

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

- I. **Call to Order:** President Scott Jarzombek called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** November meeting minutes approved by Sarah McCusker and Mary Etter. One abstention.

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

- IV. **New Business**
 - a. **Bylaws change, CASL Joint Membership- Scott Jarzombek**
 - b. **NELLS II Request- Scott Brill**

Representative Reports:

CT State Library: Deborah Schander: We are in the midst of preparing for budget and legislative sessions, so currently those conversations are happening behind the scenes. I will keep you updated as there is more information to share. Next, we have received word that the conservation we have undertaken for the Connecticut Charter of 1662 is completed and we are planning the return of the charter as well as a welcome back event to allow people to see the original charter and what will be the display version that is moving forward for comparison sake. The museum team continues to work on the exhibit planning for the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The hope is that this will be an exhibit that is installed in the Museum of Connecticut History. As far as we know, this is the one museum that is taking a statewide approach to the history of the revolution in Connecticut. The goal is a live exhibit for the 250th anniversary coming up. I also sit on the Connecticut Data Analysis Advisory Board, and they are currently forming a group related to responsible uses of artificial intelligence. This will be guiding other state agencies as we move in that work moving forward. That will be something I can update the group on as that work continues.

NELA: Scott Brill: What I said earlier- NELLS II is the big thing happening.

ALA: Kate Byroade: What used to be known as ALA Midwinter is now known as ALA LLX is happening in late January. No particular news otherwise.

ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau: Absent. No Report

ACLB: Denise Stankovics: Absent.

ACLPD: *Vacant.*

America 250: Margaret Khan: No report.

BCALA: *Vacant.*

Bibliomation: Alessandra Casiello: Absent. No report.

Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie: We had our last meeting in December. There was a demonstration from the Connecticut State Education Department talking about schools and being in a digital world and how they are combating that. There were a lot of school librarians who were involved in a lot of the language and how they're going to be able to have tools and resources for schools ready. I was glad to see that the school librarians are being involved in that.

There will be more soon hopefully in regard to getting some possible funding for doing technology projects moving forward.

Communications Task Force: John Casiello: Absent.

CASL: Jenny Lussier & Gina Wiese: nErD Camp will take place at Winthrop Elementary School in New London on March 1st. We will let you know when registration opens. We welcome all lovers literacy. CASL board members have been attending the CLA meet and greets, and we want to thank you for inviting school librarians to be part of this important work. We are really happy to be involved. CASL is continuing the work with Every Library along with the CLA legislative group. The book reconsideration bill: School Libraries for All will focus on requiring each school district to have selection and reconsideration policies. CASL along with the Massachusetts School Library Association and Rhode Island School Library Association are launching a new way to recognize outstanding school librarians. We are pooling our resources and money. We are partnering with Rosen Publishing who will recognize the winners. As three states, we will be rotating the awards monthly, and Connecticut will go first in January.

CLC: Ellen Paul: Absent.

FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek & Pamela Monahan: FOCL is going to have another pop-up session either February 6th or 13th at the Avon Library. I will update you next month as to which date we've settled on.

Library Connection: Laura Horn: No report.

Region 1: Heather Aronson: Absent.

Region 2: Lisa Miceli: See attached.

Region 3: Chonte Fields: Absent.

Region 4: Brenda McKinley: Easton Public Library: Library Director Lynn Zaffino shares: We have great news - our Library was just awarded a \$1 million construction grant from the CT State Library, to be used for the Children's Expansion Project!

Region 5: Emily Rush: Absent.

Region 6: Madhu Gupta: See attached.

SCSU: Cindy Schofield: Absent.

Sustainability Taskforce : No updates, we are still trying to set up a bylaws meeting to speak about the new membership rates that we will propose to membership for vote at the annual meeting. We are hoping to have something to bring to board by February.

Association Committee Reports:

ADA: Marilynn Lewicki: We are starting up meetings on January 24th and I'm excited to get to know everyone more and plan for the new year.

Archivist: Gerald Seagrave: No report.

Awards: Region Reps:

Career Development: Amanda Stern & Rory Martorana: Our biggest thing is scholarships- we are offering three \$1,000 scholarships this year. The application process opens in January, and we are asking everyone who is interested this year to apply early because the application comes in three parts. It's the application, the transcript, and the letter of recommendation. We are asking people to apply early so all of the materials come in on time because they don't come in all together. We don't want to deny anyone a scholarship because a piece of their application is missing. Mentoring- the next application period for mentees will be in February. We are accepting mentoring applications on a rolling basis. Applications are on the CLA website. We are looking for new mentors; specifically, people who are not library administration, but people

who do have some deep experience they can share. The other thing is that we are looking into a new firm to do our compensation benchmarks and we will be getting that ball rolling.

