TRUSTEE

Library Trustees Association (LTAS) Section - NYLA - New York

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OUR MISSION

Library Trustees Association, (LTAS), is a section of the New York Library Association (NYLA) that represents, assists, educates, and honors public library boards and their trustees as providers of universal library service.

Our core activities include:

Connecting with library trustees to inform them of issues affecting libraries and library service;Advocating support of libraries and their programs;Recognizing and celebrating the accomplishments of library trusteesEducating trustees about their role in the library

Spring Issue- April 2023

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A Trustee's Take on Sustainability

A Director's Take on Sustainability

Representative to the NYLA Sustainability Committee

Why a Board of Trustee Self-Evaluation is Necessary at the End of the Fiscal Year

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From the President, Jean Currie

Hello fellow Library Trustees:

I hope you and your libraries are having a great spring with lots of people coming through your door or maybe using the WiFI, great programs, and no crises!

By now all of our libraries have submitted the state annual report. It might seem like a rather dull document that we approved, but it does have all sorts of interesting and valuable data that should show us how we did in serving our community - circulations, programs, door counts etc. In addition, it should help with our short- and long-range planning – what are we doing really well, what could be improved, what could be changed? Are we meeting our mission and goals?

At my last board meeting, we had a staff member review some of the statistics. We learned:

- that there had been substantial weeding of the collection (a good thing!),
- an improved mechanism for keeping track of purchases of book series,
- some interesting new collections based on new programming and funding from grants (neurodiversity is one example),
- a downturn in circulation which was actually a lot less than the national downturn reported by "Library Journal",
- and a wonderful big increase in the use of the library by tweens and teens.

Apart from circulation, these figures more than met our goals for 2022 and have led to revised goals for this coming year. Information like this is most helpful for a board as we oversee the finances, work to find the money to support the library, and advocate for our library with the public and our funding sources. Don't blow this report off!

LTAS is planning two programs for the NYLA Conference to be held in Saratoga Springs, November 1-4, 2023. We will continue our programs on legal issues with Stephanie Cole Adams and the team of Ellen Bach and Robert Scofield. We are also delighted to sponsor a pre-conference workshop with Rebekkah Smith Aldrich on **Libraries and Sustainability**. Rebekkah is a founder of the effort to advance the practice of sustainable libraries in NY, an effort which has now spread to other states. We hope to see you there. If you would like more information about how to become involved in the Sustainable Libraries Certification Program go to: <u>https://sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org/</u>

I should also note that later this year, NYLA will be entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sustainable Libraries Initiative that will allow NYLA members to get discounted rates to join the program.

Jean Currie LTAS President Library Trustee Association Section of the New York Library Association (LTA) | April eNewsletter Guest Editor: Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Executive Director, Mid-Hudson Library System; Co-Founder & Advisory Board President, <u>Sustainable Libraries Initiative</u>; and co-author of the <u>Handbook for Library</u> <u>Trustees of New York State</u>

Introductory Article: Sustainability as a Core Value by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich

As we think about the future of our libraries and how we, as library leaders, help to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors, we must confront the realities of climate change. No corner of the world will be left untouched by climate change. In 2019, The *Lancet* Countdown report, a widely respected publication in the medical community, noted that *"The life of every child born today will be profoundly affected by climate change. Without accelerated intervention, this new era will come to define the health of people at every stage of their lives."*

Not-so-coincidentally, also in 2019, the American Library Association (ALA) named "sustainability" a core value of the profession. As a core value, sustainability joins the ranks of "democracy," "intellectual freedom," and the "public good" as key values to focus on as we do our work. This step was taken to acknowledge that societal efforts to respond to climate change have not expanded at the scale needed to avoid substantial damage to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades. The organization also acknowledged the 6,000 scientific studies that had found the immediate consequences of climate change are far more dire than originally predicted, calling for the transformation of the world economy at a speed and scale that has "no documented historic precedent."

In the face of such serious predictions, we are all called upon to do what we can from our personal sphere of influence.

