

**NH ALA Councilor Report from ALA 2021 Midwinter – Virtual  
1/29/2021  
Submitted by Lori Fisher, NHLA Chapter Councilor**

This is the third and final ALA Midwinter conference I have attended as your first-term ALA Councilor. ALA Council is the membership governing body for the American Library Association, consisting of 184 councilors. Representation comes from state chapters, ALA divisions, and ALA Roundtables. NH Library Association is a chapter of ALA.

My report below continues a list of the major agenda items for each Council meeting, with links to reports and resolutions. Unless noted otherwise, I voted yes when the vote occurred. I was there for all discussions, but what is clear to me (having been present) may not be clear to the reader of this report. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about anything related to this report. ALA Council, or ALA in general: 603-271-2393 or [lori.a.fisher@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:lori.a.fisher@dncr.nh.gov).

**Council I – Sunday 1/24/2021**

The chairs of the Forward Together Working Group (FTWG) presented their final report, and the names of the next group (the Forward Together Resolutions Working Group) were released. This new group is going to distill down the possible courses of action and present resolutions at ALA Annual to move this governance change forward. In addition, per the resolution passed at ALA Annual 2020, there will be a Constitutional Convention that starts this spring and goes through ALA Annual 2021 Virtual.

I am still very concerned that under the proposed new governance structure, there will not be a direct, viable way for chapters to communicate their concerns to the executive board. Amy Lappin, chair of the Chapter Relations Committee, sent a letter to the FWTG in November expressing the need for an executive board position from the chapters. I'm happy to say that I worked on a letter from Committee on Library Advocacy and Committee on Legislation that reiterated Amy's request, and that letter was sent by the chairs of those committees to ALA President Jefferson in January.

[CD #35 - Forward Together Working Group Final Report](#)

[CD #36 – Forward Together Resolutions Working Group Roster](#)

**Council II – Monday 1/25/2021**

[CD #27 from the Committee on Committess \(motions 1-5\):](#)

1. Establish a Council Committee on Sustainability
2. Discontinue the Library Education Assembly
3. Discontinue the Exhibits Round Table
4. Endorse the creation of the Exhibits Advisory Group
5. Change the charge of the ALA Election Committee

[CD#20-20.2 from the Committee on Legislation \(COL\):](#)

(Note I am a member of this committee). This link includes a summary of current committee actions, a list of our FY21 federal legislative priorities, and a **resolution in support of broadband as a human right**. I am happy to report that the resolution was approved unanimously with no dissent or abstentions. A historic moment for Council, and a testament to the thoroughness of COL in preparation of the resolution.

#### [CD#43 – Resolution to Condemn White Supremacy and Fascism as Antithetical to Library Work](#)

This resolution was hotly debated in two areas: the definition of fascism (some insisting the word has been weaponized), and the inclusion of “neutrality” in the resolution. Ultimately the resolution passed with an overwhelming majority. One of the main goals of this resolution is to provide a framework for chapter to use to create their own statements about condemning White Supremacy and Fascism.

#### **ALA Financial Management and Positioning:**

Compared to last year, ALA is making strides with greater financial transparency and stabilizing funding streams. The linked documents below provide an overview of both the current situation and the strategy to build a stronger financial foundation for the organization. While ALA is not out of the woods yet, signs are there that stability is achievable.

#### [CD #36 – ALA’s 5-Year Pivot Strategy](#)

#### [ALA Treasurer Maggie Farrell \(Report to Council Membership Information Session\)](#)

#### [CD#13.1 – ALA Treasurer’s report to Council](#)

### **Council III – Tuesday 1/26/2021**

#### [CD#19.2 – Resolution in Opposition to Facial Recognition Software in Libraries](#)

Amended to remove resolve clause #5 and approved. This was amended because it is not protocol to dictate who (i.e. Congress) is to receive resolve clauses; this is left to the ALA lobbyists and DC office staff to determine the best persons to receive this resolution. I spoke in support of this amendment on behalf of Committee on Legislation. Amended motion approved by majority of Council.

#### [CD#19.3 – Resolution on the Misuse of Behavioral Data Surveillance in Libraries](#)

Amendment proposed to add “by routinely performing privacy audits, and to ensure that...” Comments from those who crafted the resolution stated that they feel this is out of scope for this resolution because it pulls focus in on particular direction, narrowing the impact. I voted no on this amendment because I agree with the idea that we don’t want to narrow the focus or confuse the scope of the resolution. Amendment was defeated. Original motion approved by majority.

#### [CD #13.1 - Concur with the ALA Executive Board and approve the FY2022 Budget Objectives](#)

The FY22 Budget Objectives were approved by majority vote.

[CD #45 – Resolution to Classify Library Workers as 1b Workers to be Listed as a Priority Workforce in Receiving the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

This resolution was fraught with issues related to advocacy and legislative impacts at the state and local level, and basically the resolved clauses in the linked version above were removed and replaced with the following:

Resolved...

- 1) encourages libraries to continue to share resources, strategies, and success stories in locally reclassifying library workers' priority level;
- 2) supports the right of library workers to receive vaccination treatment as soon as possible in order to provide safer services for the public and for library workers; and
- 3) refers this resolution jointly to the Committee on Legislation, the Committee on Library Advocacy, and the Chapter Relations Committee for analysis of impact on state and local contexts and provide a report to Council no later than March 31, 2021; and
- 4) Affirms that library workers have a fundamental right to a safe work environment. Includes, but is not limited to, a library or other work setting that minimizes an employee's environmental risk of exposure to COVID019.

FYI that I was heavily involved in the creation of the first amendment (which introduced the first 3 new resolved clauses). I have offered to be part of the working group for the three committees listed in clause 2, which will meet soon to research and create a response. In the end, the document was amended twice, and the final vote was 149 yes, 4 no, 2 abstain. Carried.

Bottom lines regarding library workers and vaccines: The CDC guidelines are just that – guidelines for states. States can change eligibility levels to what they want. For example, the CDC guidelines recommend that educators are in level 1, but in NH K-12 school and childcare staff are in level 2b. Some state ALA chapters are issuing statements on this issue, and others are not. Vaccine levels are a state and local issue that has to be handled carefully in each local/state instance so that influence and relationships we count on for other important areas is not diluted or damaged.