

## **State Librarian's Report to the State of Vermont Board of Libraries**

For the January 10, 2023 meeting of the board

Catherine Delneo, State Librarian and Commissioner of Libraries

### **Hiring Update**

On December 7<sup>th</sup> the Department of Libraries welcomed Lilly Talbert to the Communications and Administrative Coordinator role in Library Advancement. Lilly joins us from Vermont Commission on Women (VCW), where she served in a Communications role for over 21 years, managing media relations, message development, research, writing publications, website development, event planning, and internships. Previous to working for VCW, Lilly worked in the public relations, marketing, graphic design, and communications fields and held positions at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, Liquid Studio, and Seventh Generation. Lilly holds a degree from UVM in Communication Science and Disorders and completed certificate programs in graphic design as well as re-evaluation counseling. Lilly is an avid gardener, reader, hiker, kayaker, and yoga class participant.

On December 19<sup>th</sup> the Department of Libraries welcomed Gina Hruban to the Department in the role of Executive Staff Assistant. Gina will support State Librarian and Commissioner of Libraries Catherine Delneo, as well as the Board of Libraries and geographic naming. Gina brings many years of Executive/Administrative Assistant experience from various organizations, including National Life. Most recently, she worked for the Kansas City-based publisher, Andrews McMeel. She also worked at the University of Missouri-Kansas City at their law and medical schools. Gina studied photography and film at the University of Kansas, followed by a long stay in Los Angeles. This is her second residency in Vermont and she is thrilled to be back in her adopted state. Gina enjoys being outdoors in all seasons, which includes kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing, and exploring Vermont's exquisite landscape on her motorcycle.

The Department bid farewell to Tonya Ryals, our Governance and Management Consultant, on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Tonya has moved to Michigan to take on a public library director position. We wish her all the best on her new adventure. The Department's Leadership and Library Advancement Teams are taking some time to evaluate the Governance and Management Consultant position before we post the vacancy.

### **Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont**

The Working Group met on November 18, 2022 on the topic of Continuing Education and on December 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss Survey Development and hear a Programming Overview from Department of Libraries staff. The minutes of these meetings can be found on the Working Group's webpage.

- November 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes:  
[https://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/InitiativesProjects/LibraryWorkingGroup/2022\\_11\\_18\\_WorkingGroupMinutes\\_Draft.pdf](https://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/InitiativesProjects/LibraryWorkingGroup/2022_11_18_WorkingGroupMinutes_Draft.pdf)
- December 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes:  
<https://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/InitiativesProjects/LibraryWorkingGroup/draft%202022%2012%2016%20Minutes%20Working%20Group.pdf>

## **Budget Development**

The Department's submitted a budget that met the requirement to increase funds by no more than a 3% increase. The Governor will deliver his budget address later this month on January 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **Capital Projects Grants Update**

In late December we announced to the library community with great excitement that the Vermont Department of Libraries is poised to receive \$10M in Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) for Public Facilities Preservation Initiative Grants to be made available to our state's small, rural public libraries.

The funds will provide resources to address repair and mitigation needs in these small, rural public libraries, those that also serve as community meeting spaces and public facilities, and with a focus on economically depressed areas.

We greatly appreciate the work of our Congressional Delegation and especially Senator Leahy's support in securing these transformational funds for improvements to small, rural libraries in Vermont! We also appreciate the efforts by library leaders in Vermont to advocate for these funds.

The Congressionally Directed Spending funds will be administered by the Department of Libraries as grants to small, rural public libraries in Vermont.

These funds are distinct from the \$16.4M in Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund for States, Territories & Freely Associated States administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury for which the State of Vermont has applied. <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/capital-projects-fund> The Capital Projects Funding is intended to address critical building improvements to ensure Vermonters have continued access to high-speed Internet to directly enable work, education, and health monitoring at their local public libraries.

The Department of Libraries plans to launch a competitive grant process through which Vermont communities can access both sets of federal funding to support capital improvements to their local public library in the coming month. Our goal is to support communities in successfully accessing the U.S. Treasury ARPA funds and Congressionally Directed Spending funds for which their public library is eligible. We are hopeful that public libraries will be able to apply for both grant opportunities through one grant application.

Upon finalizing the grant application materials and process, the Department of Libraries will host a series of webinars for library staff and trustees to guide them through the application process.

We anticipate opening the application as early as February 2023. We further anticipate grant awards will be made by spring 2023 so that projects can begin as early as summer 2023. Building projects must be fully completed by December 31, 2026.

Find more information federal capital project grant opportunities at <https://libraries.vermont.gov/capitalprojectsgrants>. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you have questions about the upcoming grant opportunities the Department of Libraries will administer by contacting [lib.contact@vermont.gov](mailto:lib.contact@vermont.gov).



---

**State of Vermont**  
**Department of Libraries**  
60 Washington Street, Suite 2  
Barre, VT 05641

Tel: 802-636-0040

*Agency of Administration*

We also extend congratulations to the Vermont libraries whose direct requests for CDS funds were approved:

- The Fletcher Free Library in Burlington will receive \$500,000 for historic preservation work.
- The Kimball Public Library in Randolph will receive \$200,000 for historic preservation work.
- The Worthen Library in South Hero will receive \$57,000 to install a solar energy demonstration project for libraries.