"Every job is a climate job," a phrase coined by <u>Drawdown Labs</u> Director Jamie Beck Alexander, asks us each to recognize the influence we have in our role, industry, or the level we serve at in an organization. As a library trustee, you are the ultimate authority over the library's strategic plan, budget and policy making. Each of these three areas of governance can be leveraged to not only ensure your library is sustainable, thriving into the future, but that your library is contributing to co-creating communities that are also sustainable, resilient, and regenerative. Both the American Library Association and the Sustainable Libraries Initiative use the "triple bottom line" definition of sustainability which can serve as a framework to shift your mindset as you make decisions at the board table:

> As you make decisions consider not just how much it may cost but will the outcome of your decision. The goal is to find balance in our decision making among the three elements of the triple bottom line: economic feasibility, environmental stewardship, and social equity.

As you proceed with making decisions on behalf of your community at the library board table, here are a selection of questions to yourself. Are the choices your board is making:

- Resulting in treating library workers, library patrons, and community members with dignity, empathy and respect?;
- Considering the natural resources of our world?;
- Celebrating localism and invest in the local economy?;
- Creating healthy indoor and outdoor environments?
- Respecting the taxpayers investment in the library?

These questions do not always stand alone, they need to be overlaid to get to the balance the intersection of the three areas of the triple bottom line asks us to work towards.

Inspired to learn more?

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SUSTAINABILIT

- Read on. Hear from folks in the field, including three trustees, just like yourself, who have embraced this work at their libraries.
- Subscribe to the free, monthly newsletter of the Sustainable Libraries Initiative: <u>https://sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org/sustainable-libraries-initiative-newsletter</u>
- Plan to join us for the LTAS half-day pre-conference event at the 2023 New York Library Association Conference in Saratoga Springs, NY where we will discuss this topic in depth.

The Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI) & the Sustainable Library Certification Program (SLCP) by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich

The <u>Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI)</u> provides library leaders, including Trustees, with a proven path forward to co-create libraries and communities that will thrive in the coming years. The Sustainable Library Certification Program and the SLI community of practice focus your leadership to enable your library, and ultimately your community, to become more environmentally sound, socially equitable and economically feasible.

The New York Library Association (NYLA) was the incubator for this, now, national program, getting its start with a retreat that 25 NYLA members attended to discuss how to best support the library community in the face of climate change. Out of this work resources were created to help educate library folks that sustainability is more than just going green. In the <u>Road Map to</u> <u>Sustainability</u>, core concepts such as the "triple bottom line" definition of



sustainability and the phrase "sustainable thinking" are defined. The award-winning Sustainable Library Certification Program (SLCP) was created to provide a methodical way for libraries to consider the application of the triple bottom line of sustainability throughout twelve categories of decisions – from how a facility is constructed and operated, to policymaking, to library service, program, collection, and partnership choices.



The most exciting part of the SLI is the growing community of practice, with more than 70 libraries actively working through the program, the body of examples, solutions, and great ideas grows almost daily. You can learn from those libraries who have finished the certification by checking out their <u>final presentations</u>.

Sign up for the <u>free monthly newsletter</u> for more ideas, stories from the field, and resources to help your library and community become more sustainable.

Joe Montouri, Trustee, Mahopac Public Library & Executive Director, Sustainable Putnam in New York's Hudson River Valley

Sustainability & Public Libraries: A Match Made in Heaven

As a youngster, I would never have guessed that I'd be borrowing museum passes, Wi-Fi hotspots, or household tools from my local library. Through my local library today, however, I can access these and many other materials and services.

Perhaps it's no surprise that as more and more Americans address the challenges of the climate crisis, libraries are also meeting this new need. Think about it. What other institution has the potential to inform every member of the community, from toddlers to senior citizens?

With disinformation all too prevalent, libraries are more essential than ever in providing vetted materials and information essential to decreasing carbon emissions and building community resilience for what lies ahead.

Meeting New York State's ambitious climate goals (see the Climate Leadership and Protection Act) requires the active participation of every New York municipality, business, and household. Thankfully, many libraries are already providing information and resources to help everyone meet these goals. But libraries are also doing other exciting sustainability work.

For example, many library boards are establishing sustainability policies and practices to govern its operations. That's important for the library, but it also informs the community and demonstrates best practices in an authentic way. Libraries are "walking the walk."

