

# NEW HAMPSHIRE LIBRARY TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION

2024 Spring Conference & Annual Meeting  
Wednesday, June 5, 2024

## Trustee Essentials: Today's Issues, Tomorrow's Challenges

A board of Library Trustees is defined in RSA 202-A:2 as “the governing body of the library.” Trustees are vested with the entire custody and management of the library. They hire the library director, adopt policies to govern the library’s operation and advocate for adequate financial support of the library. Trustees have the power to expend all funds provided to the library, and to determine how they will be spent.

Yes, library trustees are in charge of New Hampshire’s libraries, but how many of us actually know what that means or what it entails? Especially in smaller libraries, trustees take care of everything from human resources issues to library finances and, more recently, must defend the library’s mission to serve its entire community and be a welcoming place for all. Being a library trustee can be a rewarding experience, but it can also be overwhelming. Aside from a shared lifelong love of books and reading, none of us were trained to be a library trustee – it’s all been on-the-job training!

This year’s Annual Conference brings us back to the basics. All trustees – whether seasoned veterans or new electees will find information to help them become part of an effective governing board – from human resource and legal issues to fund-raising, intellectual freedom and everyone’s favorite: the NH Library RSAs.

**REGISTER ONLINE at [www.nhlta.org](http://www.nhlta.org)**

Registration deadline: Friday, **May 17, 2024**

\$50 NHLTA members; \$75 non-members.

One submission per person

If you have questions, please contact Ashley Methot at:

[nhlibrarytrustees@nhmunicipal.org](mailto:nhlibrarytrustees@nhmunicipal.org)

**Scholarships** to attend the Conference are available.

See NHLTA website: [www.nhlta.org](http://www.nhlta.org).

### NHLTA 2024 Spring Conference & Annual Meeting

Wednesday, June 5, 2024  
Grappone Conference Center  
70 Constitution Ave  
Concord, NH

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

#### CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

**8:00–8:45 am**

Registration & Breakfast

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**8:45–9:00 am**

Welcome & NHLTA Business Meeting

**9:00–10 am**

Keynote: New Landscapes:  
How Libraries Will Find Their  
Way in The Age of AI  
(Artificial Intelligence)

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**10:00–10:15 am**

Exhibitor Visits

**10:15–11:30 am**

Workshops 1–5

**11:45–12:30 pm**

Plated Lunch

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**12:30–1:45 pm**

Workshops 6–10

**1:45–2:00 pm**

Exhibitor Visits

**2:00–3:15 pm**

Workshops 11–15

Wednesday, June 5, 9:15–10:00 am

## Keynote: New Landscapes: How Libraries Will Find Their Way in The Age of AI (Artificial Intelligence)

The rapid rise of artificial intelligence has resulted in a range of emotions, including fear, excitement and confusion. It has also brought out some voices questioning the relevance of libraries. Our speaker will discuss how artificial intelligence is reshaping our information landscape, and make clear that while the future may seem uncertain, there is no doubt that libraries are essential in the age of AI.

**Nick Tanzi** is the Assistant Director of the South Huntington Public Library. He is an internationally recognized library technology consultant and the author of the books *Making the Most of Digital Collections Through Training and Outreach* (2015) and the coauthor of the *Best Technologies for Public Libraries: Policies, Programs, and Services* (2020). Nick is a past column editor for *Public Library Magazine's* "The Wired Library," and his work on the intersection of libraries and technology has been featured in publications including *Computers in Libraries*, *Library Journal*, and *Marketing Library Services*. Tanzi publishes at [the-digital-librarian.com](http://the-digital-librarian.com).



10:15–11:30 am

### 1 RSAs & Hot Legal Topics ♦

This presentation will focus on the fundamentals of RSA Chapter 202-A, pertaining to municipal libraries, and incorporate discussion of related statutes, such as RSA chapter 91-A, the Right-to-Know Law. A special emphasis will be placed on hot legal topics that arise with libraries and library trustees.

**Natch Greyes** advocates for municipalities before the New Hampshire legislature and state agencies. Before joining NHMA, Natch was a prosecutor in northern Grafton County. Natch received his B.A from Clark University and his J.D. from William & Mary.

♦ Workshops recommended for new trustees.

### 2 Trustee Basics ♦

Using the Trustee 101 packet of materials recently provided by NHLTA, this session will be a discussion of questions and answers after a brief introduction of the information the packet contains. This is not intended to replace the more extensive trustee orientations which are scheduled for May 7, 2024 and a fall date to be determined.

**Marcia McLaughlin** has been a trustee at the Weeks Public Library in Greenland, NH, for ten years; she served as the chair for five. Marcia is currently the President of the NHLTA Board of Directors and was a member of the committee which revised the Trustee Manual in 2021.

