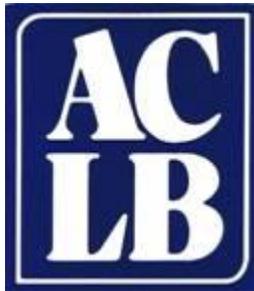


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# Connecticut Public Library Trustee Handbook



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Revised 2019

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Thank you to the Connecticut State Library for the initial printing of the Handbook.

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# Foreword

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## **Kendall F. Wiggin, Connecticut State Librarian**

It has been nearly 30 years since the first edition of the Connecticut Public Library Trustees Handbook has been published. During the intervening years public libraries have continued to thrive despite substantial societal, technological and economic changes. That rate of change continues to accelerate, putting tremendous pressure on libraries. As Connecticut public library trustees, you are entrusted with the preservation and future development of these important community institutions. As a trustee you will undoubtedly be confronted by both the daunting challenges and exciting opportunities facing today's public libraries. The way you respond to these issues, the decisions you make and the solutions you ultimately develop will be critical to the future of your library now and in the years ahead.

Fortunately, you do not have to face this challenge alone. You are very fortunate to have a peer organization that can provide you with assistance, guidance and support. This updated handbook is an excellent example of the quality work that the Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB) strives to accomplish on your behalf.

The handbook is designed to assist you in meeting the full range of your responsibilities. It contains useful, practical information about basic board operation and procedure. At the same time it includes valuable legal information as well as sound advice for dealing with some of the tough issues facing libraries, such as the protection of intellectual freedom and guidance for development of strong and effective policies.

It has been my pleasure to work with the members of the ACLB and I would like to take this opportunity to commend the members of the ACLB and the staff of the State Library who have worked so hard to produce this much-needed revised handbook.

The State Library board and the State Library staff are pleased and proud of our cooperative work with ACLB. We look forward to continuing our productive working relationship as we all strive to achieve the best possible public library services for the people of Connecticut.



# Chapter 1:

# Becoming a Trustee

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## This chapter covers:

- ✓ General description of library trustees in Connecticut
- ✓ Duties and responsibilities of trustees
- ✓ Job description for trustees
- ✓ Selection of trustees
- ✓ Orientation of new trustees

## General Description

Connecticut public library trustees are entrusted with the continued development of the community's public library, an institution essential to both individual and community well-being. For generations, public libraries have provided free access to the knowledge, information and diversity of ideas essential to a democratic society.

In Connecticut, library boards may be either governing or advisory. Governing boards have final legal and fiscal authority for the library. In general, if the library was founded by authority of Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 11-20 and 11-21, or is operated by a private association, trustees are members of a governing board. In some cases where the library is a department of the municipality the board may be advisory. In this case the board provides input on policies and planning and often participates in the hiring of a new library director. In both cases, however, the board has an important responsibility for representing the community, ensuring the quality of library service and advocating for adequate funding.

## Chapter 1: Becoming a Trustee

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An effective public library board of trustees consists of informed and dedicated citizens representing a cross-section of the population and governs the library for the benefit of the community. The board fulfills ethical, legal and fiduciary responsibilities by:

- Employing a qualified library director and understanding the director's roles and responsibilities
- Setting service-oriented library policies that uphold the principles of equal access to information and the free exchange of ideas
- Guiding the management and maintenance of library facilities and assets and expending financial resources judiciously
- Working to secure an appropriate funding level for facilities, technology, hours of operation, collections, programs and staffing
- Knowing and observing applicable municipal, state and federal laws and regulations
- Working with the director to develop and implement a written plan for the maintenance and improvement of library services
- Staying informed through regular continuing education

Collectively, a board of trustees should have:

- An interest in libraries
- Knowledge of the community served
- Business management/financial experience
- Legal knowledge
- Diversity in age, race and sex
- Varied personal backgrounds
- Advocacy skills

### Duties and Responsibilities/Job Description

Becoming a member of the board of trustees carries with it a responsibility to oversee the legal, ethical and financial health of the public library. Although it can be exciting and fun, it is important not to lose sight of this responsibility. As with any job, it can be helpful to understand the expectations that come with the position. Trustees are expected to attend all meetings and to be prepared to participate in discussions and vote on issues that come before the board.

### Job Title: Library Board Member

Accountable to: The taxpayers and the people served by the library

Responsible for: Working with other board members to oversee the library, establish policy and plans, determine the final budget and conduct public relations.

