

West Hartford Public Library Board Agenda

Monday, August 25, 2025 - 6:30 p.m.

Noah Webster Board Room

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of the Consent Agenda (Items 3a, 3b, and 3c)
 - a. Approval of the Minutes of the June 23, 2025 Meeting
 - b. Library Administrative reports (June & July)
 - c. Budget report
4. Chair's Report
5. Business Items
 - a. Library Board Hearing Process
 - b. Library Policy and State Law Requirements – Laura Irmscher
 - c. Staff Day: Open at 2pm on November 6, 2025 – Laura Irmscher
6. Director's Report
7. Adjournment
 - a. Next Meeting is Monday, September 29, 2025.

Anyone requiring auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or modification of policies or procedures to participate in a meeting, service, program or activity of the Town of West Hartford, should contact Suzanne Oslander, ADA Coordinator, at suzanneo@westhartfordct.gov or (860) 561-7580, as soon as possible, preferably seven days beforehand.

Public Comment Instructions: Individuals who wish to comment on an agenda item, may do so by sending an email with the subject “public comment” to Board@westhartfordlibrary.org on or before August 22, 2025, or by attending the meeting in person.

WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES
Monday, June 23, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gail Crockett called the Library Board to order at 6:40 p.m. Present in person, were Board members Eileen Daly, Gail Crockett, and Natalia Menjivar, Library Director Laura Irmscher, and Heidi Reagan, recorder. Member EJ Greenspan was present via Zoom. Member Kim Cohen was absent.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

3. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA (Items 3a, 3b, and 3c)

- a. Approval of the Minutes of the May 19, 2025, Meeting
- b. Library Administrative Report
- c. Budget Report

MOTION: On a motion made by EJ Greenspan and seconded by Eileen Daly, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda.

THE MEETING MINUTES of the May 19, 2025 Meeting were approved as part of the consent agenda.

4. CHAIR'S REPORT – Gail Crockett

- a. Would like to recognize the impressive variety and level of excellence of programs the Library offers.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS:

- a. SB1271 and new Library Policy Requirements – Laura
 - a. Collection Development Policy
 - b. Library Material and Reconsideration Policy
 - c. Library Display Policy
 - d. Program Policy
- b. Library Board Summer Meeting Dates – Gail Crockett

MOTION: On a motion made by Natalia Menjivar and seconded by Eileen Daly, the Board unanimously agreed to cancel the scheduled July 28 Meeting, and consider what to do about the August 25 Meeting in August

- c. 2025 Holiday Schedule – Laura Irmscher
 - a. November 26 (the Wednesday before Thanksgiving) all locations will close at 4pm
 - 1. Visitation will be tracked to see if closing at 2pm is a better option
 - b. Dec 24 (Christmas Eve), the Bishops Corner and Noah Webster Libraries will close at 2pm and the Faxon Library will be closed.
 - c. December 31 (New Year's Eve) all locations will close at 4pm.

MOTION: On a motion Natalia Menjivar and seconded by Eileen Daly, the Board unanimously approved the Holiday Schedule 2025.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. We might have to close Faxon early over the next few days because of excessive heat, the HVAC system for that building is outdated and not able to keep the building cool enough.
- b. Current Month Briefing.
 - a. Be You Family Resource Center has been launched
 - b. Historic Timeline of Connecticut's LGBTQ Community traveling exhibition is on display in the Gallery until June 28
 - c. June Community Events
 - 1. Celebrate! West Hartford
 - 2. Juneteenth Events and programs
 - 3. Pride Festival Family Tent
 - d. Summer Reading Launch
 - 1. Children's Program
 - 2. Teen Program
 - 3. Adult Program
 - e. Book it! Children's Fun Run
- c. The third annual BookWyrms Festival will be held July 26 from 10-4pm.

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: The Library Board Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:25pm. The next scheduled Board Meeting is to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Daly
Board Secretary

June 2025 Administrative Report

Family Resource Center

The new LGBTQIA+ Family Resource Center, funded by the West Hartford Library Foundation, is now on display in the Children's Room. In the spirit of the West Hartford Public Library Strategic Plan 2024-2028 goal of "Building More Responsive and Inclusive Collections", and with many requests to have a larger collection of LGBTQIA+ materials all in one location, the new Resource Center was born. The Center offers materials for ages, infant through tween as well as parenting materials, and was created in collaboration with community members. Thank you to Carol, Kirsten, Hannah, Leah, and Heidi for all of your hard work to make this collection a fantastic resource for the community!



