

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
STATE LIBRARY BOARD
January 25, 2021

INDEX

Members joining via Teams:

Mary Etter, Sandy Ruoff, Bob Harris, Melissa Wlodarczyk-Hickey, John N. Barry, Judge Henry Cohn, Allen Hoffman, Justice Steven Ecker

Members absent: Alison Clemens

Others joining via Teams:

Deborah Schander, Dawn La Valle, Jane Beaudoin, Gordon Reddick, (State Library), Tom Piezzo (CLA), Jennifer Keohane (CLC), Pamela Monahan (FOCL), Maureen Sullivan

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Chair Mary Etter. Jane Beaudoin took roll call attendance of board members. Jane informed the members of the Board that Alison Clemens had emailed to let her know she had a scheduling conflict and would not be able to attend the meeting. No attendance of the members of the public attending the meeting was taken.

MINUTES

It was MOVED (B. Harris) seconded (S. Ruoff) THAT THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 23, 2020 STATE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING BE APPROVED WITH ONE REVISION. Mary Etter stated that she would like Deborah Schander's full job title be added to page four in the third paragraph. Jane Beaudoin acknowledged that the change will be made. The motion was PASSED unanimously.

MINUTES

Motion

BOARD COMMENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Melissa Hickey took this opportunity to give a "shout out" to the Windsor Locks Public Library which is her hometown library. She is impressed with how the library is handling book reservations and pickups in a contactless way during the pandemic. The library is doing a good job with staying connected to their community through a monthly calendar that they make available on their website.

**BOARD
COMMENTS/
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mary congratulated the Windsor Locks Public Library and every library for redefining how a library can provide its services during this pandemic.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

STATE LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Deborah stated that her written State Librarian's Report was included in the Board's packets and welcomed questions. Deborah thanked the Board for their foresight in allowing Maureen to overlap for 3 weeks with her coming on board. Maureen provided invaluable assistance to Deborah in making connections with key people in government and the library community which helped bring her up-to-speed with many issues. This includes meetings with important strategic partners such as the Connecticut Library Association (CLA), Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC), and state budget officers. Deborah stated that she can see the extraordinary work that Maureen accomplished in the last several months.

**STATE
LIBRARIAN'S
REPORT**

The State Library is still not open to the public but continues to assist law clerks and state agency staff members. There is continued discussion to expand the services at the State Library by being open to the public by appointment only.

Maureen Sullivan submitted a very comprehensive and useful "Report to Governor Ned Lamont on the Everybody Learns Grants to Public Libraries". This report documents the successful partnership with the Governor's Office of Strategic Initiatives to allocate \$2.6 million to public libraries to enable the expansion of the library's capacity to serve its residents. Deborah is very pleased to continue this work.

OTHER REPORTS

Connecticut Library Association (CLA): CLA President Tom Piezzo began by congratulating Deborah Schander on her new position as State Librarian and looks forward to continuing a partnership with the State Library under her leadership. Tom also thanked Maureen Sullivan for her hard work and leadership of the State Library during her term as Interim State Librarian.

Tom reported on fundraising efforts including a recently launched public appeal using FundLibraries.org. The CLA Annual Conference will once again be virtual and take place May 10-14, 2021. This year's theme is "Libraries Meeting Challenges in a Changing World". CLA has a new CLASS section Chair, Samantha Saliter. Tom concluded by reporting that Fall workshops had unprecedented attendance compared to in-person events.

Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development (ACLPD): Division of Library Development Director Dawn La Valle reported that at ACLPD's December 16, 2020 meeting the Division of Library Development (DLD) staff presented the year in review, highlighting all statewide services, programs, resources, grants and special projects benefiting all the academic, public, school and special libraries that DLD serves. The DLD Year in Review Report is available to any Board member interested and will be posted on the DLD libguide.

As part of a newly formed Digital Inclusion Task Force, Dawn La Valle, DLD Director; Chris Gauvreau, LSTA Coordinator; Dr. Brian Real, Southern CT State Library and partners including Doug Casey; CT Commission for Educational Technology; a new partner Burton Cohen, Staff Attorney & Broadband Policy Coordinator, State of Connecticut Office of Consumer Counsel; Homa Naficy, Hartford Public Library and representatives from urban, rural, suburban, and other library types will be working on developing a Digital Inclusion Alliance providing services such as Digital Navigators to help bridge the Digital Divide in Connecticut.

Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC): Jennifer Keohane, Executive Director, stated that she echoes the appreciation expressed to Maureen for her hard work

**OTHER
REPORTS**
CLA

ACLPD

CLC

in the last several months. She also welcomed Deborah Schander and thanked her for the time she's already given to a couple of meetings. Deborah was the guest speaker at the January CLC Coffee Talk. The Coffee Talk is an opportunity for all librarians to speak up with their concerns and aspirations. Jennifer stated that she had a chance to meet with Deborah and the CLA Legislative Committee Co-Chairs. CLC has offered to help in any way they can in the absence of the CLA Lobbyist. Jennifer stated that the impact of the pandemic has caused a lot of consolidations and layoffs which means that many representatives are no longer with companies. There has been a significant decrease in vendor sales and it has had an impact on CLC. CLC is already pulling from its reserves to continue its work and may raise dues in the near future.

Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB): Dawn La Valle reported that ACLB will be presenting "Being a Library Board: Library Board Basics" virtually for the Canterbury Library on January 25, and to other libraries as well as a general library board training session in March. The new ACLB Library Board Assessment Tool will be piloted at the Douglas Library in Hebron and then launched with an information training session in March. Library board trustees around the state expressed their appreciation for the development of this tool.