Conference 2025: We currently have 26 exhibitors registered, 5 sponsor companies. And have taken in just under \$30k. Our programs team has accepted the sessions for the conference and are currently working on a schedule. We are hoping to open registration for attendees and speakers between January 15-31 and have a tentative schedule available. Contracts for speakers will be sent before February 1. We are about to announce to the public our keynote Michael McCreary.

Development: Alessandra Casiello: We took in \$780 in donations from supporters during our giving day match campaign. Our match company, RH Lord once again decided to give us the full \$1000 match anyway, so we made \$1780 from giving day. Working on the 2nd Performer Auction that will run from February 10th-14th (online auction). We currently have 20 performers donating events for this. All items will start at the same bidding price with small increments (same as last year). The highest bidder will win and will be given a contract to sign between them, the performer and cla. There will be buy it now prices as well. We are hoping to make \$3000 from this (we made just over this amount last year).

Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan: We are making progress on the Helpline Grant that we received from the American Library Association. We did receive \$10,000 and are working with the 6 New England states to establish committees and subcommittees to start making progress on that. I attended the Law for Librarians Meeting in Chicago for ALA in May. We did have a follow up training session on Zoom a week and a half ago. A tidbit of information- one of their attorneys gave a presentation and one of the questions that came up at Law for Librarians was “Can they provide any information on how much these lawsuits over intellectual freedom challenges are costing municipalities and cities?” She said they received information from the Plano, TX case, and one of the parties in the court have requested over \$180,000 in court fees. So, if that helps anybody with their intellectual freedom challenges and explaining to their boards, you are talking big numbers here. There is a new argument circulation and so far most courts have not found this to be the case, but many state’s attorney generals including Florida are attempting to argue that public library collections represent government speech and therefore are not subject to the protections of the 1st amendment. Which means that boards will have full jurisdiction to determine and remove items from the collection. So far, most courts have found against this and say that libraries are a forum of free inquiry, but this is something they are watching very closely.

Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully: Thank you Scott for reporting on the legislative meet and greets. We have more coming up. The big things we are working on are the goals that we brought to you in the previous meetings: eBook’s bill, a budget ask, and a school libraries bill. We have identified some small work groups from our committee to take the lead on prepping for and sheparding each of those goals. We are really growing our capacity this year. Some of the things we are working on this year are identifying potential champions, stakeholders who may be resistant, and how we can get those folks on board. If you have thoughts on some of those key individuals, please reach out to us and let us know so that we can make contact. Now is the time to start having those conversations. The only other thing I have on my list is the New Jersey governor signed a freedom to read act into law. It is possible that this will be challenged in court but it’s interesting that this kind of legislation is starting to pick up that proactively protects 1st amendment rights for libraries.

Kate- I've been able to go to most of the legislative meet and greets so far. Legislators seem generally receptive. A potential school library bill will be good. I just want to point out that Connecticut passed Freedom to Read legislation which is centered around reading instruction-the science of reading for those of you familiar with that discourse. So, whatever we come up with for a school bill will not be called Freedom to Read because we passed one a few years ago. Just a reminder that we do have some turnover in the legislature- some people retired, some people were voted out and new people voted in. In some way, extend yourself to your legislators. Some of them will shift committees and roles. It's important to take a look at that. I always recommend that phone call or email an invitation to your library to tour or invite to a special event.

Outreach: John Casiello: Absent.

PEG: Mary Etter: No report.

Procedures: Lisa Miceli: My only report is that I guess we are looking at the bylaws again to do joint membership verbiage which we will have for you in January.

Section Reports:

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

CLASS: Vacant

College & University: Rob Walsh: Absent.

JEDI: Mary Richardson: Absent.

Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan: Absent.

Reference & Adult Services: Christie Mitchell: Absent.

Resource Sharing: Matt Earls: Absent.

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

Technology: Kate Sheehan & Christopher Knorr: No report except the CEN conference deadline for tech proposals which is a little bit more nuts and bolts than the CLA conference proposals are coming up. If you have anyone in your library or town is doing something cool, please send them to me- I will help them write a proposal.

YA: Stephanie Smith: Absent.

Adjournment: 10:38 AM Motion to adjourn by Kate Byroade and seconded by Margaret Khan.

Present: Scott Jarzombek, Sarah McCusker, Margaret Khan, Shannon Angelone, Deborah Schander, Amanda Stern, Ann Victor, Christine Rinaldi, Colleen Bailie, Debbie Misiaszek, Gina Wiese, Jerry Seagrave, Kate Byroade, Kate Sheehan, Laura Horn, Lindsay Delligan, Lisa Miceli, Madhu Gupta, Marilynn Lewicki, Mary Etter, Olivia Blake, Scott Brill.

