

NH ALA Councilor Report from ALA Midwinter in Seattle 2019

This marked my first ALA meeting as New Hampshire's ALA Councilor! This was a huge learning opportunity for me, in order to help serve our NH libraries better at the national level. There is little down time for a Councilor during the midwinter and annual meetings, and I have to give a shout of thanks to former NH ALA Councilor Amy Lappin, who guided me with great wisdom before, during, and after this conference.

My report includes major agenda items below, with links to reports and resolutions. I was there for all discussions, but what is clear to me may not appear as clear to the reader of this report. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about anything related to this report, Council, or ALA in general.

ALA Council 1 – Sunday 1/27/19

Below are the three main actions taken by Council I. In particular, please read through ALA CD #37, the last one, where Council adopted sustainability as a Core Value of Librarianship. This is important, as all ALA actions as an organization are rooted in their stated Core Values of Librarianship. I voted yes on all of these, as amended.

[ALA CD#10.1 – ALA Resolutions Committee](#)

Motion to have ALA President appoint a task force to explore options and develop procedures to facilitate online deliberation and voting for Council outside of ALA Annual & MW, review ALA Constitution & By-Laws to determine if current guidelines meet the complexities of online deliberation and voting, and report findings and recommendations to Council at 2019 Annual meeting. Amended motion presented and seconded to include reference to Constitution and By-laws Committee in first sentence. Motion passed. Resolution CD#10.1 passed as amended.

[ALA CD#14 – ALA Committee on Diversity](#)

Revise ALA policy B.8.10 and old Policy 61, “Library services to the poor” to use more inclusive language (mainly removing “poor people” and replace with “people experiencing poverty”. Amended to change #16 “ensuring” to “encouraging”; amended to change #13 remove “basic”; motion as amended passed.

[ALA CD#37 – Adoption of Sustainability as a Core Value of Librarianship](#)

First time Council has added to list of core values. Motion is adopted.

ALA Council II – Monday 1/28/19

The most important item from Council II was the discussion and vote for **ALA CD#38 on the Elimination of Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequity**. As you can see from my notes below, ultimately I voted against this, but the majority of Councilors voted for it. Please read through that document and share with me any feedback - I can put in a motion to amend or rescind at ALA Annual in June 2019, if many of our NH librarians want to see that happen. Please also look at **ALA CD#31, which is a new Award for Innovation Through Adversity from ALA and Penguin Random House**. It would be great to see some NH libraries apply for this award when it is available, hopefully later this year.

[ALA CD#17 – Policy Monitoring Committee](#)

No discussion allowed about the content of the insertions; only action is to approve where the info would be inserted in a particular ALA policy. M Fiske (VT Chapter Councilor) tried to ask a question about the content and it would not be heard. I abstained from the vote on these three insertions because I had no context for the previous vote and could not get my questions about the content for insertion answered.

[ALA CD#36 - Committee on Accreditation](#)

Voted yes; motion passes

[ALA CD#31 - ALA Awards Committee](#)

This award, in collaboration of Penguin Random House, seeks to honor Innovation through Adversity. One cash award \$10,000 given annually to a library in the US. In addition, four runner-up awards of \$1,000 in Penguin Random House books/materials. Approved unanimously.

[ALA CD#38 – Eliminating Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequity](#)

Amended to add #4 (create Workgroup); Huge discussion about impact at local level. Motion passed 103-59, I voted against it because it does not define fees and fines, and ALA already has this aspiration in two other ALA policy documents (cited in the Resolution),

[ALA Council III Tuesday 1/29/19](#)

Discussion about a verbal/racial abuse exchange at informal Council Forum on Monday afternoon involving two Councilors (see the [ALA Executive Board statement](#) about the incident). One councilor resigned from Council at 6 pm Monday night via a one-line email to the Council listserv. I did not attend that informal Council Forum, so I have no direct knowledge of what actually happened. However, I was present for what happened at Council III. There was a high level of emotion and anxiety in the room, and when the floor opened a number of councilors spoke to the need to have discussions about what happened. One councilor even went so far as to say that anyone who votes against having small group discussions is promoting white privilege and supporting racism. Frankly, I did not feel that small group discussions would be productive: there were only 30-40 councilors present for the incident, out of 180 councilors. All that would

happen in a small group discussion, even if those small groups were directed to focus on how to better uphold the ALA Code of Conduct, is a rehash of the rumors and innuendo that I first heard when entering the Council room that morning. I voted no to the motion to have small group discussion (motion defeated by majority) and voted yes to return to agenda (motion passed by majority). In my opinion, we needed to accomplish the business before Council III at that time and allow the process for the violation of ALA's Code of Conduct to be completed. Some Councilors arranged a half hour informal discussion, to take place immediately after the Council meeting, for anyone who wanted to attend. I did not attend that informal meeting. *If anyone has further questions about this issue, please contact me directly and I will discuss what I know, and what is being planned by ALA to address racism, inclusion, diversity, and Council Code of Conduct for ALA Annual 2019.*

There were a series resolutions passed unanimously that honored a number of librarians. One in particular I would like to point out: a memorial resolution for Amber Clark, the librarian who was murdered at a Sacramento Public Library branch in December 2018. This hit close to home for me, since one of my former employees (whose parents still live in Bow, NH) was a close colleague of Amber and is still employed at SPL. Unfortunately ALA has not posted the actual memorial resolution on their web site at this time since it was submitted just before Council III.

Last, I encourage you to look closely at the resolutions/policy revisions passed under the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee below, and the report of the ALA Committee on Legislation (which did HUGE work to make sure IMLS and LSTA funding remained in the federal budget for 2018 and 2019). All of these documents/resolutions/policies have applications to our library work in NH. If any library has copies of the previous version of the Library Bill of Rights available to the public, you will want to download the revised version from the ALA website when it is available. I will make a point to share that when the time comes.

[ALA CD#41](#) – Civil Rights Protections for People of Diverse Gender Identities

Passed with minor word adjustments

[ALA CD#24.1](#) – Copyright: An Interpretation of the Code of Ethics

Passed without any amendments/changes

[ALA CD#19](#) – Intellectual Freedom Committee Report

[CD#19.1](#) – Library Bill of Rights revision passed no amendments

[CD#19.2](#) – Meeting rooms: revision passes. One person did not like word “disrupts” in second paragraph and ASCLA board did not support this for that reason.

[CD#19.3](#) – Prisoners’ Right to Read: “what may be considered” in second paragraph added; passed

[CD#19.4](#) – Challenged Resources Library Bill of Rights; passed.

ALA CD #20 – Committee on Legislation

CD#20.1 – Observing Public Domain Day on 1/1/19; passed

CD#20.2 – Public Access to Congressional Services Reports; passed

CD#20.3 – Commending Reauth of MLSSA LSTA; passed

CD#20.4 – Celebrating US Ratification & Passage of Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act; passed

ALA CD#13.1 – Programmatic Priorities

One of two items Council votes on for budget each year (statement of projected revenue in Summer; programmatic priorities for budget next FY at MW). This is the statement for programmatic priorities for the next fiscal year.

Again, please reach out to me with any questions/concerns/comments about this report, ALA Council, or ALA in general.

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