

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
STATE LIBRARY BOARD
Held via Teams
January 23, 2023

INDEX

Members joining via Teams:

Judge Henry Cohn, Jessica de Perio Wittman, Mary Etter,
Maureen Sullivan, Melissa Wlodarczyk-Hickey, Justice Steven
Ecker, Allen Hoffman, Sandy Ruoff, Sheri Szymanski

Members absent: Alison Clemens, Sally Whipple

Others joining via Teams:

Deborah Schander, Jane Beaudoin

Maureen Sullivan called the meeting to order at 1:01pm and asked Jane to take roll call attendance of the Board. She also asked any others attending the meeting by phone who would like to identify themselves to please do so. Those identified were Jennifer Matos, CSL Museum Administrator, Ellen Paul, CLC, Allen Ramsey, CSL. Maureen welcomed Jennifer Matos to the State Library.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Maureen asked Nominations Committee Chair Allen Hoffman for a report of the committee. Allen replied that he had no new news or nominations to report. Maureen stated that she and Alison are interested in continuing as Chair and Vice Chair for another term. It was MOVED (A. Hoffman) seconded (S. Ecker) TO ELECT MAUREEN SULLIVAN AS CHAIR AND ALISON CLEMENS AS VICE CHAIR. PASSED unanimously.

MINUTES

It was MOVED (S. Szymanski) seconded (A. Hoffman) THAT THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 28, 2022, BOARD MEETING BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. PASSED with two abstentions (J. de Perio Wittman, M. Hickey).

It was MOVED (S. Szymanski) seconded (S. Ruoff) THAT THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 21, 2022 STATE LIBRARY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. PASSED with one abstention (H. Cohn).

BOARD COMMENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board Meeting Venue Discussion: Maureen asked Deborah to start the conversation on the topic of future Board meeting formats. Deborah stated that the Board shifted its meeting format due to the pandemic and many similar organizations have used this as an opportunity to consider meeting formats moving forward. This conversation is to discuss possible options for a meeting format plan that best suits the Board. There was discussion on resuming in-person meetings, continuing with Teams, or trying a hybrid style meeting. Some Board members felt they would like in-person meetings to resume and others appreciated the convenience and safety of remote meetings. The State Library building at 231 Capitol Avenue does not have the technology necessary to host hybrid meetings but the Van Block Avenue facility and Middletown Library

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MINUTES
Motion

BOARD COMMENTS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Service Center do. It was decided that Deborah will look into the March State Library Board meeting being held at one of the State Library's outlying facilities with a hybrid format.

Maureen stated that she will be putting together a small committee to identify the roles and responsibilities of the State Library Board and State Librarian. She is considering Sally, Jessica, and Sheri as members and the subcommittee may come back to the March meeting with a document that will need the Board's approval.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

STATE LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Deborah stated that she is very happy to formally welcome Jennifer Matos to the State Library. Jennifer already has good ideas on how to refresh the Museum, look at alternate funding sources, and also what can be done to have more of a presence in Hartford and in the museum community.

Deborah referred to her written report which was included in the Board's meeting packets and also highlighted a few items. The Division of Library Development had the All CT Reads Reading program virtual authors' launch for the 2nd year in a row.

The Digitization of Building Codes Working Group, which was formed by the legislature in a Special Act at the end of the last legislative session, has completed its work and submitted its report to the legislature. In particular Deborah highlighted the work of the Public Records and Archives staff who were key participants throughout this process. They are continuing to monitor any related activity in the current legislative session.

Deborah also shared the four Digital Navigator Pilot Projects which were funded through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from last year have concluded and each of the four towns that were involved are moving forward in some way. The pandemic has shown us that the digital divide and digital equity are very much an issue in Connecticut. Deborah anticipates that Connecticut will be receiving federal money to continue this type of work, and the State Library is in communications with the Commission for Educational Technology and others on how the State Library will be part of that moving forward.

Allen Hoffman complimented the amount of outreach that is happening at the State Library and publicly thanked Deborah and her staff for their very impressive hard work. Deborah agreed that the staff is doing great work and she consciously showcases these efforts to the Board.

OTHER REPORTS

Maureen stated that one report was submitted by the Connecticut Library Consortium and was included in the Board's meeting packets. Maureen invited any questions. There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

STATE LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

OTHER REPORTS

OLD BUSINESS

Budget Update: Deborah stated that the State Library continues to be careful with its spending and is anticipating meeting the budget for the end of this year. Deborah explained that meeting the budget is a difficult task for various reasons, such as the cost of library materials increases every year due to built-in inflation costs and other increases. This means when we receive the same flat budget then it's actually a cut for us because we still need to cover the increase in costs. We do this by making adaptations and unfortunately by making cuts. Deborah continues her efforts to educate the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the Appropriations Committee, and others on this matter and raise awareness on how this is impacting the work that we do.

We anticipate the Governor's proposed budget will be released on February 8. Deborah will send the Board a notice of that with her intentions on how to respond once the budget is released.

Deborah reminded the Board that OPM asked agencies to not request any expansions or increases to their budgets for the next biennial budget. There was a very narrow window in which requests were allowed only for inflation increases. The inflation increase in library materials is the one request Deborah made for the Connecticut Digital Library appropriation. We are hopeful to see that increase so we can continue to provide the state services that we've been providing to date. We also put in some options for better ways to capture fees that go to support the Historic Documents Preservation Fund. The State Library will be monitoring these two formal requests.

Legislative Update: Deborah reported that in addition to monitoring the budget the State Library is also monitoring bills that either directly or indirectly impact the State Library. They have to do with remote notarization, requiring public higher education libraries to lend materials to public libraries, the creation of a Dolly Parton Imagination Library program, ebooks, land recording format, and more.

Mary Etter requested that the Board be sent the bill numbers so that they can track them as well. Deborah stated that her office will send those as requested.

NEW BUSINESS

Grant Contract Extension, Bridgeport Public Library, Lower East Side Branch Library: Maureen Sullivan referred the Board to the fact sheet in their meeting packets. It was MOVED (A. Hoffman) seconded (M. Etter) THAT THE STATE LIBRARY BOARD APPROVES EXTENDING THE GRANT CONTRACT DEADLINE TO MAY 31, 2024, FOR THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY, LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROJECT. PASSED unanimously.

With no other matters to come before the Board, at 1:28 p.m. it was MOVED (S. Szymanski) seconded (S. Ecker) TO ADJOURN. PASSED unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 27, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Budget Update

Legislative Update

NEW BUSINESS

Grant Contract
Extension

Motion

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Schander, Secretary

Jane Beaudoin, Recorder

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