Duties:

- Attends and participates in all board meetings
- Reads board meeting minutes and other materials sent out before the board meeting
- Becomes informed about all phases of library operation
- Serves on committees as assigned by the board chair
- Lends expertise and leadership to the board for the good of the library
- Actively participates in activities and workshops
- Helps to secure adequate municipal funding for the library
- Participates in fundraising activities
- Visits the library often

Qualifications:

- Appreciation of the library and a desire to provide the best possible library service for the community
- Willingness to be a team player
- Ability to work with people
- Ability to plan
- Ability to put aside personal preferences for the greater good of the library

## **Selection of Trustees**

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The selection of trustees, the size of the board, the terms of membership and the powers and duties of trustees depend on how your library was founded.

Many libraries in Connecticut are covered by Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Sections 11-20 and 21 (see Chapter 3). If there is nothing contradictory in the town charter these libraries' boards are elected in the manner provided in C.G.S. Section 9-207. The number of board members must be divisible by three. Libraries serving cities may also have been formed under Sections 11-32 and 11-33. The boards governing these libraries consist of nine members appointed by the chief elected official of such municipality with the approval of the legislative body. Not more than one member of the legislative body shall be a member of said board. Until July 2010, these two sections applied only to cities. Now the wording applies to any municipality.

In Connecticut there are many variations on the composition and appointment of library board members. Some libraries operated by associations are not governed by these statutes. Libraries should consult their particular incorporation documents, town charters and ordinances for guidance.

The caliber of trustees aids in determining the success of the library. Potential trustees should be active, informed and interested library supporters. Trustees must devote a great deal of time and express a high level of interest in fulfilling their duty. Commitment is the primary qualification for those who serve on the board. Sharing the job description with potential candidates will help communicate the expectations for members. If the library board does not have direct control over the selection of new members, it is a good idea to communicate with the person(s) with that control and let them know the abilities and qualifications expected in new trustees.

Approximately half of all public library trustees in Connecticut are elected to their position. Most of the others are appointed by municipal officials. Some boards are self-perpetuating. The chart below lists the variety of methods for selection of members. Libraries occasionally have trustees who are selected by a combination of methods, i.e., some appointed and some ex-officio.

<b>Appointed</b>	An appointed trustee is selected by a public official or group of municipal officials.
<b>Elected</b>	An elected trustee is selected by the registered voters of the municipality in a municipal election.
<b>Ex-officio</b>	An ex-officio trustee is selected by virtue of holding a specified public office or a specified political, committee, social or religious affiliation in the municipality. For example, the legal authorization for some boards of trustees may require that their membership include the principal of the local high school, a member of the Board of Selectmen, a religious leader or a member of a prominent family.
<b>Self-perpetuating</b>	A self-perpetuating trustee is selected by the members of the library corporation or association, usually from the corporation or association membership but occasionally from the municipality at large.

### Terms of Membership

Board members should serve staggered terms in order to provide continuity of service. If your board is governed by C.G.S. 9-207, one third of board members are to be elected for six-year terms on a staggered election cycle.

No trustee should serve on the board indefinitely, no matter how dedicated and no matter how effective the trustee is. Continuity of service provides the wisdom of experience, but change provides the essential infusion of new ideas. Both are needed. It is the responsibility of board members to recruit and encourage qualified potential trustees.

There are many ways a former trustee may continue to contribute to the library organization:

- Helping to raise funds
- Joining a committee
- Volunteering for a short-term or long-term project
- Participating in a one-time event or project
- Providing positive public relations by continuing to be a good spokesperson and positive advocate for the library
- Offering occasional expertise in areas such as law, finance or public relations
- Becoming an active member of the Friends of the Library.

### Trustee Orientation

Very few new board members come to the position of trustee with the library knowledge they need to function effectively. Some specialized library knowledge is necessary to be an effective trustee. This knowledge cannot be readily acquired by the lay person who is interested in libraries but has never been directly involved in library planning. In addition, some new board members may not fully understand the roles and responsibilities of the board. New members will become effective members more quickly if they are provided with the information they need to feel comfortable with the new job and begin work.

A step-by-step orientation program should be designed jointly by the library director and the board. The new trustee should be informed as to how the introductory activities will be handled. Responsibility for planning and implementing the orientation is shared by the board chairperson, board members and library director.

The specifics of orientation obviously will vary with the style and size of the board and the type of library system. However, the importance of a written orientation plan cannot be overemphasized.

