programs are also dependent on this funding.

Dismantling IMLS is nothing less than an assault on our nation's repositories for history, culture, knowledge, enrichment, and community. This Executive Order will have a devastating effect on libraries and museums in Connecticut and across the country.

The Connecticut Library Association calls on the current administration to withdraw the Executive Order eliminating IMLS and recommit to supporting the funding, maintenance, and development of America's libraries and cultural institutions.

CT State Library: Deborah Schander

My update is related to your questions, so why don't we just launch right in. I know I sent out on Conntech that we are continuing to be in active conversation with our federal delegation on this with state budget office and others related to it. The state librarians are also having ongoing synchronous conversations about the issue. We continue to not have much specific information or clear answers on the outcome of the executive order. The deadline for the agency to submit its information is tomorrow. We are expecting something today and tomorrow for more information to be coming out on that front as well.

Alessandra Casiello: I'm going to talk about points because we are getting questions on social media. CLA wants to take direction from the State Library on this because it's really affecting you. Will there be talking points that you send out to CT libraries or what you would want us to send? Its people in the general public are sending us messages as well as librarians. There is still confusion of our role versus your role. We don't want to put anything out there regarding talking points until you guys do that. Will there be something coming out for that?

Deborah: My guess will be yes once we have more specific information about the implications of it. In terms of talking points, yes. I think there has been a lot of confusion about who it is directly impacting by the executive order. So, the funding does go to the state library which supports the staff and DLD, the statewide services that we provide. So, the direct funding and support to local libraries is not currently being impacted but could be impacted by potential changes in our services. What I would say for at least this group is that we are in conversations with the state budget office of and what we can do if federal funding it cut now or down the line. So, it is very much an active conversation. They are aware of the impact it would have on libraries across the state and the State Library itself. I expect we will have more to share in concrete information in the days to come. But I would say in your perspective, the thing to do is contact your federal legislators. They are the ones who can potentially have an impact and for them to hear about that from the public, from those who are impacted and concerned, is really the thing that is going to raise that conversation the most. You're welcome to refer questions to me or to Dawn. We have been getting questions from the press, and I know others have as well. We expect we will have more information very soon.

Brenda McKinley: I know we're challenged with the state library budget to begin with, but what is the likelihood that the state would step in to help with some of these important programs?

Deborah: It's a very good question. We have been having this conversation with OPM, which is our budget office, since before November. We knew that President Trump tried to zero out IMLS all four years of his budget when he was in office the first time. So, this is not a new conversation. Connecticut takes a "Let's wait until there is a specific problem to deal with it" approach. So, they are waiting to know what the real issue is that they have to solve. If it's making up \$250,000 for a Laura Bush grant, that is different than \$2.1 million for DLD. They are aware of the staff and the services. They are facing this problem with many agencies- the department of education of course chief among them. We are not alone in that conversation, but I think Connecticut is very much looking at what their options are. They are also aware of the fact that the services we provide while they are currently primarily supported by federal dollars are state-mandated services. They understand that the work that we do is a directive of the state that currently the federal government is footing most of the bill for so that is very much a factor in the conversation too.

Sarah McCusker- in the past, when IMLS was on the chopping block, which you said is pretty common, we've always been told that delivery is directly paid for and DLD is directly paid for. Is that the case?

Deborah- That is correct. The federal funding supports many of the consultants. It supports the delivery service to the maximum we are allowed to do and the infrastructure for a lot of the statewide platforms and services that we use to provide databases and resources the electricity and the snow plowing and all of the things that are happening at Middletown as well as the collections that we provide through Middletown. Each of those are funded through federal dollars as well as the Connecticut Library for Accessible Books. Many of the staff in that area are supported too. It would have brought implications, but I think that's why OPM is very cognizant of the concern because they know these are statewide services that we provide.

Scott- Deborah, are you comfortable with us saying that there's a possibility that these programs will lose funding?

