

# NHLTA Library Trustee

The Newsletter of the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association

www.NHLTA.org

## Embrace Change! The 2021 NHLTA Annual Conference: A Two-Day Virtual Event

In 2020 as a result of the ongoing global pandemic, New Hampshire public libraries closed their doors for weeks or even months and frantically learned safety precautions and technological adaptations for every service or task, eventually reopening to function in ways entirely different and more complex than ever before. In addition, we confronted difficult questions about what George Floyd's death, police brutality and Black Lives Matter protests mean for the predominantly white field of librarianship in the overwhelmingly white state of New Hampshire. NHLTA was forced to cancel its annual conference last year and as it's still unsafe to gather in large groups, this year we decided to create our first-ever virtual conference.

Our annual conferences usually take place all on one day, but this year we have spread our usual number of workshops over two days in order to limit screen fatigue. We will offer one keynote presentation, 11 workshops and two "roundtable" discussions on Wednesday, May 12 and Thursday, May 13 from 9:30 am to 2:45 pm, with fifteen-minute breaks between sessions to visit our virtual exhibitors. Due to decreased hosting costs as a result of holding the event online, we have reduced our registration fee to \$25. This includes access to all sessions, both days. Holding the event virtually also allows attendees access to sessions for



Keynote speaker  
Deo Mwano

six months after the conference, including concurrent programs that in person you would normally have to choose between, and the opportunity to watch especially useful programs again.

We will begin the conference on May 12 with Deo Mwano's Keynote Address, **How to Be an Inclusive Individual or Organization**. Mr. Mwano is a social-impact innovator whose work is focused on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in organizational culture, education, business, community and individual development. He has a BA in International Relations and History and an MBA in Strategic Leadership. He has worked for the Federal Govern-

ment/State Department, non-profits, educational institutions and tech startups on DEI manifestation and implementation. In 2016 he was named as one of *40 Under 40 in New Hampshire* and he is a 2017 Leadership New Hampshire graduate. This hour-long presentation will provide tools to create DEI-friendly policies in the areas of work culture, services and resources, and in building diverse boards, employees and partnerships, evaluating your current organizational culture, and cultivating a learning mindset on a personal level.

Following the keynote address, Lori Fisher, NH State Library, will present **Post-Pandemic Libraries: What Has Changed, What Hasn't**,

By Lara Berry, NHLTA Board of Directors and Education Committee Chair

After the past year of uncomfortable conversations and transformations, 2021's NHLTA conference theme is "Embrace Change!"

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Katrinka Pellecchia  
NHLTA President

## *Happy Spring!*

In addition to warmer temperatures and longer daylight hours, we're excited about the Spring Conference coming up in May. While we will miss meeting in person, we're hoping that hosting a virtual conference will make it more accessible to those who found the drive to Concord or Manchester made for too long and tiring a day. Since meeting virtually is less expensive than meeting in a hotel, we were able to lower the price – \$25 for two full days!

It's also time to start thinking about NHLTA's annual awards! (Actually, according to recent emails we've gotten, some of you have already started thinking about them.) The awards program is an opportunity for YOU to say thank you: to a trustee who has shown exceptional leadership; to a stellar library director who has helped transform your library; to a Friends group that has been working for years to support your library through volunteer efforts; or to some other individual or group that has provided outstanding service to your town's library or to New Hampshire's entire public library community. It's also a chance for your entire community to stick out its chest and say "our combined efforts have resulted in the best library in the state!" Don't be modest! Submit a nomination for one of our annual awards by July 31. See the details on criteria and how to apply on page 4.

Spring also means newly-elected trustees. Former NHLTA board members Liz Tentarelli and Susan Gaudiello will once again present two Orientation sessions via Zoom. These are a must for new trustees and can also serve as a refresher for veteran trustees.

The NHLTA Trustee Manual gets revised every five years and this is the year. We're currently making the final edits – we'll be sending a copy to every NH library and, of course, be putting it on our website.

There's a lot going on – and none of it happens without a lot of hard work. If you think I'm going to ask for help – you're right! NHLTA needs your help to maintain its services! One of the great strengths of our library community is the wealth of knowledge and experience of our trustees. Because NHLTA tries to accomplish a lot on a tight budget, we are especially reliant on our members to pitch in on committees and on the board itself. We are looking for individuals with experience and perspective on library services or governance. Volunteers can help as board members, serve on educational, advocacy and communication committees, or help organize regional meetings when we're able to meet in person once again. Whether you have a lot or a limited amount of time to contribute, there are interesting volunteer opportunities. Be assured that volunteering with NHLTA is not boring! We use contract support for the routine administrative tasks, so that board and committee members can focus on programs and services. Meeting via Zoom has proved to be a time-saver and we are discussing continuing to use Zoom even when meeting restrictions cease. Please consider volunteering with NHLTA – together we can continue the high-quality and timely educational programs, regional events and informational offerings you have come to enjoy. We can also respond to the many requests for advice, information and assistance we receive from individual members, requests that have been increasing every year. Feel free to email me or any NHLTA board member for more information. I hope to hear from you in the coming months!