Summer Reading

Summer Reading is here and we have programs for all ages!

Children (grades K-5): We kicked off the summer with a visit from the Poop Museum and had over 200 attendees. All summer, children are encouraged to read, log their books, attend programs, and receive prizes!

Teens (grades 6-12): The program began with an event in Blue Back Square, where teens could get their library card, learn more about teen summer programs and volunteer opportunities, and find how to enter our teen summer contests, including the grand prize chance to design your own custom pair of shoes!

Adults: Get uplifted this summer with our Summer Reading Challenge for adults. From June 16 through August 31, read books and complete activities in the summer reading categories and earn chances to win bi-weekly and grand prizes.

Book It! For the Library

The misty rain didn't keep the crowds away from the 3rd annual Book it! for the library fun run! 146 children checked in at the registration desk and we had a total of over 400 attend the event all together. The program evaluations thanked us for an activity focused on getting the kids to be in an outdoor physical activity and liked that it is an event that shows a lot of community spirit. Thanks again to Bailey & Joesph, Carol, Pramod, Laura & her daughters, the CERT Team, the staff from Facilities and EMTs for another successful year!



June Outreach Roundup: Celebrate West Hartford, Juneteenth, and Pride

Our annual outreach marathon has finally wrapped up! We had a great time at Celebrate (in the rain), Juneteenth (in the rain), and Pride (in the heat). Thank you to everyone who helped out in planning, prepping, and populating the booths.



Recent Media

Follow the links below for recent media coverage about the library's programs and services.

[‘Book It’ Over To West Hartford Library’s Annual Children’s Fun Run](#) (Patch)

[Caribbean American Heritage Month Will Be Highlighted In West Hartford Library Program](#) (we-ha.com)

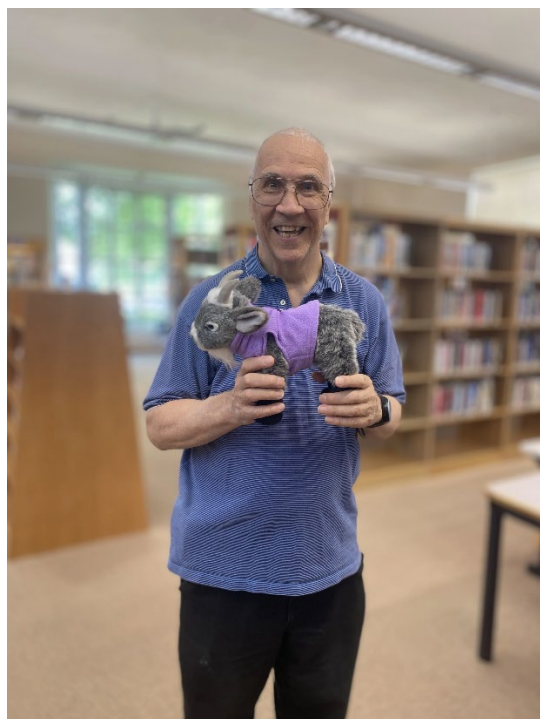
Staff Updates

Departures

We said goodbye to these staff members and wish them all the best:

Vitalina Veriienko – PT Page, Bishops Corner

July GOAT – Michael Zienka



I am pleased to hand over the G.O.A.T. Award to Michael Zienka.

Michael has been a page at the Faxon Library for 24 years. One item in particular is that he pays attention to detail when doing his tasks. When preparing a cart for shelving, for instance, he always checks for “library ownership,” so as not to file an item on our shelf that does not belong to Faxon. He will check the spine label for an incorrect spelling of the author’s name, or to see if a children’s book is missing a sticker/label.

He also will inform us when a shelving area is getting too tight and that there is not much room left to shelve. He keeps up with the newspaper-weeding, and shelf-reads the collection when time permits.

In addition to his shelving duties, Michael sets up and takes down the program room as needed (a major task that I wouldn’t want!), and keeps our many plants and flowers here at Faxon watered and happy.

Michael has always been reliable and punctual, and while this is of course expected of all employees, it is especially appreciated in a small library with a limited staff.

Nice work, Michael!

-Karen Thomson

Adult Services & Programs

ADULT PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS (NWL, FAX, BC)	
STANDALONE Programs	3
Attendance	49
Avg. Attendance	16
RECURRING Programs	30
Attendance	258
Avg. Attendance	9
TOTAL Programs	33
Attendance	307
Avg. Attendance	9

Local History

Visitors: 31 in-person and 10 off-site requests

Patron interest areas: Yearbooks, snow sculptures in the 1960s

June Highlights:

- The work of our volunteer Andy Tran continues and has paid off with helping a CCSU student with research on immigrants from SE Asia to the Hartford area. Shelby Lukaszczyk sorted and inventoried the Barbara B. Girard Post Card Collection; only a small portion remains to be entered into the inventory.