Residents learn something new when their local library adopts a policy that prioritizes *reuse* over *recycling* of outdated equipment, or invests in building energy efficiency by adding insulation — saving money *and* decreasing carbon emissions. When patrons see an EV charger in the library parking lot, they may seriously consider an electric vehicle purchase. Needless to say, Sustainable Library Certification is a cause for celebration and civic pride! Announcements via website, newsletter, or a press release are great ways to reinforce that lesson.

In short, our libraries are uniquely positioned to publicly demonstrate what's possible and practical in addressing the climate crisis.

There's yet another avenue available: partnering with local civic organizations. For example, many municipalities have instituted Climate Smart Community Task Forces, charged with implementing sustainability measures. Community nonprofits, from Rotary chapters to food banks are also natural partners. In 2020, I helped found Sustainable Putnam, a small nonprofit, right in my local library's Community Room. We've since held many workshops and presentations there, co-sponsored a sustainability-themed art exhibit, and even advised the library on its own energy efficiency efforts.

As a library trustee and Sustainable Putnam's Director, I can honestly say that it's been a dynamic match. The reach of our library's publicity has been invaluable in getting Sustainable Putnam off the ground. And our Clean Energy presentations have increased the library's relevance to an even wider circle of patrons.

Whatever steps your library takes toward a more sustainable future, you can be sure that it will have a positive educational, financial, and environmental benefit to your community.

Lisa Kropp, Director, Lindenhurst Memorial Library; Advisory Board Member, Sustainable Libraries Initiative & Incoming President, New York Library Association

If you had told me when I was in library school that a majority of my day-to-day work would involve thinking about sustainability or climate action in libraries, I would not have believed you.

But times change in libraries. We shifted away from VHS tapes and now DVDS to streaming services and other devices. We created more seating and social services areas in our buildings as we thoughtfully trimmed collections to accommodate this new use of space.

Over the last few years, many libraries have turned their attention to climate action and sustainability. Why? Because it is the right thing to do for our communities and for the greater good in general. This is the very mission of libraries – to serve their communities in ways that are meaningful and impactful. I can't think of anything more impactful than having the library seen as a leader in this area.

Libraries are perfectly suited to adopt sustainable thinking. What does this mean? It aligns a library's core values and resources with the local and global community's right to ensure, to bounce back from disruption, and to thrive by bringing new and energetic life to fruition through choices made in all areas of library operations and outreach.

By making impactful choices for our communities (going fine free, offering repair cafes, committing to a more diverse staff and Library Board, making green energy choices for building upgrades, etc.) libraries can model for their patron base, how to embed proactive climate actions and sustainable thinking into everyday life.

Fast forward from the 1990s when I began my work as a professional librarian, to now. I have committed to sustainable thinking and climate action work as active members of different associations (NYLA, ALA, the Sustainable Libraries Initiative.) The Lindenhurst Memorial Library went through the Sustainable Library Certification Program, becoming the third certified library in the United States in 2019. Today, we have a full-time Sustainability Coordinator on staff who leads staff and the community through important events like The Great Give Back, repair cafes, ewaste recycling, establishing two Little Free Pantries, and organizing our community garden.

I cannot urge my colleagues enough to join us in this work. Libraries matter to their communities, and to the greater world community. I can't think of a better place for climate action work to take place, than in a local community led by a strong library and its dedicated workers.

Check out the Lindenhurst Memorial Library's Sustainability page on their web site.

Pam Rice, Trustee, Mamakating Library (NY)

Mamakating Library's Sustainable Library Certification process was launched in 2021 when director Peggy Johansen was inspired after hearing SLI Co-Founder, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich speak about sustainability in libraries. The Board of Trustees and library staff enthusiastically supported the initiative, and a Sustainability Committee was formed, with worked organized around each team member's interest and knowledge base. The library's new director, Cheryl Jones, joined us in the fall and has brought her own passions and skills to the process. She leads our current Sustainability Committee, which includes a member of our Board of Trustees, the director of our local environmental education center, our building maintenance staff, and our former Town Supervisor. Each member brings unique knowledge of different aspects of our community.

