

Connecticut Library Association Board Meeting
September 19, 2024
10:00 am Business Meeting via Zoom
Minutes

- I. **Call to Order:** President Scott Jarzombek called the meeting to order at 10:09 AM.
Approval of Minutes: August meeting minutes approved by Scott Brill and seconded by Mary Etter. Four abstentions.
- II. **Old Business**
 - a. **President's Report** – See attached.
 - b. **Treasurer's Report** – See attached.
- III. **New Business**
 - a. Intellectual Freedom Helpline Grant
 - b. 2025 CLA Annual Conference Attendee Rate Vote
 - c. CLA Legislative Agenda

Representative Reports:

CT State Library: Deborah Schander: We are entering budget and legislative season. The State Library is preparing its own budget request for the upcoming session. The instructions we were given cover a wide range of different topics including information technology, capital requests, appropriations, etc. One thing of note: all agencies were instructed to propose 3% cuts to their budget. As usual, the State Library will be using this as an opportunity to explain how devastating any cut would be to our budget. We will be continuing to convey that conversation to OPM. We're also expecting that the majority of our requests will come in the area of capital requests, collections, and staffing as those are significant needs within the State Library. At this point, we are in the proposal stage, and I will keep you posted as we learn more over the next couple of months about what might appear in the governor's budget proposal. We are also continuing to do some restructuring within the State Library. We have a new unit called Digitization and Digital Collection Services. This is a combination of the former Preservation office and Photo Duplication office and really is recognizing the increased role of digitization, preservation, and digital collections within the State Library's operations. That unit is led by Anna Newman. Finally, NBC Connecticut will be airing a segment call "Hidden in Plain Sight" which is about things you see on a daily basis but not know anything about. Today's episode features the Colt Factory and the Onion Dome. There was filming that took place at the Museum of Connecticut History where we have the rampant Colt and a reproduction of the dome in the museum.

NELA: Scott Brill: NELA conference is coming up on October 20th- 22nd. Some of the people in this room will be speaking on Sunday. A lot of great Connecticut speakers will be attending. I will also be attending the NELA Annual Meeting. If there is anything you would like for me to bring up at a NELA meeting, please let me know.

ALA: Kate Byroade: I want to make sure everyone is aware that ALA membership rates are changing as of September 1st. For nearly everyone, the rates are going down except for one existing tier that is going up \$2. Rates for PLA and other divisions are also changing but this should make membership at the national level cheaper for everyone. On October 2nd ALA is presenting a free webinar about Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau: No report.

ACLB: Denise Stankovics: We have our first fall seminar this Wednesday, September 25th at 7PM. Brenda McKinley will be presenting on Association Libraries. Registration is still open and there is a link on our website. On October 30th, we are doing a joint presentation with FOCL on Standing Strong: the three-legged stool approach for libraries which will focus on the roles of Directors, Board of Trustees, and Friends. We hope you will encourage your Boards and Friends to attend. I want to give credit to Pam Monahan, our FOCL liaison, for suggesting we do this joint program.

ACLPD: *Vacant*

Bibliomation: Alessandra Casiello: Thank you for adding Bibliomation back on here. Bibliomation was happy to be a sponsor for the Library Leadership Institute in August and we're glad to hear how well it went. Congrats to the Career Development team on that. At Bibliomation we have 2 libraries that either have temporarily closed or have some inaccessibility. Just a reminder, Southbury cannot get transit to or from their library right now. If your library is stocking up on Southbury materials, we, as Bibliomation, are happy to hold onto those materials but please let me know. Bridgeport Library's East Side Branch is temporarily closed for 9 months for renovation. With the State Library no longer able to do E-rate filing for CT Libraries, Bibliomation will be doing that for our member libraries only. As much as we want to help the rest of the library community, we are only able to do it for member libraries right now. Hopefully, other places in the state can help the other libraries with E-rate filing.