*Katrinka*

## **New Trustee Orientation Workshops**

*Presented by Susan Gaudiello and Liz Tentarelli via Zoom*

**Saturday, April 24, 2021 11 am – Noon (register by April 17)**

**Monday, June 7, 2021 3-4 pm (register by June 1)**

This virtual workshop will cover questions relating to the trustee responsibilities of policy making, budgeting and financial management, personnel oversight, and advocacy. Prior to the Zoom meeting, registrants must view the three-part webinar series on the NHLTA website which covers the main elements of the traditional orientation workshop as the workshop slides will not be covered.

Registration information was emailed to all NHLTA members and library directors in mid-March. Sign up for either the April or the June session. Registrants will be sent login information and a survey to solicit their questions in advance of the session.

## Embrace Change! The 2021 NHLTA Annual Conference

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### and Where We can Go from Here.

Lori will share what is being discussed post-pandemic on the national level at ALA, PLA, and United For Libraries regarding funding, fundraising, advocacy, and sustainability in relationship to community awareness and how that may change libraries' relationships with outside entities going forward.

Also at 10:45 AM, representatives from SMP Architects, Bauen Construction and the Exeter Library will discuss **Congratulations, Your Vote Passed, What's Next?**

You'll learn about construction management, the architect's role during construction, unexpected developments that can arise, how the library functions during the expansion of an existing building, how the director and trustees keep the community informed and more.

The first two afternoon sessions start at 12:30 pm. Thomas Ladd will discuss **Pandemic's Policies** (with alliterative apologies to John Bunyan). This program will explore changes in policies and procedures for NH libraries resulting from not just the pandemic itself but also the legal and societal changes brought on by the events of the past year. It will include a review of policy-setting abilities and responsibilities in NH libraries and a look at some best-practice examples.

Natch Greyes, Municipal Services Counsel from NH Municipal Association, will present **An Introduction to RSA chapter 202-A**. This presentation is especially valuable for new trustees. Natch will discuss the fundamentals of RSA chapter 202-A, pertaining to municipal libraries and will incorporate discussion of related statutes, such as RSA chapter 91-A, the Right-to-Know Law. Emphasis will be placed on the budgetary aspect and the relationship between the library trustees and their select board.

At 1:45 PM, Bobbi Lee Slossar, NH State Library, will talk about the **New Hampshire Library Archives Collaborative**. This newly launched project provides NH public libraries with a digital platform to host historical photographs, records, and documents. Learn how your library can participate in this exciting opportunity that combines librarianship, technology, and local history.

Also at 1:45 PM, Mary Hubbard, Peterborough Town Library, will present **Talking about Race: Training for Library Staff and Trustees**. In the summer of 2020, Mary developed a three-part training to promote deep thinking about race among staff and Trustees, using readings, videos, exercises and discussion. This program will walk you through the three-part training and show you how you can create something similar at your library to foster a commitment to actively address the challenges of systemic racism and fulfill our libraries' role as inclusive and equitable civic institutions.

On Thursday, Julie Perrin, director at the Jaffrey Public Library, will begin our day with **Future-Proofing your Library Services: How Do We Prepare for the Unexpected?** This presentation will discuss the many ways you can design your service model to be adaptable and dynamically responsive, so your library is ready to serve your community no matter what the future holds.

At 10:45 AM, Dianne Hathaway, director at Goffstown Public Library, and James McKim, President of the Manchester, NH, NAACP, will present **Courageous Community Conversations: Can We Talk About Race?** Goffstown Public Library, in partnership with St. Anselm College and St. Matthews Episcopal Church, engaged in a multi-year initiative to make Goffstown a more

Continued on next page

## Embrace Change!

NHLTA Virtual  
Spring Conference  
May 12 & May 13, 2021

### KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Wednesday, May 12, 9:30 am

*"How to Be an Inclusive Individual or Organization"*

### WORKSHOPS, MAY 12

10:45 am

Congratulations, Your Vote Passed, What's Next?