**Michelle Elbert** served as a trustee at the Goodwin Library in Farmington for 11 years and as its chair for seven years. She is currently a member of the NHLTA Education Committee.

### 3 Communicating Library Value in a Digital Era

Our libraries remain an incredible investment in the year 2024, but are we sure our communities know this? In our digital era, we tend to equate high-tech with high-cost, but this needn't be the case! We'll explore budget-sensitive techniques you can use to adapt to technological change, communicate value to library stakeholders, and wow your users.

**Nick Tanzi** See Keynote Address above.

### 4 Requests for Reconsideration Basics ♦

This presentation will cover the basics of a request for reconsideration of library materials or library programs. There will be a review of key concepts that should be included in a request for reconsideration policy and some tips for conduct during the public meeting portion of the reconsideration process.

**Mindy Atwood** is the Assistant State Librarian for the New Hampshire State Library. Prior to the State Library, Mindy worked as a New Hampshire public library director for more than 12 years at the Abbott Library in Sunapee and the Salisbury Free Library. She was the 2023 NH Library Association President and holds a MLS from Clarion University.

**Jen McCormack** has served as the Director of the Nashua Public Library since 2010, and was previously the director at the Tewksbury Public Library.

**Lea McBain** is the Director of the Newbury Public Library. She has an MLIS from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She has worked in at the Newbury Public Library for 10 years, and before that worked at the Albany Public Library in Albany, NY.



## 5 Managing Your Library Trust Funds in Today's Economic Market

This session will provide insights on today's market conditions and how they are impacting library trust funds in New Hampshire. Topics include: creating and updating investment policy statements, review strategies and approaches for getting the most out of your funds and how to simplify the way you manage your investments.

**Bryan Sanford**, CSRIC™ is a Senior Portfolio Manager – Investment Administration Coordinator at Bar Harbor Wealth Management. Bryan joined the organization in 2009 and is one of a few individuals in Northern New England to have completed coursework through the College of Financial Planning on sustainable investing. Bryan specializes in sustainable investing, municipal account management, and family office practices.

**Jason Edgar** holds the position of EVP President of Bar Harbor Wealth Management and Bar Harbor Financial Services. Jason joined the organization in 2019 and works in the Concord, NH office. With over 20 years' of industry experience, Jason leads the wealth management and financial services teams in setting and achieving their long-term goals.

12:30–1:45 pm

## 6 Intellectual Freedom 101

This session will provide a general overview of Intellectual Freedom for public libraries with a slight emphasis on library's collections and book challenges.

**Mary Danko** is the Library Director at the Fletcher Free Library in Burlington, Vermont. She received her MLIS from Syracuse University. She has worked at libraries of varying sizes in Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, and Vermont. She has been President of the New England Library Association (NELA) and Chair of the Vermont Library Association's (VLA) Intellectual Freedom Committee. She is currently Vice President of VLA. She is passionate about all things having to do with public libraries.

## 7 Trustee Basics ♦

See description and bios, morning session.

## 8 Fundraising for Library Expansion/Construction

This presentation will describe the process the Newbury Public Library used to raise money for the expansion of their small building.

**Jeanne Palleiko** served as Trustee and Treasurer of the Newbury Public Library from 2020–2023 and has served as Chair

of the Newbury Public Library Foundation since 2020. During that time, the Foundation raised nearly \$700,000 to offset the cost of expanding and renovating the library. In 2022, the Warrant Article asking the Town of Newbury to approve the funds for the town's share of the cost of the library expansion lost by two votes. In 2023, the Warrant Article supporting the Library Expansion passed with 73% YES votes. Jeanne received the 2023 Special Library Service Contribution Award from the NHLTA for her fundraising and promotion of the library's expansion.

## 9 Getting Your Legal Ducks in a Row: Best Practices for Management of Your Library Director

The Library Director is charged with administrating the library and the elected or appointed Trustees are responsible for, among other things, supervising the director. This supervisory responsibility is, in some ways, the most difficult task assigned to the trustees. Effective management of the library director starts at the beginning of the relationship when the trustees set the terms of the relationship – either by contract or policy and then must continue during the term of the Director's employment. This program will discuss best practices for initiating and maintaining an effective supervisory relationship with the Library Director, a framework for analyzing when supervisory follow-up either through discipline or performance management is "fair" and necessary, best practices for documenting discipline and performance counseling, and the employee protections related to removal and discharge imposed by the NH Public Library Law (RSA 202-A:17). Key takeaways from the program will include: (1) best practices in establishing terms of employment for the director; (2) the framework for assessing and documenting "just cause"; and, (3) an understanding of the requirements of RSA Chapter 202-A:17.