Deborah- I think that is a true statement- it is a possibility. We don't know for sure what will be implicated. I don't know if it has reached your ears but there is a lot of looks at language of the statutes that IMLS operates under. In legal parlays, there are "shall's: and "mays." If a language says "shall" it means an agency is required to do. a "may" is something they can choose to do. I looked through the language yesterday very closely. The majority of the work that the library side of IMLS does, has "shall" language. Everything it relates to the work it does for museum uses "may" language. On the one hand you think we are in a better position, but I would say, given the uncertainty, we don't know for sure if that language will stand the review that it is currently under. So yes, it is possible that these services will be cut but we don't know for sure what the outcome will be.

Sarah- So it's the same follow up that I had. There's the questions we are getting as an organization, but we all have our politically active patrons coming to us as librarians and saying, "explain to me why I care about this so I can make a phone call." So, I've been telling them about delivery because I think from a library perspective that is the most visible thing that could be affected.

Deborah- yes. I've linked to this in the email, but DLD has put together a page that talks about what is supported through the federal dollars. I will put that link in the chat. You are all in a position where you are able to say, "if you have concerns, the people to talk to are your federal delegates." That is where that conversation needs to go. We have reached out to those offices as well and they are aware. They always appreciate hearing from constituents, not just the organizations that are potentially being impacted.

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/Federal-Library-Funding-CT>

Kate Byroade- I think my big concern is that while 2.1 million dollars would run my library two times over, it's really pocket change for the state of Connecticut, while I'm really concerned about as you said, is the department of education, I know that something like half of the positions in the state department of health- I'm sure there are other state jobs that are funded with federal dollars that are being summarily axed. The concern I have is that libraries will be less of a priority, and I am worried that this was already a reauthorization year. I do not see this congress standing up to the administration. Even if things were halted by lawsuits or whatever in the short term, I don't even know when that reauthorization would have come up. I would assume later in the year during the budgeting process.

Deborah- you bring up a couple of good points. I can't speak for OPM, but I can share at least a little of what I have seen. For us, 2.1 million dollars seems like an amazing amount of money. In

the State budget, it is a very tiny amount of money and in some cases, it is easier to fund the little things, rather than the big things. Giving an agency \$60 million dollars is very different than what we are asking. I sat in a hearing last year, and the agency going in front of us was talking about having lapsed \$10 million dimes saying, “ that happens sometimes” and I’m thinking that’s my agency’s entire budget. How people think about those dollars is very different when you are dealing with that state budget perspective. So, I absolutely hear the concern- I have concerns about how libraries are viewed. I also have seen evidence that in many cases, the small ones are the easier ones to solve. I think the fact that we have that state mandate for the services we provide is also a leg up that we have. Many of these other organizations may not have state legal authority for what they are doing- it may be something they have added. It’s important work but it hasn’t necessarily made it into state law. That is something I think we are helpful with, and I do think we have done a good job in the last couple of years of showing the role libraries and museums play in their local communities. We’ve seen at the state level that there is fairly broad support for libraries across the aisle. I think we have some positives running for us. The uncertainty is disconcerting.

Scott Jarzombek: thank you Deborah. Please feel free to reach out to me if you feel like we are saying something you don’t want. But I think this was a really great clarification. We are all going to pick and choose what we say on what that service does for us. I’m concerned about databases because our staff has gotten really good at using them for reference questions. The loss of those is a big concern for my constituents. My friends group wants to make a statement and are waiting to hear back from me. I’m saying let’s wait to hear from CLA. It’s going to get out there- we just want to make sure that we are not saying something that you all see tactically isn’t a smart thing to say.

Deborah- I think at the moment that the guidance I would say is whatever is put out, make sure it is accurate based on the situation. Saying we don’t know the outcome yet, but these are possible is a good way to go. That’s essentially why we have held off putting something out beyond the fact that we are working behind the scenes because we are still working on what steps we need to take.

Kate Byroade- just to clarify, I looked at that DLD document that you linked to. I see Statewide resource sharing under Connecticut Digital Resources- is that statewide resource sharing delivery? Because I don’t see it anywhere else in that list.

Deborah- Delivery is paid for very heavily by federal dollars. The state pays for a few of our staff drivers. Everything else is paid for with federal dollars. Resource sharing is kind of used broadly for the databases, interlibrary loans services, the platforms that we use for some of those things as well. Some of that is encompassed in the Connecticut Digital Library appropriation line. But I would say, functionally, delivery is held up by federal dollars.