America 250: Margaret Khan: I have been meeting with the 250 commission and subcommittee. The subcommittee is working on developing materials to be distributed through the state promotional materials and working with local committees and municipalities. There is a list that has local commissions that have been developed so far. If your town has one, I encourage you to reach out to that contact person to see how your library can get involved. We're looking into the future when we have some more materials ready to really utilize libraries as advertising platforms for the 250 event to help get the word out, bring people in to the effort. Libraries will be great places to help put out materials, programs, and collaborations on celebrating the 250th anniversary of our country. I hope to have more information by our November or December meeting. If you have any questions, please let me know.

BCALA: *Vacant*

Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie: We had our meeting a couple of weeks ago and there was a lot of talk about artificial intelligence as far as how it affects libraries and school systems and what the commission can potentially do to help assist people as AI becomes more prevalent. There was also talk at the national level about E-rate going away entirely. We brought up stuff that is going on at the state level as well. The commission right now doesn't have much to say about that but there may be stuff going forward. One of the proposals out there was the possibility of dismantling e-rate as a whole, which would be devastating for our schools as well as the 90 libraries in our state who use E-rate as well. I hope it is one of those things that people are bringing it up as a reaction to something and will go away in November but I will find a document to forward to everyone to refer to.

Communications Task Force: John Casiello: The taskforce work is done. We have discord in place, the link has been sent out to the board previously. I'd like to really push it again within the next month so that sections can use it as a tool for finding out what their members want for conference and things like that. If any of the board wants to be involved, please let me know. The current plan was to use it for just members but the biggest hangup is to have a way for us to

check that people joining are members. I look forward to getting it launched and think it's a great way for committees to check with their members.

CASL: Mary Ellen Minichiello & David Bilmes: Absent.

CLC: Ellen Paul & Amanda Stern: The CLC board at their September meeting did talk about the possibility of jointly endorsing a legislative agenda with CLA and CASL. There was a lot of enthusiasm with that. We're going to push forward once we have a final legislative agenda. Over the summer we launched 3 new contracts for promotional supplies and I think this could really be of interest to CLA if you're buying things for conference or events. The contracts are with UBO of Middletown, Vanguard from Rocky Hill, and Crestline from Lewiston, Maine. You will get substantial savings from these vendors.

FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek & Pamela Monahan: Absent.

Library Connection: Laura Horn: Absent.

Region 1: Heather Aronson: Thanks to everyone who has reached out to us at Southbury Library. As you know, our library was severely damaged in the flood on August 18th. It was just our basement level; we are very lucky, but the building is not safe at the time. All of the systems have to be checked out thoroughly before we can even enter the building and even make a plan. We've probably lost our HVAC, all of our technology, we have to check the power because it never went off. Big thank you to Bibliomation for being wonderful from the start. I appreciate everything everyone is doing, especially with our books. Thank you to our neighboring libraries for helping as well. If you have any questions, please reach out to me. I will email you eventually but there is a lot going on right now. Most of the staff work out of town hall. We are doing crafts and Storytimes at other town buildings. The Friends were hit the hardest and are working at another location and taking donations. You can call the main library number, and it will be rerouted to us.

Region 2: Lisa Miceli: See attached.

Region 3: Chonte Fields: Absent.

Region 4: Brenda McKinley: If any of the region 4 folks want to pipe in, I did not hear from any of my liaisons. In Ridgefield, we have gotten funding from our town to update our automated material handling system. We're getting the timeline for that major project and working on updating our strategic plan.

Region 5: Emily Rush: The Branford library has internal promotion. They have a new full-time reference librarian who had just been a part-timer. She is doing a lot of library TikTok's that are getting a lot of traction. They are having their annual book sale this weekend. The Scranton Library is also having their Book Sale this weekend. The Russell Library in Middletown has a couple of new library associates on staff and sadly their head of property management and security, who had been there for a long time, Robert Prchal has passed away from cancer. The Case Memorial Library in Orange's Head of Tech Services for over 20 years, Jonathon Wiener, has just retired.