Mamakating Library has one of the smallest operating budgets in the Ramapo Catskill Library System. From the outset, we knew our certification process could not be costly or impact our operating budget. The team focused on innovation and creative thinking. We have found that the more we do, the more we learn, so experimentation has been key to our progress. We also aim to maximize impact of our programs and initiative, hitting multiple Sustainable Libraries Certification points with each program. One example is our Full Moon Bike Ride series, which runs May through October. Through this project, community members are invited to meet at the library the evening of each full moon, heading out together to ride our local trails, which include the O&W Rail Trail and the D&H Canal Trail. This program focuses on building community engagement through interpersonal, intergenerational connection, promoting activities which improve community health (Sullivan County has one of the lowest health rankings in NYS), and celebrating the beauty of our natural environment. Our Full Moon Bike Rides touch on the certification sections of Transportation, Social Cohesion, and Collective Impact.

Mamakating Library has been deeply narrative-driven throughout the certification process, reminding ourselves that our library is a community hub, and that by aligning our actions with the three spheres of sustainability, we will ensure the vitality and resilience of our community going forward. We look forward to soon becoming a Certified Sustainable Library!

Check out Mamakating Library's web page on their sustainability efforts!

Mark Wilson, Trustee, Kinderhook Memorial Library and Trustee, Mid-Hudson Library System

When I think about sustainability, the first thing that comes to mind is this saying attributed to Yankee thriftiness:

"Use it up | Wear it out | Make do | Or do without."

Libraries have been doing that for decades. Sustainable practices were well in place as they faced budget shortfalls, lack of building space and other critical resources – yet still providing the best services possible to their patrons. Today, sustainability is a critical part of many organizations' operational goals. Libraries have a lot to teach in this area, as well as new opportunities to learn.

Promoting sustainable efforts is critical to libraries' futures by codifying practices that long have been part of an informal yet integral framework. Sustainability practices help guide trustees and staff with long-range strategic planning and policy development that becomes actionable, indeed flexible. It provides leadership the chance to fully understand how libraries connect with their communities and constituents through its facilities, operations, policy, technology, programming and partnerships as we dive deeper into the 21st century. Finally, cost benefits can be realized from savings in all these areas as practices are put into place. Simply put, Sustainability Rules!

Library sustainability encompasses a combination of three essential pillars – the Triple Bottom Line – for success: economically feasible, socially equitable and environmentally sound. Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI) is one team that helps libraries achieve their sustainability goals. Several libraries in the Mid-Hudson Library System are working on SLI certification and others have successfully completed the initiatives. They can serve as an important resource in your journey to sustainable practices.

So why not formalize what you've been doing already . . . and for a long time? For more information, check out https://sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org/.

There is another saying I rather like . . .

"Everyone talks about the weather, but no one does anything about it."

... but that is for another time.

Check out some of the Mid-Hudson Library System's resources created through their Sustainable Library Certification experience:

- <u>Mission, Vision, and Values Statements</u>
- Sustainability Policy
- <u>MHLS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy</u>
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy & Procedure Analysis Framework

Resources List:

For an introduction:

- <u>Sustainability in Libraries: A Call to Action</u> [American Library Association]
- Road Map to Sustainability [Sustainable Libraries Initiative]
- <u>Partners for the Future: Public Libraries and Local Governments Creating Sustainable</u> <u>Communities</u> [Urban Libraries Council]

For examples:

- <u>Certification Presentations</u> from libraries who have completed the Sustainable Library Certification Program [Sustainable Libraries Initiative]
- <u>Resilient Communities: Libraries Respond to Climate Change</u> (A Programming Guide for Libraries) [American Library Association]

For further reading:

- <u>Recommended Reading</u> [Sustainable Libraries Initiative]
- <u>Selected Bibliography</u> [American Library Association]
- <u>SustainRT Zotero Library</u> [Sustainability Round Table of the American Library Association]

Friendly Ways to Be Sustainable: The Friends of the Library and library trustees can help make it happen!

by Marie Bindeman

First, with the assistance of Wikipedia, the following definitions of sustainability may clarify the movement. Sustainability consists of fulfilling the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future generations, while ensuring a balance between economic growth, environmental care, and social well-being.