Studio

Show Your Pride with Painted Leather Bracelets

Frankie (with help from Cherokee) hosted a program where participants could paint leather bracelets using pride flag colors or the design of their choosing.

Sundays in the Park Sketching with Sam

Sam and Leah spent another Sunday in Elizabeth Park with sketchers young and old (and got inside before it got too hot).

STUDIO 20 BY THE NUMBERS	
In-Depth Appointments	42
Short Interactions (Walk-ins)	65
Total	107

Branch Libraries

Did you know that we host a monthly craft program for adults at both branches? This month, we decorated mason jars with pressed flowers to make lovely summer luminaries.



Bishops Corner

Thanks to a Library Foundation grant, we were able to reconfigure the smart lockers at Bishops Corner to add 6 additional lockers (converting some of the larger lockers to smaller ones, more suited to hold books as opposed to packages.) We had 197 deliveries to the lockers in June and now have 395 registered users.

Faxon

Babies Love Books!, a program held at the Faxon Branch Library co-sponsored by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and the West Hartford Public Library, is a four-week literacy program for immigrant families held on Tuesday mornings in June. Families were invited to experience a variety of literacy, music and art experiences with a teacher and assistants. Countries that families are from include China, Nepal, Japan and Brazil.

Children's Services & Programs

Programs

- *Pride Storytime: Celebrating All Families*, for children ages 3-5, was held on the morning of June 11 featuring stories, songs, crafts, and a snack.
- A program to celebrate Juneteenth for children ages 3-6 with children's author Charnaie Gordon reading her latest book *Black Joy*.
- Miss Sara's Tween Tuesday program featured Dirt Cupcakes using the famous cupcake making machine, plenty of gooey frosting and a multitude of gummy worms.
- Disney© Movie Trivia for Grades 3-7. Participants tested their knowledge of all Disney trivia from the Golden Years to Renaissance and from Marvel to Star Wars, played either solo or with a team.



Updates

A West Hartford Girl Scout Troop assembled 30 Dignity Totes and delivered them to the Noah Webster Library.



Teen Services Programs

- Elven Keychains: Cherokee from Studio 20 and Destiny from Teen Services partnered on a program inspired by the Elvish language of J.R.R. Tolkien with some custom elven keychains.
- Teen Pride Bracelets
- Teen Summer Reading Kick-Off
 - Hall band Child Like Morgan performed their first show ever
 - Kilwin's offered Scoops for Scholars cards (10 punches = 1 free ice cream)
 - Teen volunteers helped with crafts and make your own sundaes
 - It was beautiful weather and everyone had a great time



July 2025 Administrative Report

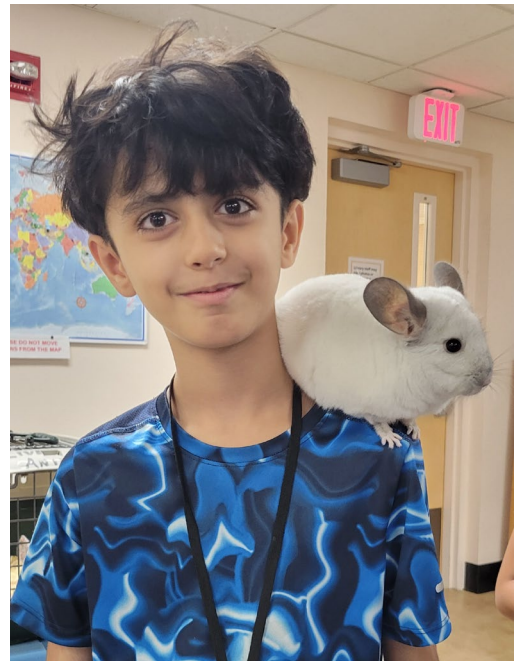
BookWorm Fest

BookWorm Fest was an amazing success! We saw 2,200 visitors of all ages attend to enjoy sword fighting, face painting, crafts, shopping, games, and more. Check out the links in the recent media section for press coverage. Thank you everyone who made this event possible. We can't wait for next year!



