



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](#)



Spotlight On: Retention Period for Employee Records

Attorney Stephanie "Cole" Adams answers questions specific to libraries in the [Ask the Lawyer Service](#). This service is offered by the [South Central Regional Library Council](#) in collaboration with the other nine councils comprising the Empire State Library Network. The Finger Lakes Library System is a member of the South Central Regional Library Council.

The topic of record retention tends to come up at times of transition: the end of the year; a new director or executive member of the Board, etc.

Your Board should have a policy in place that answers the question of how your library handles records. In their counsel on the following question, lawyer and library advocate Stephanie "Cole" Adams shares some things to consider when crafting this policy for your library.

The following question was posed to Ask the Lawyer:

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

Read Cole's response [here](#).



Municipal , School District, and Special Legislative District libraries must follow the [Freedom of Information Law](#). It is recommended that Association libraries follow suit in the name of transparency.