Post-Pandemic Libraries: What Has Changed, What Hasn't, and Where We Can Go from Here

12:30 pm

An Introduction to RSA chapter 202-A (Public Libraries)

Pandemic's Policies

1:45 pm

Talking about Race: A Three-Part Training for Library Staff and Trustees

New Hampshire Library Archives Collaborative

### WORKSHOPS, MAY 13

9:30 am

Future-Proofing your Library Services

10:45 am

Courageous Community Conversations: Can We Talk about Race?

You Can Do This: Demystifying Strategic Planning

12:30 PM

Social Media: Risks & Rewards

Roundtable: City Libraries

1:45 PM

Roundtable: Small Libraries

Bridging the Distance: Virtual Programming

### CHAPTER LEVEL SPONSOR





welcoming community. This Community Conversation continues today, three years after initial planning. This event will share the planning process and implementation of the project.

Also at 10:45 AM, Brittany Overton and Mary Cronin, directors at the Minot-Sleeper Library (Bristol) and Cook Memorial Library (Tamworth), present **You Can Do This: Demystifying Strategic Planning**. Brittany and Mary will share how strategic planning has helped them engage more fully with their communities. Attendees will learn when and why to plan, who to involve in the planning process, and how to ensure the plan itself is a living document and guide.

After the lunch break, the conference will continue with two sessions of two workshops each. **Social Media: Risks and Rewards** will be presented by Heather Lindsay, Mary E. Bart-

lett Memorial Library in Brentwood, Laura Horwood-Benton, Portsmouth Public Library, and Yvonne Loomis, Manchester City Library. Hear about the three libraries' social media strategies, covering various platforms and outlets. Presenters will discuss showcasing your library's personality, building a team and encouraging staff participation, managing public responses, tips for gathering content, cross-posting and hashtags, and how policy and practice have adapted during the COVID pandemic.

Also at 12:30 PM, Lori Fisher will facilitate a **Roundtable Discussion** focused on city libraries.

The final two sessions of the conference are a **Small Libraries Roundtable Discussion**, facilitated by Lara Berry, and **Bridging the Distance: Virtual Programming in the Social Distancing Era** presented by Justin Levesque, Abbott Library (Sunapee); Elise Fuller, Colebrook Public Library; and Amy Carter and Polly Mahoney from Cook Memorial Library (Tamworth). The four librarians will discuss their experiences of virtual story times, remote discussion groups, podcasts featuring community leaders, and share their ideas and insights.

Registration will be online, the deadline is April 23. Registration information will be sent to members in late March and available on the NHLTA website.

### 2021 Annual Awards: Honor Those Special Contributors Who Connect the Library with the Community

Each year NHLTA is pleased to recognize the individuals and groups who have contributed to the excellence of New Hampshire public libraries. This year, the submission deadline is July 15. Email nominations to [nhlibrarytrustees@nhmunicipal.org](mailto:nhlibrarytrustees@nhmunicipal.org). Instruction, all criteria and a description of the awards can be found at [www.NHLTA.org](http://www.NHLTA.org).

## COVID Vaccines in NH – What You Need to Know

The NH COVID vaccine rollout has been occurring since late January in New Hampshire, and looks to continue through the spring and summer for all people eligible to receive the vaccine. The best source of information about the vaccine rollout and New Hampshire's plan can be found on the [nh.gov](http://nh.gov) COVID website, [www.nh.gov/covid19/resources-guidance/vaccination-planning.htm](http://www.nh.gov/covid19/resources-guidance/vaccination-planning.htm). Here are a couple of important overview points to keep in mind as this effort continues:

- The NH vaccine rollout is occurring in phases. Anyone who was eligible in a previous phase is still eligible to get the vaccine as other phases are opened. 2a (educators K-12) was opened on March 17, and 2b (anyone 50 years of age or older) on March 22nd.
- There are three vaccines being administered at state fixed sites as of 3/8/2021: Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require a second dose spaced within a certain time period after the first dose (Pfizer, 21

days minimum; Moderna; 28 days minimum). The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is a one-dose vaccine. Information on all three vaccines is available on the NH website above.

- At the state fixed vaccination sites, recipients do not get to choose which vaccine they will get. The vaccines administered on a particular day are dependent on the supply received. For the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, recipients will get a card with their 2nd dose appointment date and time on the back, and they need to come back to their 1st dose location to get the 2nd dose.
- All of the vaccines are for adults (Moderna/J&J – 18 years of age or older; Pfizer – 16 years of age or older).
- For specifics about your health and the vaccine, please consult with your primary care physician.
- For other questions about the vaccine rollout plan in NH or qualifications, please call 211.