Kate- But I don’t see it in this list in the libguide.

Deborah- in part it is because that language doesn’t exist in the state statute. Delivery is the one thing that we do that is not state mandated. BorrowIt is, delivery is not. But that is part of the conversations we are having with OPM and others too. We know this is the most well-known and loved of the services we provide to the public.

Scott J- any other updates you’d like to provide other than IMLS?

Deborah-other than that, sessions continues. We are meeting with the bonding committee this afternoon to talk about funding for construction grants and things like that. So, we expect that to be a fairly routine conversation. But the big thing is what is happening at the federal level right now.

CT Library Association
Region 2 Representative Report
March 2025

Canton Public Library

- Will hold their Annual Craft Supply Swap Saturday, March 29 11AM–1PM

Cromwell Belden Library

- Will hold a Clothing Swap Saturday, April 12 10:30AM–1PM

West Hartford Noah Webster Library

- Will hold a Composting Workshop Saturday, March 22

Simsbury Public Library

- Is having a Human Library event in partnership with the Simsbury Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council on March 22 10AM-2PM

Southington Library

- Hosts Wheeler Southington Health Outreach which facilitates access to behavioral and mental health for Southington residents

CLA Region 5 News: March 2025

James Blackstone Memorial Library, Branford

- We have a community member who is wanting to learn how to produce podcasts, so he has started one for the Blackstone. We have 3 episodes out and plan to do more, covering all aspects of the library – our history, what we offer and how we make things happen here. I've heard from the public that they enjoyed listening and learned a few things!
- We have partnered with the town's Counseling Center to have a caseworker and social worker have office hours each week at the library, so anyone can come chat with them about getting connected to support and services.
- Blackstone Library is planning its annual Mini Golf at the Blackstone weekend fundraiser in April: <https://www.blackstonelibrary.org/support-the-library/fundraising-events/mini-golf-blackstone-mini-golf-after-hours/> This is our biggest fundraising event of the year, and we are thrilled to welcome the event's first-ever title sponsor: Amy Rosen, in memory of her parents, Gail and Alan Rosen.
- The town of Branford assigned (earmarked but not yet appropriated) \$400,000 for future capital repairs/improvements for the library. We have seen some indication of water infiltration in various places and are planning to have a complete building assessment done to determine a facility repair/maintenance plan. With help from the town and existing bequests, we hope to be able to fund these projects to ensure the building is properly maintained into the future.
- Just a note on publicity: we started a regular campaign on Facebook of posting about one of our museum passes each month, highlighting the special features of the museum, Since then, our circulation numbers of museum passes have gone up tens of percentage points for the last two years! Our plan is to do the same systematic highlighting of our Library of Things collection. Woohoo!

Russell Library, Middletown

- Some Russell Library news: Dan DePaolo is the new Head of Property Management and Security.

Wallingford Public Library, Wallingford

- We just hired two new full-time staff members - a new Head of Facilities Joe Proto and a new Head of Adult Reference (a newly created position) Meghan Currey.

Scott Brill- addition to Region 5 news

Milford Library had a book challenge on "It's Perfectly Normal" by someone who wanted it removed from the children's department. I wrote a letter that I'm willing to share with other people. Sam Lee and others have said it was good. On my desk this morning, there was another challenge on the same book by another person. She said she heard from another concerned person about this terrible book. Sam Lee gave me two great pieces of advice: Marshall your allies. The first thing I did was call the mayor's office and my board and make sure they were in support of what I did. The other thing is to be ready. Have something crafted that you're prepared to say check with others. Sam and Lindsay are invaluable in this and are very helpful. Ellen Paul was the first person who called me, and Scott has been wonderful. We are all in this together and we have a wonderful group.