Faxon Fun

Ellen ran another incredibly successful Faxon Fun this summer. Participating children had so many opportunities throughout the 4 week program, including literacy activities, crafts, games both indoor and outdoor, music, STEM activities, music, and so much more! Faxon Fun is funded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving as well as a West Hartford Library Foundation supplemental grant. Thank you to Faxon staff for putting so much into this wonderful program!



Recent Media

Follow the links below for recent media coverage about the library's programs and services.

[Bookworms Draw Swords](#) (New Haven Independent)

[BookWorm Fest Returns To West Hartford This Summer](#) (we-ha.com)

[Massive Fantasy Game Celebration Slated In West Hartford Saturday](#) (Patch)

[Prominent Mental Health Advocate, Author To Appear At West Hartford Library](#) (Patch)

['Rolie Polie Guacamole' Concert Is Thursday At West Hartford Town Hall](#) (we-ha.com)

Staff Updates

August GOAT – Meredith Ericksen



The G.O.A.T. for August is Meredith Ericksen. Meredith has been on staff for 12 years. She manages an extremely busy back workroom at Bishops Corner, catalogs all new magazines, prints out the NYT crossword puzzle and bestseller list weekly, and serves on two committees.

She has taken the primary lead on the Smart Locker System and works with Package Concierge directly whenever there is an issue and deals directly with patrons to assist them through any problems they may experience with the lockers. Adds new residents, loads lockers daily, removes expired packages.

Also, she has created a user's manual for the lockers for other staff to follow.

Always willing to go the extra mile in assisting patron, customer service with a smile! Patient with patrons who need help with technology.

She is also the primary staff contact for work study students and their job coaches when they're working in the building

Congratulations on achieving the G.O.A. T. for August.

-Michael Zienka

From Our Patrons

Here are some stories and interactions our staff recently had with patrons at the library:

- While picking up a Summer Reading prize at the desk, one winner commented, “Thank you very much. I had a rough week. This made my day.”
- A patron called to say how incredibly helpful Aprill was when he was asking for information about curling. He really appreciated the help that she gave him and wanted to thank her for being so nice.
- Eduardo Jose Arias Cruz came in and said the help he received from Pramod with his citizenship test was vital to him being able to pass. He was most grateful for all Pramod did and would like to pay it forward. He offered his knowledge of Spanish and English in any way that could help.
- A patron came in this week with a 2023 year-end handout we distributed that listed the top fiction and nonfiction titles of the year. She shared that it was a valuable resource for picking books and she requested the 2024 list which we provided.
- A nice shoutout for Bishops Corner on West Hartford Neighbors and Friends!



Adult Services & Programs

ADULT PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS (NWL, FAX, BC)	
STANDALONE Programs	4
Attendance	227
Avg. Attendance	57
RECURRING Programs*	10
Attendance*	143
Avg. Attendance*	14
TOTAL Programs	14
Attendance	370
Avg. Attendance	26
<i>*As of 7/1/2025, Faxon no longer counts Citizenship Help or Tech Help as programs (see Ref Stats for those numbers)</i>	

Author Talk: Laura Delano and "Unshrunk"

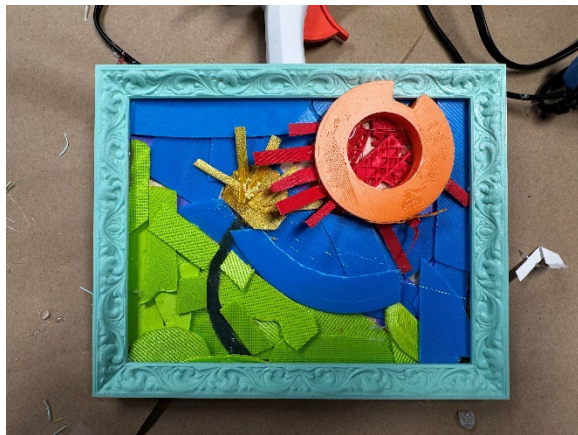
The talk was with author Laura Delano and the Chief of Psychiatry at Hartford Hospital and the Institute of Living about living life tapering off of psychiatric medication.

- 79 people in attendance
- A father and his daughter drove all the way from New Jersey for the talk

Studio

Framed in Nature: Upcycled 3D Filament Collages

For this awesome program, participants made collages using scraps of filament left over from 3D printer projects, set into a lovely 3D-printed frame!