President's Report

Scott Jarzombek

We have hosted several Legislative Meet and Greets around the state. Some were pretty successful, some had light attendance. I would say the one in West Hartford was really good and the one here in Fairfield I thought was really informative. We had a great conversation in West Haven- we had one elected official show up, but I did get Zuppardi's to bring home so it wasn't a complete loss. It was a good meeting and what has been really great is that colleagues around the state are showing up. The School Library cohort is really in full force which is really nice to see. I went to Chicago in December for the ALA Section Meetup. It was good to see colleagues from around the country and many seeing similar issues and taking on similar issues that we are. The big take away from the event is that many associations that have been successful with their legislative agenda have a lobbyist. My assistant director is a CLA board member, and I have a very deep insight into the history of this organization having a lobbyist and I get it. But I will say that when talking to every one of my peers they say that it is really key. And the few groups that do not have one are looking into getting one.

I want to give kudos to Alessandra and John for doing the work while going through a major life change. I am now aiming for the beginning of January for the next newsletter. I couldn't get it together for this month especially since John is part of it. I may ask a few of you to write something and Sarah, I may ask you to proofread what we write. I got an email last night from CASL and the person they hired to help move their agenda along said they need CLA to get the message out and share as much as they can with their membership-and I agree with that. I think emails and the newsletter are a great way to do that.

Last but not least, a candidate for ALA president contacted me and asked for time at a future meeting to present. I thought that was interesting. I met with her yesterday; she's looking for 5-10 minutes to present why she's running and why we may think about voting for her. My biggest concern is that these meetings already go long and that if we do it for one candidate, then we may have to do it for all. I'm going to come back to Sarah and Erin and talk about it a little bit and see if we open this up on our agenda or offer this to all of them as a group. Please share with me your feedback and questions about this. But I think it's cool that a possible future president of ALA is interested in talking to our association.

Sarah- Last year when the ALA candidates wanted to do that, we set up individual meetings for each of them and opened it up to the membership. Not too many showed up, but it was enough to have a conversation.

Treasurer's Report

Everything is status quo. To date, we have received over \$16,000 in our membership in our anticipated revenue. We are already receiving a good amount of money from our conference exhibitors, almost \$20,000 received for that so the conference committee is hard at work. We are waiting for the final tallies on the fundraiser that we did in November- the online store and Giving Tuesday. Otherwise, nothing special is going on this month.

New Business

a. Bylaws change-

We will need to change our bylaws in order to do the Joint Membership scheme with CASL. Do we want to form a committee to do this or Lisa, do I work with you to work up the language and what are the next steps?

Lisa- we were going to wait to do that when we worked on the membership fee structure and wait until Alessandra's life settled down a little more to do that in the Spring.

Scott- I don't want to do that in the Spring right before conference because we are going to get super busy. My thought was January/February because in March/April we will be deep in legislative session and then we'll be so close to conference. So, if we can get language for the February meeting that would be awesome.

Lisa- Yes, if you want to do it then, that's fine.

b. NELLS II Request- Scott Brill

I received a letter from Kaitlin Stacy who is the chair of NELLS. They are going to do the NELLS II, which is their big thing. I think each state association would give money for that. I don't have the budget in front of me, so I don't know what's actually budgeted. We've decided to ask each state Association for \$2,000 which is consistent with previous years. Please look for an invoice around the first of the year. It will be Monday, May 12th – Thursday, May 15th at the Von Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, Vermont. It is Tier II, as we all know as NELLS for leaders with 3 to 15 years of experience in libraries. I know there are people in this room who have really benefited from it in the past.

CLA Region 2 Rep Report

December 2024

Lisa Miceli

East Granby Public Library

- Has a traveling art exhibit through the end of December: Peace in the World created by child artists ages 5-14 from Russia

Canton Public Library

- Had an easy art for adults program last night where they made Book Trackers for 2025 with watercolors, pens and collage.

South Windsor Public Library

- Cora J. Belden Library in Rocky Hill
- Will hold a Pre-School Expo January 8th.

Bristol Library

- Will begin Sunday hours on January 5th. They'll be open 1-5 on Sundays.

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- The Bill Memorial Library received a grant from Groton Utilities that funds a combination drinking fountain and water bottle-filling station with refrigerated and filtered water. They are also completing a 2-year window restoration and replacement program, with 40 windows either restored or replaced with funding from the Neighborhood Assistance Act.
- Waterford Public Library is currently offering a weekly English conversation group on Thursday evenings. This weekly class, along with funding support for new collection materials to support English language learning is being funded with a Southeastern Regional grant from the Community Foundation of Eastern, CT.
- Mystic and Noank Library had a holiday open house with a sleigh and eight tiny (inflatable) reindeer.
- East Lyme held its first “ComiCon” event this fall, and it was a great success. They hope to hold one next year too.
- Public Library of New London is currently running the Adopt a Fund fundraiser. The library has planned a series of exciting activities for children and teens during the upcoming school vacation week.