**Anna Cole** and **Hannah Devoe** are Labor and Employment Attorneys with the firm Drummond Woodsum in Manchester. They provide counseling services in all aspects of employment law to public and private employers. They advise and train clients on all areas of workplace issues, including just cause and supervision, wage/hour law, employee handbooks, policies, and procedures, and more.

♦ Workshops recommended for new trustees.

## 10 Preparing for Challenging Conversations

Effective communication is essential to a productive environment for library boards, particularly when board members have strongly held opinions and beliefs that differ. The way trustees share and receive information can mean the difference between divisive conversations and reaching agreement. This workshop will focus on strategies trustees can use to deepen their ability to communicate effectively. Participants will work with several specific tools that provide step-by-step frameworks for trustees looking to prepare for difficult conversations, providing opportunities for the participants to work in small groups with the tools discussed.

**Melinda Gehris** and **Greg Eaton** are conflict resilience consultants and mediators with PRISM Conflict Solutions which provides coaching, training, consulting and facilitated conversations for individuals, teams and organizations dealing with conflict. They design and lead trainings for boards and organizations including non-profits, manufacturers healthcare practices, and government agencies. They both have also served as library trustees.

2:00–3:15 pm

## 11 Legislative Tracking and Policy Advocacy

This workshop will describe how to track state legislation in NH and how to appropriately advocate for or against policies as an entire board or individuals. Participants will learn how to educate and engage stakeholders on these issues.

**Brodie Deshaies** is a former NH State Legislator, NH School Board Member, NH Library Trustee, registered lobbyist, Communications & Policy Manager for NH Hunger Solutions.

## 12 Technology for Today's Libraries: What Trustees Need to Know

Explore the quickly evolving role of technology in public libraries, from digital content rights to advanced tools that are rapidly changing how libraries are able to serve their communities. Participants are encouraged to bring their technology questions to the session.

**Bobbi Slossar** has served as the Technology Librarian at the New Hampshire State Library for 18 years. Throughout that time, she has worked to bring emerging technologies – from digitization to MakerPlay to 3D printing – to all NH public libraries, regardless of their size, staffing, or budget. Her current projects include robotics and AI instruction.

◆ Workshops recommended for new trustees.

## 13 THE RIGHT STUFF: Defining the Role of Your Library Director and Ensuring a Successful Search

This session will walk trustees through the steps of hiring a new library director. The speakers will discuss how the process might work in a large city library or a very small town library with just one or two staff members.

**Debra Caplan** is a NHLTA Director and Co-Chair of the 2024 Annual Conference. She was an Alternate Trustee of the Peterborough Town Library for 10 years and served on the town campaign committee to raise fund for the new library building. She holds an MLS from Simmons College.

**Rosemary D'Arcy** is a former trustee and chair of the Minot-Sleeper Library board of trustees, serving from 2013 until 2022. She is a member of the NHLTA Board and serves as Chair of the Education Committee.

**Brittany Durgin** is the library director at Moultonborough Library. She earned her MLIS from Simmons University and has more than 10 years of experience in the library field, most recently serving as the adult services librarian at the Hooksett Library and before that, as the library director at Minot-Sleeper Library in Bristol. Brittany helped launch and served as chair of New Hampshire Library Association's Sustainability Committee; she also serves on NHLA's Advocacy Committee.

## 14 The 22nd Century Library: Embracing Heritage While Planning for the Next Hundred Years

New England community libraries have a rich history as gathering places and visible symbols of civic life. With regional population forecasted to grow, existing library facilities must adapt to changing demographics, community interests, and technology. This workshop will review planning considerations in adapting current (often historic) libraries for the next 80-100 years, and examine successful examples of recent projects in the region.

**Josh Lacasse** is an architect at Placework with a passion for adaptive reuse of existing buildings to confront new requirements regarding technology, climate, and social issues. Josh's experience in library design and planning includes public, K-12, independent school, higher education, and special collections libraries, including celebrated modernist buildings at Phillips Exeter Academy and Somersworth, NH.

**Liz Nguyen** came to architecture inspired by the intersection of culture and construction. Her background in urban design and systems-thinking perspective informs her daily work as project manager at Placework. Liz has recently worked on two library planning studies: the Wiggin Library in Stratham and the Somersworth Library, projects which rebalance space use within existing buildings to accommodate a re-thinking of programming needs.

**15 Meeting Minutes Madness, Non-Public Sessions, and Other Thorny Right-to-Know Issues** ♦

This presentation will go into detail on specific issues under the Right-to-Know Law that are often misunderstood. It is relevant because libraries and library trustees must deal with the RTK Law all the time.

**Cordell Johnston** is an attorney in Henniker, whose practice is limited to representing municipalities. He was Government Affairs Counsel at the New Hampshire Municipal Association from 2004 to 2022. He previously served as a selectman and planning board member in Henniker and is now the town moderator.

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