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully

There has been a lot of movement since our last meeting. We've got 4 bills that we're actively watching. The eBook bills (2)-they've both been voted out of committee. SB 1234 came through the government administration and elections committee. They voted it out and it has gone through a couple of steps in the process. It is now on the senate calendar, but it has been filed with substitute language. The other eBook bill- HB6958- the planning and development committee has also voted that out of committee and filed that with the LCO on March 11th. It's been interesting to see the responses in both of those committees. In Planning and Development is passed unanimously with bipartisan support. They are really looking at it as a practical matter- consumer protection, government administration and elections. Historically there has been more opposition in that committee and we have seen that this year. Interestingly, the opposition took the bill this year it was a lot more subdued. So, it seems like the opposition is backing down a little bit. They don't necessarily support the bill or the legislation, but they might not be as active in fighting against it. With the eBook stuff really underway, we need to be prepared for this to pass. There are no guarantees, but we should be ready to talk about it with our library colleagues and not just in Connecticut but elsewhere throughout the country. We in Connecticut have been moving this along and I think we have gotten further than other states have except for Maryland and New York. If people haven't been watching Connecticut on this one, they will be if it passes.

Next up, we've got the Freedom to Read and School Library legislation. There are 2 bills there but are somewhat different. One is focused on just public school libraries and the other is on public libraries and school libraries. We've got HB 7014- that came through the education committee and there hasn't been any movement since they had their hearing. SB1271 came through the committee on children and that just on Monday was referred to the Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis. That also has been filed with substitute language but I'm not sure we've seen that substitute language either. Things are happening on all of this legislation and we're trying to keep folks posting on way to take action and what we can do now. But really the big thing right now is to talk to your local legislators and make sure they know about these things and ask them to support this legislation if and when it hits the floor. If they are so inclined, they can also co-sponsor it. It's really just getting this support shored up for this legislation.

Kate: I just want to be clear about bill 1271 which is the bill we think will move to the floor. We need to reach out to our legislators now because we know this bill will be what is called a talker. Because the hearings were a talker and went for many, many hours. There was a lot of opposition testimony. This bill cannot wait for the end of session. It needs to be taken up on a session day which they have scheduled sometime in the next 2 months before the end of the session in June. When you're talking to your legislators, say I really hope this bill makes it to the floor and that we know there's going to be a lot of opposition, and we'd really like to see this actually move forward. They can handle a talker if they schedule it early, but if it's something that pops up at the end of the session, they're not going to give it time. We need these freedom to read bills to actually have the full debate so that the processes of government can actually occur. We've gone through the hearing stage, we're about to go through the stage where it's up for debate and we need legislators to support this bill.

Olivia- We know that this is a priority for the democrats. They really want to make this happen, so we've got to make sure it gets over the line.

In other news, Kate and Scott J. attended the Connecticut conference of municipalities. It's sort of the annual meeting of all of the municipal associations and it was a good conference. There was some discussion about eBooks and we're hoping to find some way to get in roads to advocate more and get them more as an advocacy ally on stuff.

A week ago today, we had our legislative breakfast at the legislative office building. A big thank you to Scott and Mary who coordinated this. It's my understanding that we had a great turnout and there was a lot of great discussion.

Kate- it was a busy day at the capital. We didn't have very many legislators stop by. We did get a couple and talked to them. We did have aides and other people who work in the building, but I was really pleased that the library community did turn out. The more comfortable you get coming to the capital, the more comfortable you will be coming to the capital. Thank you very much for coming and allowing staff to attend. We did distribute one-pages to our legislators and their offices. This is a great way to get going by making appointments with your legislators. This is hopefully an annual event for us.

Scott J. – a big shoutout to Mary who was a huge help with this. We're going to work together on a document to lay out the best way to do this in the timeline for everything. This year we had a little hiccups from catering and thank you Kate for noticing that we weren't listed on anything. There are things we didn't do last year that we needed to do this year, but we think we have those things ironed out. I really appreciate the librarians and library staff who came out from all over the state. It was great to have this great gathering and crowd. And thank you to everyone who remembered to invite their representatives because the president of the association did not do that after telling you guys at every meeting to do that. Thank you everybody.

Mary- I would second what Kate said about having librarians who came but also some who were brand new to the process. I had good conversations with people who wanted don't know how this fit and how they could extend it to the legislation we are working on.

SB 1271 & HB 7014

SB 1234, HB 6958

HB 6958

Freedom to read: HB 7014, SB 1271