Region 6: Madhu Gupta: East Lyme Public Library will hold their first Cosplay Comicon event "Heroes and Legends" on November 9th. The Stonington Free Library shared a report with me from over the past year. They added a full-time position, have transformed their youth services department by securing grant opportunities, rearranging the space, starting new successful program initiatives, and collaborating with local businesses and organizations. The Public Library of New London will be hosting Hispanic Heritage Month celebration on Saturday, September 28th, and also preparing an adopt a book fundraiser which is our annual fundraiser.

SCSU: Cindy Schofield: Absent.

Sustainability Taskforce : Alessandra Casiello: The bylaws vote passed this morning so thank you to everybody for doing that. Last month the strategic plan was approved here so now it has to be sent out to the membership and it will be put in place in January 2025. Our financial plan was also approved last month so that is all done. Now we are focusing on our StarChapter Software and training committee and looking at other softwares to move to and we can give that the most concentration.

Association Committee Reports:

ADA: Marilynn Lewicki: I just started here but I will be having a meeting soon. I don't have anything to report but I will soon.

Archivist: Gerald Seagrave: No report.

Awards: Region Reps: The region reps have been invited to the conference committee to go over the awards ceremony and hope to have more information after that.

Career Development: Amanda Stern & Rory Martorana: The Library Leadership Institute on August 23rd was a huge success. We had 50 attendees who all showed up with the intention to participate fully, and it showed. Our sessions were all interactive and our presenters deeply engaged all attendees. It was amazing to see our colleagues show up so fully to learn, support each other, and to take home real strategies they can implement to be better leaders in their libraries.

The application period for our 5th cohort of the CLA Mentoring Program has closed, with 21 mentee applications – our largest group yet! We will be making matches next week for an October 1 start. This cohort will run through March 30.

Conference 2025: After today's meeting, the board members will get a preview of the program submission form from Kristina Lareau and Allison Murphy. Program submission will open tomorrow the 20th until mid-November. We also have new rates for our exhibitors and sponsors. We haven't changed many of the rates- our table and booth rates have pretty much stayed the same. They range from nonprofit tables for \$500 to premium tables for \$1500. People can still do add-ons for extra representatives. Our sponsors range from \$100 for a demo session to \$10,000 as a full conference sponsor. There is something in there for everybody. Our exhibitor packet and information and registration will open October 21st. We just signed our conference with our keynote. Our keynote is Michale McCreary and will be on both days as well as do individual chats and book signings right after the keynotes. The keynotes will be different- it will be a 30-minute comedy act and then Q&A. There will be two separate keynotes. Michael McCreary wrote the book "Funny You Don't Look Autistic" and is an Autistic Comedian. We're still working on our after-hours event and fundraisers.

Grants/Fundraising: Alessandra Casiello: We were not able to do our Banned Bands Freedom to Read event this year. We actually moved up another of our fundraiser that we usually do as a holiday fundraiser. We are going to start our Meadow Farms and call it a Fall Holiday Fundraiser. This will go out on Monday and go through November 8th. Right after November 8th, we will go into our match for Giving Tuesday. Hopefully, we will raise funds like we have in the last two years.

Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan: Freedom to Read week is upon us and starts on the 22nd. I hope everyone is celebrating and reading those banned books, engaging with patrons, and making sure your policies are up to date. The Freedom to Read date of Action is October 19th. United Against Book Bans, Coalition of ALA, OIF are encouraging folks to take a

day of action to talk about the freedom to read. Since it's banned books week, Lindsay is going to the Old Lyme Library to do a program. I am going to New Haven to do a panel next Friday and I was asked earlier in the year to do a seminar at Wesleyan University. We are busy doing book ban challenges and outreach all over the place. If you have friends or family who are interested in learning about book ban challenges, they can take this seminar. It is the night of September 30th and October 7th and includes tickets to the show at the Ivoryton Playhouse called "The Alabama Story" which is a dramatization story of two bunnies getting married- a black bunny and a white bunny.

