

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
STATE LIBRARY BOARD
September 18, 2023

INDEX

Members joining in person:
Mary Etter, Sandy Ruoff, Allen Hoffman

Members joining via Teams:
Melissa Wlodarczyk-Hickey, Judge Henry Cohn, Justice
Steven Ecker, Sheri Szymanski, Jessica de Perio Wittman

Members absent: Alison Clemens, Sally Whipple

Others joining in person:
Deborah Schander, Dawn La Valle, Suzanne Kiss, Jane
Beaudoin (CSL), Ellen Paul (CLC)

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chair Allen Hoffman. Jane Beaudoin took roll call attendance of board members. No attendance of the members of the public attending the meeting was taken.

MINUTES

It was MOVED (M. Etter) seconded (S. Ruoff) THAT THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 24, 2023 STATE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. PASSED unanimously.

MINUTES

Motion

BOARD COMMENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Judge Cohn requested an update on the Charter. Deborah reported that staff continues to coordinate insurance and travel details related to the transportation and transfer of the Charter to NEDCC.

**BOARD
COMMENTS/
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Allen congratulated Mary Etter on her retirement and wished her many happy and healthy years.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Elizabeth Lane, Director of the Prosser Library in Bloomfield, spoke about her construction grant experience.

**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. She highlighted a few things from her report. This Friday, the State Library's new outreach van will be launched. Acquiring this van was a continuation of former State Librarian Kendall Wiggin's project which started with the idea of a History on the Move vehicle. We were pleased to use American Rescue Plan Act funds (ARPA) to purchase this very impressive new van. The van will allow the State Library to "hit the road" and get into the community reaching citizens who aren't able to visit the library and museum for a variety of reasons. Plans are already underway to increase State Library and museum visibility across the state.

**STATE
LIBRARIAN'S
REPORT**

Deborah informed the Board about a few grants the State Library has received. Two of the grants are funded through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and were awarded to the Division of Library Development (DLD). One will create a replicable reachable digital navigation plan which will build on the work to develop digital navigation programs across the state. We also received a grant extension for our Futures Schools program. This will help us to continue training libraries and other organizations to be future minded through activities. The focus of this grant will be organization level training. Lastly, the State Library has received word that it will be receiving a 6th National Endowment for the Humanities Chronicling America grant so we can continue to scan important documents from Connecticut's newspapers. Deborah congratulated Anna Newman and Gail Hurley of the Preservation office for their work on this project.

Deborah complimented the work of Museum Administrator Jennifer Matos who joined the State Library staff almost 9 months ago. Jennifer has done a great deal of work re-envisioning and assessing the library's work and thinking about the future of the Museum. The State Library has been accepted into the Collections Assessment Program fund through the Institute of Museum and Library Services which will focus on collections care and setting priorities. We will also be working with a museum assessment program from the American Alliance of Museums which will focus on long term health and organizational alignment.

We're looking forward to moving the museum inventory to a newer system called Connecticut Collections, offered through the Connecticut League of History Organization.

We have also hired a new Curator which will make the Museum fully staff for the first time in many years. Deborah gave kudos to Jenn Matos and the entire museum staff for taking a close look at the operations of the museum and thinking about how to move forward and present it to the public in a unique way.

OTHER REPORTS

The update that was received from the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board was included in the Board's meeting packets. There were no questions on what was submitted.

OLD BUSINESS

Budget Update: The State Library's financial report was included in the Board's meeting packet. Deborah reported that the State Library is entering preparations for the next legislative session. Because we have a biennial budget this is the adjustment period rather than the full budget process so the legislature will be focusing on the adjustment to the existing budget that we are currently operating under. Agencies were asked to not request any increases to their budget. One proposal the State Library has submitted is an administrative one. In the biennial budget, \$500,000 in pass-through literacy grants and \$225,000 for the restoration of public library grants-in-aid were put directly in our general operating line. We have requested to have them moved into their own lines to make administration of the funds easier. We are waiting for a response from the Office of Policy and Management.

**OTHER
REPORTS**

OLD BUSINESS
Budget Update

Deborah stated that we've completed our biennial audit and the findings were released on September 6. The audit findings focused on the Museum's inventory accession process and updating the fine arts balance which has been carried over for a number of years. Jennifer Matos and Deborah have been in conversation about this to determine how to respond to these findings. The audit also had some comments about oversight of the Historic Documents and public library grants and how they are monitored. She invited questions.

Justice Ecker stated that he found the media headlines about the audit read quite seriously. He requested that the Board be kept informed on the matter and asked that a copy of the audit be sent to the Board members. Deborah stated that they are already working on a proper assessment and finalizing an update on the number that was reported. Jennifer Matos has a number of ideas on how to respond to this audit and getting us back on track.

Legislative Update: There was no Legislative Update at this time.

Legislative Update

Strategic Plan: Deborah reported that the Division of Library Development (DLD) will be leading the State Library in the work to update its Strategic Plan over the next 6-9 months. We hope the plan could go into effect by next July 1, 2024 covering the next 2-3 years and setting some broad goals for the State Library. We would like to involve the Board in this process and anticipate needing about an hour of the Board's time to have a visioning session. In terms of scheduling the easiest thing to do would be to schedule this an hour before or after the already scheduled November Board meeting. There would be some questions that go out to the Board in advance and the Board would submit their responses which would then be analyzed and prepared for the meeting. We would be working with stakeholders across the state, members of the public, staff and others to receive input throughout the process.

Strategic Plan

Review/Discussion of Bylaws: Allen stated that the Board appreciates the work that Sheri Szymanski did as Chair of the Bylaws Committee as well as all the committee members. He stated that rather than get into a lengthy discussion about the revisions, we could discuss the whole of it and get an idea of how everyone feels and then come back to discussion at the next meeting after everyone has had a chance to think about the revisions. Sheri thanked Deborah for her work in making the revisions to the Bylaws for the Board's consideration. Deborah reported that most of the updates were primarily one of two kinds: 1) grammar and procedural revisions to reflect the work of the Board and 2) an enumeration of long standing practice of the division of responsibilities between the Board and the State Librarian and how they work together. Updating the agenda and how some Board proceedings happen were also updated. Deborah went over the revisions to the bylaws and informed the Board that the Attorney General's office has reviewed the bylaws as well and made no substantive changes. Questions were invited and discussion was opened. Discussion followed about reports from outside organizations. Justice Ecker likes Allen's suggestion that we consider the revisions and then discuss them further at the next meeting of the Board. It was agreed that any further suggested revisions to the Bylaws could be emailed to Deborah or Jane to compile the information and then send it to the Board for discussion at the next meeting. Deborah reminded

Review/Discussion of Bylaws

the Board that they could email their suggestions but that no discussion or comments could occur over email. Sheri stated that another Bylaws Committee meeting could be scheduled if it's determined to be necessary. It was agreed that any Bylaws revisions should be submitted to Deborah no later than the end of October so she can work with the Bylaws Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

Justice Ecker requested that an update on the State Library's audit be on the next State Library Board meeting agenda. It was agreed.

At 2:10 p.m. it was MOVED (M. Etter) seconded (S. Ruoff) TO ADJOURN. PASSED unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Monday, November 27.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Schander, Secretary

Jane Beaudoin, Recorder

NEW BUSINESS

None

Motion