ACLB

Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL): FOCL Vice President Pam Monahan expressed her thanks to Maureen Sullivan for the above and beyond work that she did in her role as Interim State Librarian. Pam appreciated that Deborah Schander attended the January 12 Friends meeting. The Friends are doing internal communications structure work and are also planning to hold an Annual Fall meeting that may be held outdoors.

FOCL

OLD BUSINESS

Budget Update: Deborah stated that the State Library operates with a tight budget and is very careful with spending. She has been meeting with Maureen and partners in the state regarding the budget. The State Library is working on an internal process for purchasing. The budget will involve the legislature soon.

OLD BUSINESS
Budget Update

John Barry stated that with Deborah coming on with fresh eyes, it would be good if she could spot some areas where savings and efficiencies can occur.

Deborah plans to start delving into the details of the budget and will see how things go.

Legislative Update: Deborah stated that we don't know yet what the format of testimony will be. The State Library has a number of good partners throughout the state that are willing to help in the absence of a lobbyist.

Legislative Update

Allen Hoffman suggested that consideration be given to Board members making themselves available for calls to their State Legislators about the budget or other topics related to the State Library. Mary Etter offered to mention this at the CLA Legislative Committee meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

John Barry stated that most state agencies have a legislative liaison and that the State Library is at a disadvantage because it doesn't have one. John stated that the Board may want to consider working with Deborah to get a staff person assigned to be the eyes and ears at the legislature.

Sandy Ruoff shared that she met with past presidents of CLA who stated they would be willing to donate funds to help rehire the lobbyist. They are hoping that others will also be willing to donate to this cause. Tom Piezzo stated that is not possible this year and probably not in 2022 either. This is only a pause in the lobbyist's service and not something that is intended to be permanent. Tom continued that they are not sure what the legislative session will look like this year given the pandemic. They are still waiting to hear back from key people.

NEW BUSINESS

State Public Library Construction Grant Recommendations: Dawn La Valle explained that these grant recommendations were approved at the State Library Board's last meeting. Unfortunately the grant amounts on the fact sheet that was approved were incorrect. This was due to a clerical error. The formality of bringing a revised fact sheet is because the minutes of the State Library Board meeting that reflect the grants and the amounts that are approved are included in the state public library construction contract. The grant projects are the same. Only the grant amounts have been revised. It was MOVED (J. Barry) seconded (B. Harris) THAT THE STATE LIBRARY BOARD AWARDS THE FOLLOWING STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANTS, ORIGINALLY APPROVED AT THE NOVEMBER 23, 2020, MEETING TO THESE REVISED AMOUNTS:

- \$675,000 to the Brainerd Memorial Library in Haddam
- \$146,957 to the Town of Durham for Durham Public Library
- \$159,375 to the Town of East Haven for the East Haven Public Library
- \$40,000 to the Town of Harwinton for the Harwinton Public Library

PASSED unanimously.

Resolution for Gordon Reddick: Mary read the resolution in its entirety. It was MOVED (A. Hoffman) seconded (B. Harris) THAT ON THIS 25TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2021, THE MEMBERS OF THE STATE LIBRARY BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY EXTEND THEIR HEARTFELT THANKS AND DEEPEST APPRECIATION TO GORDON REDDICK FOR HIS DEEP COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION IN SUPPORT OF THE MISSION OF THE CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY AND THEIR APPRECIATION FOR HIS EFFORTS TO ENHANCE LIBRARY SERVICES TO THE PEOPLE OF CONNECTICUT. PASSED unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

State Public
Library
Construction
Grants

Motion

Resolution for
Gordon Reddick

Motion

Gordon Reddick thanked the Board and expressed that it has been his honor and privilege to work with the outstanding staff at the State Library. He is very appreciative of the support he has received from management.

Public Library Construction Grant Extension for the Bridgeport Library Lower East Main: Dawn La Valle stated that this project is administered by the State Library but the grant awarded is from the Office of Policy and Management. In a letter from the City Librarian for the Bridgeport Library, Elaine Braithwaite explained that the library encountered issues with the bid process and are now prepared to submit drawings by an architect. They also lost their project manager but now have plans to obtain an independent project manager for the renovation project. It was MOVED (S. Ruoff) seconded (S. Ecker) THAT THE STATE LIBRARY BOARD APPROVES EXTENDING THE DEADLINE TO MAY 31, 2024, FOR INITIATION OF THE BRIDGEPORT LIBRARY LOWER EAST MAIN CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROJECT (#01B-SC-18). PASSED unanimously.

Public Library
Construction Grant
Extension

Motion

Mary Etter stated that at the last Board meeting Sandy Ruoff suggested the possibility of holding monthly meetings. Mary assured Deborah that the Board will be willing to meet more often if that would be helpful. Deborah replied that she will see how things go and will keep the Board informed if anything changes.

Mary again thanked Maureen Sullivan on behalf of the Board. Maureen stated that it's been a privilege to serve as Interim State Librarian and it has been her pleasure. She added that Deborah has already proven to be a good leader.

Motion

At 2:00 pm, it was MOVED (B. Harris), seconded (S. Ruoff) TO ADJOURN. The next meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Monday, March 22, 2021 and will be held via Teams.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Schander, Secretary

Jane Beaudoin, Recorder