– Lori Fisher

# Community Projects in Antrim Benefit the Library

Last summer when the J.A.Tuttle Library in Antrim was mostly closed to the public except for curbside pickups, a couple of gentlemen who share a passion for trains decided that a train going around the Children's Reading Room would be a great addition to the library. Four train enthusiasts and a helper mapped out a plan to build approximately 110 feet of track. The first step was building a platform to house the tracks. A local lumber



yard, Antrim Lumber, donated all the wood for the project. One person cut out the platform support structures (there ended up being about 80 of them) while another designed a bridge that was needed to go over ornate windows. Another project was a zig-zag "S" curve to go around an emergency light. The platform was installed over several weekends in between negotiations with a local shop in Keene for the actual track and Lionel train set. The train is named the Polar Express and comes with internal lights, engine noises and a conductor call of "All Aboard!". Once the train was completed, we trained the library staff how to operate it. Now, the many kids and kids-at-heart who visit the reading room are greeted with: Would you like to see the train go around? Who could say no to that? We had the support of our library trustees, the Antrim Historical Society, the local Lions Club and our

local Ace Hardware. To see the smiling faces of young and old has made this one of the best projects of this pandemic year.

Our exterior book drop box at the library was getting a bit weather-beaten this winter. One of our trustees who volunteers at Avenue A, a local teen center in Antrim, asked if the center's Painting Club could use their talents to bring some life and color to the old box. We lugged the box over to Avenue A's location in an old mill building. Since they aren't holding any events inside the building, we had the time to strip off the old paint and give it three coats of blue paint. The box looked pretty good. But it really came to life as the teens used cut-out templates to outline and paint characters from various children's books. The drop box was delivered back to the Library on March 2. Another great community effort!

By Rick Wood, Chair,  
Board of Trustees, J.A.  
Tuttle Public Library



## Advice for New Trustees: Learn Your Job, Love Your Job!

You've just been elected to serve on your library's board of trustees, and are looking forward to supporting your library's contribution to the community. But how much do you really know about the responsibilities of trustees and what will be expected of you?

The role of library trustee is more complex than most successful candidates realize. NHLTA is here to help you gain the foundation you need to execute your new role with skill and grace.

- NHLTA will be publishing its updated Trustee Manual this summer; it will be on the NHLTA website, with a hard copy also provided to each library.
- NHLTA offers three short (1/2 hour) webinars that cover all the elements of the association's trustee orientation workshop. Normally, this program is offered in person, but two years ago we recorded the content and posted the webinars online, so that those who can't make an in-person event would have access to the information. This move was certainly prescient, given the onset of COVID!
- This spring, NHLTA is offering two virtual orientation discussions for members. Much as we recommend you watch the webinars, their one disadvantage is that participants miss the opportunity to ask questions about situations they've encountered in their towns. When you sign up for one of the two virtual sessions, scheduled for April 24 and June 7, be sure to send in your questions.
- The Annual Spring Conference always offers several workshops that are especially useful for new trustees. Check out the conference offerings starting on the first page of this newsletter, and look for topics recommended for newbies.



By Natch Greyes,  
Municipal Services  
Counsel,  
NH Municipal  
Association (NHMA)

Once the budget is set, it's set. The select board does not have the authority to make further adjustments to the library budget.

Early spring brings with it not only a smattering of snow and a few shivering flowers, but also a number of questions related to financial matters as well as control of library premises. Here are some of the questions that I've received in the last few months.

## Financial Matters

**The select board believes that since they have fiduciary responsibility for town funds, that includes library funds.**

**The trustees believe RSA 202-A:11, III authorizes fiduciary responsibility for library funds to the library trustees.**

**Who's correct?**

The relationship between select boards and library trustees can be difficult to understand, but perhaps the most accurate comparison is one of a protectorate. The library is dependent upon the town to grant it funding and, as a practical matter, to provide many administrative services (such as payroll), but has local autonomy over its funds and affairs. In terms of fiduciary responsibility, RSA 202-A:11, III and IV explain that trustees oversee the library funds and work with the town treasurer to ensure that those are being spent correctly. See also RSA 202-A:22 pertaining to the trustees of trust funds.

**Can the select board remove funds from the bottom line of the approved library budget mid-year? Can they reduce funds from line items in the library budget?**

No. The town meeting or deliberative session is the one chance for both the select board and the library trustees to make final adjustments to the budget. Once town meeting sets the library budget, it's set. The select board does not have the authority to make further adjustments to the library budget, unlike, say, the police department. The library is, as I said above, much like a protectorate in this way.