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully: What we have been working on is preparing for the upcoming legislative session to begin in January. We have a lot of working groups who are preparing for all different facets. I wanted to point out that the Connecticut Lobbying Conference will be on Tuesday, October 1st in Hartford. CLA can provide partial reimbursement for up to 5 members. It's a great day to learn about advocacy work, lobbying work, and meeting local Connecticut legislators who can give you the inside track on what is important to them and how to speak to those issues. We have about two dozen people who are helping us with the legislation preparation work and one stream of it was to come up with an educational program for library people. That effort is being led by Maureen Sullivan, Laura Horn, Keith Michael Fiels, and Dee Brennan. Keith Michael was the Executive Director of ALA and formerly the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Dee was a consortium director in Illinois, and they had a substantial program. We will draw on that work and hopefully that will establish a new baseline for people's knowledge of advocacy work and how to go about doing it.

Outreach: John Casiello: Not much to report but I will ask that anyone reaching out to me to please use the outreach@ctlibraryassociation.org email because its easier to separate my other work. It is the best way to reach me to get a quicker response.

PEG: Mary Etter: No report.

Procedures: Lisa Karim: Bylaws have finally passed.

Section Reports:

Children's: Alexandra Remy & Chonte Fields: No report.

CLASS: Vacant

College & University: Rob Walsh: Absent.

JEDI: Mary Richardson & Samantha Connell: Absent.

Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan: No report.

Reference & Adult Services: Christie Mitchell: No report.

Resource Sharing: Matt Earls: Absent.

Technical Services: Ann Victor & Christine Rinaldi: Absent.

Technology: Kate Sheehan & Christopher Knorr: We sent out a survey to gauge what people are interested in. Generally, what people are interested in is broader overviews of AI, automation issues, etc. There's a lot of E-rate anxiety but from my understanding it is not something any indivial library can step up and apply as the consortium. Unrelated to CLA, I am excited to have Margaret and Shannon join me at CEN. It's always great to have cross pollination between libraries and technology.

YA: Stephanie Smith: I am planning a workshop/meeting for the beginning of December. It is not on the website yet but will be forthcoming. It will be a paid, ticketed event with members getting a discount.

Adjournment: 11:23 AM Motion to adjourn by Kate Byroade. Seconded by Margaret Khan.

Present: Scott Jarzombek, Erin Dummeyer, Sarah McCusker, Margaret Khan, Shannon Angelone, Deborah Schander, Alessandra Casiello, Alexandra Remy, Allison Murphy, Amanda Stern, Brenda McKinley, Christie Mitchell, Colleen Bailie, Denise Stankovics, Ellen Paul, Emily Rush, Heather Aronson, Jennifer Sullivan, Jerry Seagrave, John Casiello, Kate Byroade, Kate Sheehan, Kristina Lareau, Lisa Miceli, Madhu Gupta, Marilyn Lewicki, Mary Etter, Matt Earls, Olivia Blake, Robert Scheier, Samanda Lee, Scott Brill, Stephanie Smith.

President's Report

Scott Jarzombek

The CASL vote we had last month cannot actually be done. That will have to be done at a general membership meeting like we had this morning for the Bylaws vote. We will have to have this vote at the Annual Membership meeting at the conference. I got invited to speak at a press conference on the 26th by the Lieutenant Governor speaking on banned books. I am looking forward to that. Past, Current, future board members were at the board meeting yesterday for FLAG- Fairfield Libraries Administrators Group. We had a really good conversation around our Legislative Agenda with positive feedback. The president, Scott Brill, has asked for us to have that as a standing item on the agenda every month that we meet. I still need to meet with the regional members-we've been trying to meet as a group, but I'd like to meet with you individually as well. I received a lot of positive feedback about it but not everyone received it. We will need to remind members to check their preferences in what emails they receive. I am going to continue for this to be my pet project. If you have any suggestions or input, let me know.