An integral component of sustainability is the ability to embrace diverse communities and the unique voices they support — with increasing challenges related to climate change, resource scarcity and population growth, it is more important than ever that we work together **to create a more resilient world**. Sustainability has three main pillars (or the triple bottom line): economically feasible, environmentally sound, and socially equitable. These three pillars are informally referred to as people, planet, and profits. The American Library Association added sustainability as a core value of librarianship in 2019.

How can Friends of Library organizations and library trustees assist in these efforts? Let's look at a selection of specific programs, resources, and practices.

- Assist the library in funding improvements to enhance accessibility to library programs and services by sponsoring enhancements such as the creation of sensory spaces. A sensory room is a calming space. It can be useful for everyone but particularly to children and adults with developmental disabilities, PTSD, autism, and sensory issues like harsh, bright lights and loud noises.
- Honor the cultures and true history of indigenous peoples by helping the library celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 11th.
- Financially support and sponsor programs for Earth Day in April which could include film showings, panel discussions, recycling initiatives, tree plantings, etc.
- Work with providers like Better World Books or ThriftBooks to coordinate leftovers from book sales so that unsold books can be recycled.
- Think about sponsoring a challenge in your local community. Kingston Library offers a monthly sustainability challenge for patrons with lots of resources and program ideas. Check it out at https://www.kingstonlibrary.org/sustainability-challenge-2023.
- Partner with other organizations to coordinate events like the Ulster County Food Fight, which is a competition to determine which community organization can garner the most donations for use by local food pantries. Be a donation site. Allow people to contribute

cash as well as food items so that food pantries can control supplies. Correlate such efforts in celebration of Giving Tuesday (https://givingtuesday.org).

- Create a list of titles and online resources for both children and adults to post on your library's website. Create bookmarks on recyclable paper for distribution to the community.
- Do the Friends underwrite prizes for the summer reading program? Encourage library staff members to carefully consider their choices of promotional "swag" such as pencils, pens, bags, and bookmarks. Avoid items which are made by companies whose workers are exploited or mistreated, items made of plastic or polystyrene, or single use/landfillbound products. Think about materials which are ethically sourced, locally produced, made of recycled materials, have a long use period, have minimal packaging, require low emissions in the production process, and can be easily composted or recycled. In other words, look for suppliers of locally made cloth book bags rather than plastic book bags ordered from an unfamiliar source.
- Find out more by checking out the Sustainable Libraries Initiative https://sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org/ which empowers library leaders to advance environmentally sound, socially equitable, and economically feasible practices to intentionally address climate change and co-create thriving communities. The initiative is designed to offer tools and resources that library leaders need to incorporate sustainability as a core value in their work. The Initiative has a certification program for libraries which the Friends and trustees can support and participate in with staff.

Partner with staff and have fun taking action to help create a more sustainable world!

Marie Bindeman, Friends of Libraries Section/NYLA Member At Large and FLS Representative to the NYLA Sustainability Committee.

Six Reasons Your Board Should Do an End-of-Year Review by John McCarthy

Most library boards know that they need to do a performance review of their Executive Director on a yearly basis. But few do a review of their own work on a similar basis. Here are six reasons you should.

- 1. Giving your board a report card: It's good to know what each of your members think your board did well, did poorly, or should do more of to improve over the coming year.
- Accountability: The public wants to know what you're doing to safeguard the institution that they love. Making public the results of your end-of-year review will give them confidence in your stewardship.
- 3. Example: You're in charge of evaluating your ED. If that person sees that you hold yourselves to the same standards that you hold them to, it will be easier to convince them to make any changes you want them to make.
- 4. Provide a basis for future planning: The end of every year should be an opportunity to see how closely you followed your Five Year Plan. Knowing how close you are following it will give you a sense of how quickly you'll be able to follow it in the future, giving you a chance to speed up or slow down that plan.
- 5. Strengthen the bonds between the trustees: working as a team can be hard sometimes. Working toward a common goal can often bring a team together. Knowing what the reasons are that your fellow board members use to evaluate the board's progress can help you understand their thinking.
- Come up with new ideas: lastly, you can use that review as an event for your patrons. A part of that review can serve as a brainstorming session for the community as a whole.
 What can we do next year that will make next year's end-of-year review as big a success as possible.