The one thing to keep in mind, of course, is that the library trustees submit a budget to the select board (or official budget committee, if any) for consideration as part of the annual town budgeting process. RSA 202-A:11, II. The select board (or

official budget committee) need not accept that proposal as written. The board is entirely within its rights to reduce (or enlarge) the budget prior to presenting it to the voters.

If the library trustees disagree with the select board (or budget committee), they – like any voter – may make a motion to restore the prior funding at town meeting. While that may only increase the bottom-line budget as submitted to the NH Dept of Revenue Administration, it may also change the detailed chart of accounts, which would specify town meeting's grant of funds to the library in accordance with RSA 202-A:4. See also RSA 202-A:18 pertaining to discontinuances of libraries.

**If the library trustees submit a warrant article, can the select board change the wording of the warrant article? If the warrant contains a dollar amount, can the select board change the amount?**

Any voter – including a member of the select board – can propose a change to the amount of funds appropriated in a warrant article. Separate warrant articles for libraries are no exception.

Similarly, voters can propose a change to the wording of a warrant article. However, this gets complicated. By statute, select boards must review petitioned warrant articles and can make minor textual changes that do not change the intent. In other words, they can fix grammatical errors. At town meeting, a voter can move to change the wording of an article, but such changes cannot affect the “subject matter” of the article. For example, a warrant article cannot be changed to read “to not appropriate” if it originally read “to appropriate.” Another example is where the change is from buying a “snowplow” to a “fire truck.” The test that DRA employs is the couch test – is a voter who read the article as originally written going to be motivated by the amendment to change his/her mind about going to town meeting. In other words, is the voter going to get off the couch. A voter may



see that a library building expansion is up for vote and decide not to come, but that same voter may come if it were a town hall building expansion.

## Control of Library Premises

**If the town owns the library building but the trustees are authorized to maintain the library per RSA 202-A:6, then who really is in charge of the building?**

This is a complicated topic. Technically, the trustees would be in charge of all library property pursuant to RSA 202-A:6. That means that the trustees are able to make the rules pertaining to, e.g., reopening the library during the pandemic, as well as being charged with actual maintenance and operation of the library building. However, there are plenty of instances where what counts as library property is not clear cut. For example, the parking lot that patrons use. Is that library property or town property? It often depends.

Similar problems arise in instances where the library is housed in part of a municipal building. If the select board decides that the 100-year-old town hall building is in such bad shape that it needs to be torn down and a new town hall building built, but the library is housed in part of that building, what say do the library trustees have? In all likelihood, the select board is going to have its way. But all parties should be mindful of RSA 202-A:18, prohibiting discontinuance of a library except in certain instances, as well as other statutes pertaining to records – both town and library (as well as town records maintained by the library).

Additional issues arise if the land or building were granted to the town for the purpose of having a library upon it. Generally, that property is going to be

controlled entirely by the trustees, but the complexities can be such that legal counsel's opinion is really necessary before moving forward in any direction related to reconstruction or expansion.

In most cases, however, the issues that arise are simple ones of policy – what can patrons do and not do. In those cases, the library trustees set the policies.

**Can the trustee board set a policy that prohibits a person – other than law enforcement – from bringing a gun into the building? What if the person has a permit to carry from the state?**

There is one major exception to trustees setting the policies and that relates to guns. Current law, RSA 159:26, states that “no ordinance or regulation of a political subdivision may regulate the sale, purchase, ownership, use, possession, transportation, licensing, permitting, taxation, or other matter pertaining to firearms, firearms components, ammunition, or firearms supplies in the state.” That statute is pretty clear, but just to emphasize, no municipal entity may regulate possession of guns in their buildings.

As far as permitting goes, New Hampshire's default rule is that anyone is allowed to have a gun. The only permitting requirement, which is no longer enforceable due to a change in state law, is that New Hampshire did allow the regulation of concealed firearms. Now, however, anyone is allowed to carry concealed or openly. Our hope, of course, is that people will be reasonable when they choose to carry a gun and realize that they would be wise not to carry a gun into an area or situation where having a gun would cause alarm or affront as that could end very badly.

# NH Library Trustee

The Newsletter of the  
New Hampshire Library Trustees  
Association

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**MISSION**

The NHLTA assists Trustees to be knowledgeable and effective in order to serve, improve and promote New Hampshire Public Libraries.

## 2021 CALENDAR

<b>April 24</b>	<b>11 am</b>	<b>NHLTA Trustee Orientation (presented via Zoom)</b>
<b>May 12–13</b>	<b>9:30 am–2:45 pm</b>	<b>2021 Virtual Spring Conference</b>
<b>June 7</b>	<b>3 pm</b>	<b>NHLTA Trustee Orientation (presented via Zoom)</b>