**Orientation Checklist — A New Trustee To-Do List**

- Tour the library and meet staff members
- Become informed about all aspects of the board:
  - ✓ Type of board: appointed, elected or self-perpetuating; ex-officio members
  - ✓ Governance of the library: municipal, corporate or association
  - ✓ Organization of the board, its officers and standing committees
  - ✓ Board meeting location and schedule
  - ✓ Responsibilities and expectations
  - ✓ Library and board goals and long-range plans
  - ✓ Library and board accomplishments
  - ✓ Trustee roles in relationship to the library director
  - ✓ The library's relationship to the Connecticut State Library, Association of Connecticut Library Boards, Connecticut Library Association, Connecticut Library Consortium and network consortium (if applicable)
- Meet with the library director and trustee chair to learn about the functioning of the library:
  - ✓ Organization and history
  - ✓ Funding sources and budgeting process
  - ✓ Day-to-day operations
  - ✓ Service to the community
  - ✓ Evolving nature of the library
  - ✓ Variety of services provided as the library moves beyond those traditionally offered and is open to ever-expanding possibilities
  - ✓ Relationship to other resources and groups
  - ✓ Projects in progress
  - ✓ Volunteer resources and Friends of the Library group

**Orientation Kit and Board Handbook**

In addition to the Connecticut Public Library Trustee Handbook, a new trustee needs local information to review and consult. The library director should provide each trustee with a copy of the library's by-laws and any local ordinances that affect the library, its long-range plan and annual updates, its policy manual and its current budget. A list of all funding sources and the percentage of revenue that each source represents is also an important tool for new trustees.

**Contents of a Local Manual May Include:**

**Board**

- Description of board members' responsibilities
- Descriptions of duties of officers, committees and charges
- Annual calendar with program and fiscal planning schedules
- List of board members, names, addresses, phone numbers and terms of office
- By-laws of the board and articles of incorporation if applicable
- Minutes of previous board meetings, especially those of the previous year
- List of suggested resources (e.g., publications and organizations)

**Personnel**

- Organizational chart for the library including position descriptions, pay scales, etc.
- Union contract, if applicable
- Staff list, titles, responsibilities, location within the library
- Brief biography of the library director
- Procedures for evaluation of the library director

### **Policies and Planning**

- History of the library and its current mission statement, goals and objectives
- Library policies on such subjects as, but not limited to, personnel, Internet access, meeting room use, etc.
- Community analyses such as census figures, economic and occupational trends
- Long-range development plans (which may already include the above information)
- Most recent library annual report with prior years for comparison

### **Statistical reports such as, but not limited to:**

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/stats>

- Circulation figures
- Program attendance
- Usage of technology resources
- Reference questions received and answered

### **Promotional materials including**

- Newspaper articles about the library and/or press releases
- Brochures

### **Budget and Finance**

- Current budget and financial reports
- Contracts with other libraries or networks

### **Local Government**

- Local laws, town charter sections and contracts pertaining to the library
- Local government information such as a list of Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee members

**Friends/Volunteers**

- Friends of the Library history and list of board members
- Information on activities performed for the library by volunteers

# Chapter 2:

# Board Organization

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**This chapter covers:**

- ✓ Characteristics of a good library board
- ✓ Content of library by-laws
- ✓ Duties of board officers
- ✓ Responsibilities of the library director, trustees and Friends

## **Characteristics of a Good Library Board**

Good library boards everywhere have characteristics that identify their operations as "professional":

- Trustees know what is expected of them in time, attendance, support and work to fulfill the job description.
- Trustees accept that a board acts as a unit and that differences of opinion will be worked out in amicable discussion and final decisions.
- The board has a structure of its own with by-laws, written policies and procedures covering all operations of the library.
- The board meets often and regularly with the expectation that individual absences will be justified.
- The board meeting is open to the public and abides by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- Trustees look to the chair to run the meeting and move the agenda along. However, it is the responsibility of all board members to ensure efficient and productive meetings. Most boards have adopted Robert's Rules of Order procedures for conducting board meetings.
- Meetings are conducted with dignity and each trustee is treated fairly.

- The library director is encouraged to participate but does not vote.

### By-laws

The Connecticut General Statutes, Chap. 190, Sec.11-21, empowers public library boards to adopt by-laws for their own governance. This is done in writing and by formally adopting and revising the by-laws at a regular meeting of the board.