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In Final Order, Court Declares Maryland's Library E-book Law Unconstitutional provided by Kevin Carmody, Legislative Director, Assemblywoman Kimberly Jean-Pierre

Please click on the link below to read the article.

https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/libraries/article/89598-in-finalorder-court-declares-maryland-s-library-e-book-law-unconstitutional.html

2023 Velma K. Moore Award

Presented by the Library Trustees Association Section (LTAS) of NYLA

The Velma K. Moore Award was established to honor the memory of Velma Moore, one of the charter members of the of The New York State Association of Library Boards (NYSALB), now the **Library Trustees Association Section (LTAS)** of New York Library Association (NYLA), and wife of former New York State Lt. Governor Frank C. Moore. Mrs. Moore worked actively for the improvement of library service in New York State from 1947 until her death in 1961.

Mrs. Moore served two terms as president and was a member of the NYSALB Board from its establishment. For thirty-three years Mrs. Moore was also a Trustee of the Kenmore Public Library near Buffalo, New York.

The Award, to be given annually, was originally established in 1962 with a gift from the Moore family. The Award—with its **\$1500 cash prize**--will be announced at the 2023 NYLA Conference in Saratoga Springs NY and then personally presented to the recipient, along with a check, payable their library or system of choice, at their home library at a later date.

Eligibility

Any individual or group of individual *volunteers* who have made exemplary contributions to the development of library services in New York State is eligible for nomination. Nominees may include trustees, a community member, library boards, or any *volunteer* individual or *volunteer* group who supports libraries. Nominations can be made by anyone in the library community.

Nominating Procedure

Nominations may be submitted by e-mail to: <u>VKMAward.LTAS@gmail.com</u> or by mail to:

LTAS Velma K. Moore Award Committee % Suzanne Stockman 58 Clarkes Crossing Fairport NY 14450

The letter of nomination should include:

- Name and address of *nominee*.
- Library affiliation.
- A statement of not more than 500 words on the reason for nomination.
- Name, address, contact information and library affiliation of the *nominator*.

Deadline for receipt of nominations is Friday, June 30, 2023.

Criteria for Evaluating Nominees

- 1) Measurable service to local, county, system or state libraries, advancing the effectiveness of these libraries.
- 2) Service in areas of legislation or other support that advance library causes with local or state government.
- 3) Promotional services through publishing, speaking or involvement in professional or lay library groups or organizations.
- 4) Service to state or national library organizations, *e.g.* Library Trustee Association Section, United for Libraries, New York Library Association, American Library Association or service on State study committees.

This is a wonderful opportunity to recognize the efforts of a volunteer committed to bettering library services in New York State.

Velma K. Moore Award Winners 2022

Cuba Circulating Library, Cuba, New York 14727 www.cubalibrary.org, Tina Dalton, MLIS, Library Director Cuba Circulating Library, Cuba, New York 14727 www.cubalibrary.org, Tina Dalton, MLIS, Library Director



VKM AWARD WINNERS, CUBA CIRCULATING LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Front row: Jean Currie, LTAS President, Suzanne Stockman, LTAS Vice President, Tom Donahue (VP), Tina Dalton (Library Director), Lionel Legry Back row: Jill Schwab, Bradley Weaver, Wendy Sprague, Lin Assink, Denean Emerson



VKM AWARD WINNER, MARTINA "TINA" THOMPSON, Secretary, Board of Trustees

Henrietta Public Library <u>hpl.org</u>, Adrienne Pettinelli, Director, Henrietta Public Library Rochester, New York

Left to Right: Jean Currie, LTAS President, Martina "Tina" Thompson, Suzanne Stockman, LTAS Vice President



VKM AWARD WINNER, JOSEPH PONTECORVO, Vice President of the Board of Trustees

Island Park Public Llbrary islandparklibrary.org, Jessica Koenig, Director, Island Park, New York

Left to Right: Ian Smith-Assistant Director, Island Park Public Library, Dr. Dean Bacigalupo, Trustee, Island Park Public Library, Michael Schnall, Trustee, Island Park Public Library Robin Donovan, LTAS member, Joseph Pontecorvo, Vice President, Board of Trustees, Island Park Public Library, Jessica Koenig, Director, Island Park Public Library

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