Local History

Visitors: 35 in-person and 13 off-site requests

Patron interest areas: House history, yearbooks

July Highlights:

- One patron was looking into the history of the Bishops Corner Neighborhood Group to help in their efforts to revive the Group and resume efforts to improve the neighborhood around BC.
- Another patron was looking for information on a music teacher, Ruth Wolcott, that inspired this person to love and pursue music throughout their life.
- We also had a patron request via email any information we have on the Children's Librarian here in the 1950s because this patron was putting together an autobiography (also sent the patron their yearbook photo which they looooved). Also assisted a student in a summer course gather works regarding Hartford area writers of the 18th-20th centuries.
- Later in July we had a visit from Danielle, the assistant director for Adult Services at New Britain, to go over our Local History Collection and ways we care and make accessible/visible to the public.

Branch Libraries

Tie Dye and Lawn Games at the branches

Over 20 attendees at Bishops on July 21 tie dyed everything from shirts and socks to bags and shorts with the help of 2 teen volunteers.

On July 23, Faxon had Family Lawn Games and Tie Dye. Sara covered the table for the "Mid-Summer Reading Log Check" while Ellen and teen volunteers covered the Tie Dye and Popsicles. Many children showed that they are working on the reading log (have read at least one book), and they got to choose a prize from the treasure chest. They are loving it. There were at least 75 people at this outdoor event.



Children's Services & Programs

Programs

- The Brooklyn based duo *Rolie Polie Guacamole* visited West Hartford for a high-energy, interactive family concert for over 250 people. The program was generously funded by the Ellen Jeanne Goldfarb Memorial Charitable Trust.
- The *Science of Color* program for children in Grades 1-3 facilitated by Miss Sara offered a fun afternoon of science experiments and opportunities to create colorful walking rainbows, color-changing milk, and more!
- Children ages 3-6 attended *Pint-sized Picassos* also offered by Miss Sara to explore various hands-on activities that were designed to enhance their fine motor skills, imagination and cognitive development. All attendees were asked to dress for mess. Both programs were based on the Color Our World summer 2025 reading theme.

Teen Services

Programs

- Dragon Eye Craft
- Crocheters for a Cause
 - Some teens made crochet daffodils
 - Others made individual projects, including whales, dragons, and mushroom head toys
- Cookies & Coloring Sheets
- Teen Bullet Journaling
- Teen Silent Book Club
- Teen BookWorm Fest Chalk Art Contest





Updates

- Immigrant Youth Advocates
 - Updated social media @iya_weha
 - Worked on new logo
 - Worked on mission statement
 - Finalized 2025-2026 projects
 - English Cafe (test run in October)
 - Fundraisers (1 local, 1 international)
 - Storytelling / podcast

Library Financials - General Fund**August, 2025**

Year	Period	Rollup Code Description	YTD Actuals	Original Budget	Available Budget
2026	2	GF-Library-Personal	\$ 346,988.93	\$ 3,188,238.00	\$ 2,841,249.07
2026	2	GF-Library-NonPers	\$ 160,511.92	\$ 663,312.00	\$ 502,800.08
2026	2	GF-Library-Sundry	\$ 23,934.23	\$ 238,725.00	\$ 214,790.77

DRAFT

Town of West Hartford Library Board

Purpose

The Town of West Hartford Public Library ("Library") is committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive, and safe environment for all Library patrons, volunteers, and staff. To ensure the Library remains a safe and respectful space for everyone, the Library established and enforces the *West Hartford Public Library Patron Rules of Conduct and Enforcement*. These Rules of Conduct are designed to create a positive experience for all who visit, ensuring that all patrons can use Library resources and services without fear of disruption and harm.

All Library patrons, volunteers, and staff are expected to comply with the Library's established rules, regulations, procedures, and policies. Failure to comply with the Library's rules, regulations, and guidelines may result in temporary or permanent restrictions on Library access or programs.

This document outlines the procedures that govern appeal hearings before the Town of West Hartford Library Board ("Library Board") for individuals aggrieved by a determination made by the Town of West Hartford Library Director. These guidelines are designed to ensure transparency, fairness, and orderly conduct of the proceedings.

1. Nature of the Hearing

This is an administrative hearing—not a legal proceeding. As such, the rules of court and rules of evidence do not apply. The purpose of the hearing is to allow the Library Board to review and consider the circumstances surrounding the appeal fairly. At the Board's discretion, it may delegate the responsibility of facilitating or conducting the hearing to a designated party. The designated party shall act under the authority of Board and may carry out all hearing-related functions as assigned.

2. Time and Notice of Hearing

The Library Board shall schedule a hearing on all appeals within 60 days of its receipt of an appeal. The Board shall give notice of the hearing at least ten (10) business days prior to the date thereof. The Board shall mail notice of the hearing to the parties. Such notices shall state the location, date, time, and place of the hearing, and the procedural rules.