Treasurer's Report

The financials are not ready yet, but nothing extraordinary came across my desk over the last month in terms of spending our revenue, so you can expect status quo there. We are still waiting to hear from the accountant on getting our business filing with the State of Connecticut sorted out. Once that is done, we can move forward with our financial plan and getting our savings account set up. We also renewed our insurance policy. Just a reminder when filling out expense forms, if at all possible, please sign them electronically. I've used foxit which is a free software that you can use to sign pdf documents and will make the process easier for all the signatures we have to collect. I'll put a link in the chat along with a fillable expense form which is available on our website on the finance pages. If you have any questions, let me know.

<https://www.foxit.com>

<https://ctlibraryassociation.org/Finance>

New Business

a. Intellectual Freedom Helpline Grant

Early in the spring, ALA put out a grant for \$10,000 for various state library organizations to form an Intellectual Freedom Hotline. Lindsay Delligan heard about it and also went to Chicago to meet a bunch of other Intellectual Freedom Advocates around the country, met up with several New England Librarians and together decided to apply as a block of 6 states for this grant. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut applied for the grant and got it. We have \$10,000 to be split between the 6 states to help form and establish an Intellectual Freedom Helpline. We are still in the process of figuring out what that looks like. We were going to create a website with a clearing house of information so that when people have those challenges, we can direct them to those resources. As they get deeper into it, they can contact their local Intellectual Freedom committees and get support. Rhode Island Library Association was the principal applicant, and they are holding the funds, and we are waiting to receive them. There is a fly-out in October and a representative from each of the 6 states will fly out and get some training and support from ALA. CLA has signed on along with CASL to be part of this Helpline grant. We are very excited about this.

b. 2025 CLA Annual Conference Attendee Rate Vote

Every year the board has to vote on the changes we are requesting to make towards the attendee rates. You do not have to vote on the exhibitor rates, but we do on attendee rates. The sheet included in your packet shows the rates from the previous 5 years and what we are hoping to update for this year. If you have been part of the board over the last few years, my goal was to get us to a place where we can make a profit. We did do a larger raise last year and now we can do incremental raises to cover food increases and upcharges that we are getting from the venue. (See attached Proposal for rates). Since this is coming from a committee, we just need a second. Mary Etter seconded the motion. Motion passes.

c. CLA Legislative Agenda

The main legislative issues we are looking at right now for CLA's legislative agenda is eBooks, a budget ask to include funding for the State Library, CLC, individual communities, and policy for School Libraries regarding reconsideration of Library Materials. In the months board packet, the biggie is the budget piece. Alice Knapp from Stamford Library worked with some folks to put together this amazing budget proposal that we would like to bring to the State Legislature. This is for the 2025-2026 state budget. Just to sum up, the proposal is seeking increases in these 4 areas: State Aid to Public Libraries- \$3 million; Shared technology and resource sharing- \$2 million; support to the State Library- \$500,000; support to the Connecticut Library Consortium- \$200,000. These are all increases totaling \$5,700,000. The proposal is 6 pages long and I encourage you to check it out for rational and great explanations about what these funds can do for these areas. We are asking the CLA board to formally endorse this legislative budget ask so that when we go forward in the new legislative session in January, the goal is to have at least have CLA, CASL, and CLC's boards all signing off on this officially as "this is what the library community want."

Since this is coming out of a committee, I am looking for a second: Erin Dummeyer. All in favor. Motion passed.

CLA Region 2 Rep Report

September 2024

Lisa Miceli

- Friends of the New Britain Public Library Annual Author Luncheon features Ann Napolitano on October 10
- Noah Webster Branch of the West Hartford Public Library hosted Your Vote Matters! Voter Information with the League of Women Voters September 17, 1-6 PM
- Simsbury Public Library is celebrating its 150th anniversary and is becoming the new Visitors Information Center for the Town
- Farmington Libraries are holding a Halloween Costume Swap
- Manchester Public Library held their Author Fair last weekend.
- East Hartford Public Library will celebrate the culture of Japan October 5-11
- Burlington Public Library will hold a pasta making workshop on October 5