



Finger Lakes Library System

TRUSTEE NEWSLETTER

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Advocacy Day is Everyday

We were all set to meet with our supportive legislators for Advocacy Day in Albany on February 28, but the weather had other plans.

It was a good reminder that advocacy happens every day, not just one day in February. Lawmakers enjoy visiting our libraries any time of year to show their support and meet their constituents.

As we get closer to the April budget deadline, we expect more email advocacy requests from NYLA, so please be on the lookout for those.

Thank you for your continued library advocacy work!



ALA's National Library Week 2023 will be celebrated with the theme "There's More to the Story". It's a great time to tell your library's multi-faceted story.



Assemblyman John Lemondes hand-delivers a bullet aid check for over \$6,000 to the Weedsport Free Library (Cayuga County) in January 2023.

NYS Budget Season

Governor Hochul Proposes Cut to Library Funding

Governor Hochul's FYE2024 NYS budget called for cuts to both library aid and construction aid. This is the third year the Executive budget has proposed a reduction in funding libraries.

- Library Aid \$96.1M
(-\$3.5M reduction from FY2023 Enacted Budget)
- Library Construction \$14M
(-\$20M reduction from FY2023 Enacted Budget)

This would put us even further below full formula funding in Education Law, which is \$106.2 million, and those formulas have not been adjusted to allow for inflation over the past several decades.

The New York Library Association (NYLA) asks library advocates across the State to tell their legislators that libraries need increased funding. Please consider reaching out by email to your legislators by using the [simple advocacy form from NYLA](#).

Board Calendar

Upcoming Events

March 1: Annual Report Due to Jenny Shonk. *Your Board should have approved this at your February Board Meeting.*

March 15th 1:30PM-2:30 PM

NYS Construction Grants 101
Contact your Library Director or Sarah Glogowski for the link to join.

April 12th 10:00 AM-11:15 AM

[Developing Cultural Humility with Jill Hurst-Wahl](#) *Follow the link to register.*

Referendums

A few referendum reminders...

- You should be finishing up your petitions. (if you do a petition.)
- If you attend a school board meeting, it should be in February or March.
- School districts must publish the first of four legal notices of the budget vote between March 28 and April 1 this year. Check with your school for deadlines.

While you can encourage your community to vote, be sure to avoid any "Vote Yes" messaging.

Board Best Practices: Minutes

Minutes: *noun* an official and legal record of the proceedings of a meeting, conference, convention, etc.

Minutes are a record of what was done at a meeting--not necessarily what was said. Well-written agendas help lead to well-written minutes. Use your agenda as an outline to write minutes. Every Board meeting includes a vote to accept the minutes from the previous meeting.

What's included in Board Meeting Minutes?

Typically the secretary records the minutes and starts by noting the date/time of the meeting as well as the attendance. (Do you have quorum?) Minutes should be a concise summary of the actions that took place during the meeting. The tone should be neutral. Remember, minutes are not a transcript of the meeting. You should refrain from including quotes and play-by-play narratives.

What about Executive Session?

If your Board takes a formal vote on any action during executive session, then yes. The minutes should reflect a record or summary of the final determination of such action, and the date and vote thereon provided should be included in the minutes. However, the summary need not include matters which are not required to be made public by the **[freedom of information law](#)**.

Remember, meeting minutes are meant to be shared. Your meeting minutes must be posted to your library's website. Minutes are FOIL-able records so it is recommended to keep them indefinitely.

Resource:

[NYS Committee on Open Government](#)



Retention Period for Employee Records

Attorney Stephanie "Cole" Adams answers questions specific to libraries.

Q: How long should the library retain employee records, payroll records, sales and purchase records, mortgage and loan documents, and other records?

A: Several considerations impact the answer to this question:

For a public library, the bare minimum record retention periods are found in a document called "the [LGS-1](#)."^[1] The LGS-1 has rules for retention covering everything from your library's charter, to how long you hold onto circulation records.

For an association library, which does not have to follow the LGS-1, those retention rules in the LGS-1 are a good baseline, but you have a bit more latitude.

However, no matter what baseline a library or other cultural organization chooses to adopt, it is good to keep in mind that required retention periods are routinely extended by things like:

- Insurance policy requirements
- Union contracts (for personnel records)
- Grants, and other sponsored funding
- Lawyers instructing a client to retain records as part of a "litigation hold"

In addition, while it can't be considered a formal "retention period", documents are also "retained" by institutions simply due to a tendency to hoard records. At times, this can be a healthy tendency (like when letters from a first grade class from 1945, written to thank the local library for a story hour, are found in moisture-resistant storage, and they are turned into an exhibit). Other times, it is not so healthy (like when borrower records from 5 years prior^[2] are accessed during a burglary or hack).

For a large library (or museum, or other cultural institution) with robust funding and a large staff, "records management" per the LGS-1 or a customized "record retention policy" is often part of a person's (or department's) job description--and is supported in the annual budget. For a smaller library (or museum, or other cultural institution) with less-than-robust funding, and a smaller staff, "records management" is often an afterthought. This can cause complications when the records pile up, and there is no person--or budget--to sort through them and make sure they are properly retained/purged.

But this question is about retention periods, not the drama they can cause! So here is the answer:

For the types of records mentioned in the question ("employee records, payroll records, sales and purchase records, mortgage and loan documents"), the retention periods vary; some are "permanent", and others are as short at 6 years. The LGS-1 (which will pop up when you search "LGS-1") will give you the breakdown.

See a [Model Retention Record Policy](#) in Cole's full answer.