3. Parties to the Hearing – the Parties in each shall comprise of:

- a. The Appellant – the individual appealing the Library Director's decision.
- b. The Library – represented by the Library Director or their designee.

Legal counsel may represent both parties, but the presence of counsel is not required.

4. Pre-Hearing Requirement

The following documentation must be provided seven (7) business days prior to the hearing:

- a. All Parties involved in the hearing shall submit a written statement brief to the Library Board. The brief must outline the key points, arguments, and issues they intend to address during the hearing, as well as any relevant evidence or supporting documentation. The statement brief must not exceed three (3) pages in length. Parties are to provide a copy of their respective briefs to the other party.
- b. Witness Disclosure
 - i. Each party must email the Library Board Administrator and copy the opposing party.
 - ii. The notice must list all witnesses the party intends to call.
 - iii. For each witness, a brief description of their expected testimony must be included.
- c. Evidence Submission
 - i. All documentary evidence must be submitted to the Library Board Administrator and copied to the opposing party.
- d. Each piece of evidence must be pre-marked as follows:
 - i. Appellant's evidence: Alphabetical labels (e.g., A, B, C...).
 - ii. Library's evidence: Numerical labels(e.g., 1, 2, 3...).
 - iii. A Table of Contents listing all submitted evidence must accompany the materials.

Late submissions may be excluded at the discretion of the Library Board.

5. Hearing Format

- a. The hearing will be open to the public in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.
 - b. The appeal will be conducted by the Library Board or by any independent, impartial designee appointed by the Board.
 - c. The hearing shall commence with a statement by the Chair or their designee explaining the process.
 - d. The Library Board shall conduct all questioning of the parties. Questions will be directed to clarify the statement briefs, any exhibits admitted into evidence, and any relevant issues.
 - i. First, the Board will question the Appellant and any witnesses presented by the Appellant.
 - ii. Second, the Board will question the Library representative and any Library witnesses.
 - iii. There is no direct cross-examination between the parties. All questioning is conducted by the Board.
 - e. Closing Statements - Each party will be given up to five (5) minutes for a closing statement to summarize their position.
6. **Time Limit** - The entire proceeding shall not exceed ninety (90) minutes, excluding any recesses. The Board may reasonably adjust timing to ensure all relevant matters are heard, but extensions beyond this limit will be rare and only granted for good cause.
7. **Deliberation** – The decision of the Library Board shall be based on the record of each case. Ex parte communications and investigations are discouraged and shall not form the basis for the decision of any Board member, in whole or in part, in any case before the Library Board.

Once both Parties have presented their respective closing statements and the Board has had an opportunity to ask all pertinent questions, the Board will commence deliberations in an open session. In coming to a determination, the Board may consider:

- a. Whether the decision of Library staff was consistent with Library rules, regulations, and policies.
- b. Any information provided by the Appellant as mitigating factors.
- c. Was the decision of the Library staff proportionate to the behavior that led to the decision?

Following its review and discussion, the Board will recommend by a majority vote to either uphold, amend, or dismiss the Library's decision. The Board may conclude its deliberations on the day of the hearing or at a subsequent special meeting that must take place within sixty (60) calendar days.

8. Accessibility and Conduct

- a. Any party, witness, or member of the public wishing for an interpreter or reasonable accommodation shall notify the Library Board at least five (5) business days prior the hearing.
- b. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the hearing.
- c. All participants are expected to maintain respect and decorum.

An official recording of the hearing will be made.

Approved by Library Board on: _____, 2025

House Bill No. 7287

in the town in which the public library is located or the town in which the contract library is located at the time a reconsideration form is filed under subsection (e) of this section.

(4) "Remove" means deliberately taking library material out of a library's collection. "Remove" does not include the process of clearing such collection of any materials that are no longer useful.

(b) The board of trustees, or other governing body, of each public library shall adopt a (1) collection development and maintenance policy, (2) library display and program policy, and (3) library material review and reconsideration policy. Each such policy shall ensure that all library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. In developing each such policy, the board shall have control over the content of each such policy, provided such policies are in accordance with the provisions of this section. The board of trustees or other governing body shall review, and update as necessary, each such policy every five years.

(c) The collection development and maintenance policy shall, at a minimum:

(1) Recognize that library materials should (A) be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents, and (B) represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole;

(2) Recognize the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents;

(3) Acknowledge that librarians are professionally trained to curate