

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS  
STATE LIBRARY BOARD  
January 22, 2024

INDEX

Members joining in person:  
Sandy Ruoff, Allen Hoffman

Members joining via Teams:  
Mary Etter, Melissa Wlodarczyk-Hickey, Judge Henry Cohn,  
Jessica de Perio Wittman, Sally Whipple, Alison Clemens,  
Sheri Szymanski, Claudia Jalowka, Scott Matheson

Members absent: none

Others joining in person:  
Deborah Schander, Suzanne Kiss, Jane Beaudoin (CSL)

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

**MINUTES**

It was MOVED (S. Szymanski) seconded (S. Ruoff) THAT THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 27, 2023 STATE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. PASSED unanimously.

**MINUTES**

Motion

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There were no matters requiring Executive Session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**BOARD COMMENTS**

None at this time.

**BOARD COMMENTS/  
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None at this time.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**STATE LIBRARIAN'S REPORT**

Deborah reported that the State Library has signed the final treatment plan for the Connecticut Charter and is continuing to work on details for sending it out to the Northeast Documents Conservation Center (NEDCC) for conservation. She will continue to keep the Board posted as the process moves forward. Deborah thanked Lizette Pelletier and her team for their work on this project. Educational materials about the Charter as well as information about the process to preserve it will be prepared for sharing after the process is completed.

**STATE LIBRARIAN'S REPORT**

Webinar programs have continued over the past few months with the Public Records unit as they continue to educate state agencies and municipalities that interact with the Public Records Administrator's office in many ways. The team will be meeting with new and existing Town Clerks in the coming months to continue training and education. Deborah thanked the Office of the Public Records Administrator for their work.

The third annual launch of the All CT Reads Program happened recently. This is an opportunity to bring together librarians and others across the state who are thinking about how to have book clubs and conversations about the titles that have been selected for All CT Reads. This is intended to be a statewide reading program for libraries, book clubs, and also private groups wanting to have conversations about today’s world. Book selections are available for younger children, teens, and adults. Deborah thanked, Kym Powe, Ashley Sklar, and the Division of Library Development (DLD) team for putting together this program.

Deborah announced that there is a new Project Coordinator for the CT Digital Newspaper Project. This program has operated through National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) funding and grants over the years. We hope to continue receiving these funds and continue to digitize newspapers for many years to come.

Deborah informed the Board about some staff changes that are happening in the next couple of months. One is the addition of a Director of Operations. This position will focus on internal operations for the agency and do very high-level budget work. The role will also include facilities, launching some upcoming capital projects, as well as working on internal policies and procedures for staff and the State Library’s operations.

We are also going to be hiring a new staff member to oversee agency affairs and communications. This person will focus on the external matters, including making partnerships in the legislature and others that we work with and overseeing strategic communications. This person will help give all of our constituents a better understanding of who we are and what we do.

Deborah stated that her full written State Librarian’s Report was included in the Board’s packets and welcomed questions.

Allen commented that the State Librarian’s Report continues to be very informative and shows that Deborah and the staff have been very busy.

**REPORTS OF BOARD COMMITTEES**

No reports at this time.

**OTHER REPORTS**

The updates that were received from the Connecticut Library Consortium, Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board, and the Association of Connecticut Library Boards were included in the Board’s meeting packets. There were no questions on the submissions.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Appointments to the Connecticut Digital Library Advisory Board (CDLAB): It was immediately MOVED (S. Ruoff) seconded (M. Etter) THAT THE STATE LIBRARY BOARD APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED APPOINTMENTS OF JESSICA PANELLA OF UCONN SCHOOL OF LAW LIBRARY IN THE CATEGORY OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN, LISA ROMASANTA OF NORWICH TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL IN THE CATEGORY OF SCHOOL LIBRARIAN, KARI WALL OF RAYMOND LIBRARY IN THE CATEGORY OF LIBRARIAN-

**REPORTS OF  
BOARDS  
COMMITTEES**

**OTHER  
REPORTS**

**CONSENT  
AGENDA**

Appointments to  
the Connecticut  
Digital Library  
Advisory Board  
Motion

OTHER, JULIET GORAIEB OF MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE CATEGORY OF TEACHER-SCHOOL OR COLLEGE, AND JASON ANDERSON, WEB TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONAL FOR ONLINE BUSINESSES AND UCONN, IN THE CATEGORY OF BUSINESS COMMUNITY OR LIBRARY USER, FOR A TERM BEGINNING FEBRUARY 1, 2024 TO JANUARY 31, 2026, AS APPROVED BY THE CDLAB AT ITS DECEMBER 6, 2023 MEETING. PASSED unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Budget Update: The State Library’s financial report was included in the Board’s meeting packet.

Deborah stated that the legislative session starts on February 7, and she anticipates the budget getting released on that date as well. The State Library has very minor requests this session which are to move some appropriations that were put into our general operating funds into their own separate account numbers. This would make things easier to deal with administratively. There were no other requests this session. The State Library continues to be very fiscally conservative with its expenditures.

Legislative Update: Deborah stated that we are waiting for the session to start on February 7. Most of the bills that are introduced should be related to budget adjustments but she will wait to see what is filed. We’re expecting that EBook legislation will be reintroduced. There has also been some interest from the Lt. Governor and the Democratic caucus on matters of Intellectual Freedom, book challenges, and censorship as well as on school librarians. These topics are outside of the purview of the State Library so any involvement will be peripheral or educational.

Strategy Plan: Allen stated that facilitator Jerry Nichols who the Board met with in November to discuss strategy planning will be invited back most likely in March. It was an opportunity to discuss some things that the Library has been involved in and other things that are coming up. It’s time for Board members to begin to think of things that they want to do and what they could do better. Allen asked Deborah to give a summary of the conversation the Board had with Jerry Nichols and then the Board was invited to discuss next steps in moving forward in this process.

In the session, the Board covered their perspective on the State Library’s current mission and vision and also what the role of the Board is as a whole and individually. Deborah summarized the key takeaways, including: clarifying the State Library’s mission; recognizing what we choose or can afford to preserve impacts the history people see; making sure the multiple constituencies we serve get the correct focus; sprucing up the agency; helping others understand the work of the agency, the role of the staff, and the State Librarian; and the State Library Board’s key responsibilities: setting broad policies and goals for the agency and advocating for the State Library.

Deborah will share a more detailed written summary with the State Library Board members.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Budget Update

Legislative Update

Strategy Plan

Next steps will be that Consultant Jerry Nichols will return to meet with the Board and continue its conversations. Deborah, the Leadership Team, and agency staff will also meet for discussions prior to seeking constituent input.

Deborah asked the Board three questions to help her in moving forward: Is there anything that the State Library Board wants Deborah or the staff to know as they start conversations about the Strategy Plan? Is there anything they want her to prepare as they prepare to bring back Consultant Jerry Nichols? Is there anything from the prior conversation they wanted to discuss again today? Some discussion followed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was MOVED (S. Ruoff) THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED. PASSED unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Monday, March 25, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

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Deborah Schander, Secretary

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Jane Beaudoin, Recorder

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT**  
Motion