Every library board should have its own written set of by-laws that provide the framework, rules and regulations covering its meetings and operation. By-laws should be drafted and revised as needed so as not to conflict with any local, state or federal laws or regulations. Some libraries do not have by-laws specific to the library; instead, they use those laid out in their municipal charter, act of special legislation or original municipal articles of incorporation. All trustees should have their own copies of all by-laws and rules governing their library. It is each trustee's responsibility to read and become familiar with the library's governing documents.

By-laws may include:

- Name of the organization
- Purpose and objective
- Constituency served
- Method of board and officer selection, duties, appointments and term
- Time, place and responsibility for regular meetings
- Attendance requirements
- Method for calling special meetings
- Definition of a quorum
- Appointment and duties of standing committees which may include:
  - Executive
  - Budget and finance
  - Personnel
  - Library development and planning
  - Policy
  - Legislative
  - Fundraising
  - Building
- Provision for special committees
- Required reports and yearly timetables

- Provision for amending the by-laws
- Provision that any motion dealing with policy or regulation must be continued over for final decision at a subsequent meeting
- Provision for filling vacancies
- Removal/replacement of trustees
- Provision for recourse to Robert's Rules of Order, revised edition, for procedural matters not covered in the by-laws

### **Duties of Officers**

All boards of trustees recognize the need for officers with clearly defined duties and powers for each office, all in writing and well understood by everyone. Board position descriptions can and should be designed to meet the specific needs of the individual library. Following are some sample position descriptions.

Boards of trustees traditionally elect the following officers:

#### **Chairperson/ President**

- Keeps the board operating effectively
- Works closely and cooperatively with the library director
- Serves as a diplomatic troubleshooter to identify potential problems and issues that require advance board study and action
- Remembers that the chairperson is only one member of the board and is not empowered alone to set policy for the board or the library
- Walks a delicate line between front and back stage, doing and delegating, remaining silent and speaking, pushing and pulling, persisting and praising, listening and leading
- Ensures that all board members contribute and are given due credit in carrying the workload for the board
- Acts as the chief spokesperson representing the board both orally and in correspondence
- Plans and presides over board meetings
  - Sets agenda in consultation with the library director and other board members

- Conducts efficient and productive meetings that move the board toward its goals
  - Keeps the discussion focused on the major action issues to be considered
- Appoints committees for specific assignments
  - Chooses committee chairs with the commitment and ability to reach the board's assigned objective within the assigned time
  - Monitors the progress of committees and provides help if needed without dominating
  - May serve as ex-officio members of all committees except the nominating committee.

Some boards limit the chairperson's term of office to one year to facilitate rotation of leadership responsibilities. This creates a stronger board and lessens the potential for one person to dominate the board.

### **Vice Chairperson/Vice President**

- The commitment and leadership abilities of the person the board elects as vice chairperson should be similar to those of a chairperson.
- The vice chairperson automatically becomes the chairperson in the event of the chairperson's resignation or death unless the by-laws provide otherwise.
- The vice chairperson presides in the absence of the chairperson or whenever the chairperson temporarily vacates the position.
- In the absence of the chairperson, the vice chairperson is not an ex-officio member of any committee and cannot fill vacancies unless specified in the by-laws.

### **Secretary**

It is important for the secretary to have a general knowledge of the board's statutory authority, by-laws and operating policies as well as parliamentary procedure. The secretary should understand that minutes of a public body must be a clear, concise, factual record for possible later reference or legal evidence showing what specific action was taken, why it was taken, when and by whom. The secretary:

- Issues and posts for public notice advance agendas of meetings following specific legal requirements for open meetings
- Prepares the official board minutes and keeps them on public file
- Keeps members' attendance record
  - Presides at meetings in the absence of the chairperson and vice chairperson until the election of a chair pro tem

- Handles all official correspondence on behalf of the board

### **Treasurer**

The treasurer's role varies with the size of the library. In small libraries, the treasurer may keep the books, deposit funds, prepare reports and write checks or vouchers. In larger libraries, the treasurer is the legal officer named to assure that financial operations are being properly handled. Bylaws should outline the specific job. The treasurer:

- Understands financial accounting
- Serves as chairperson of the board finance committee
- Works with the library director to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to the board on a timely basis
- Assists the library director in preparing the annual budget and presenting the budget to the board for approval
- Reviews the annual audit and answers board members' questions about the audit

### **Meetings**

What follows is a brief outline for conducting efficient and lawful board meetings. All members of the board should be informed and active participants in the meetings.

- The meeting is called to order. A library board meeting should start and end on time. A board meeting is a business meeting that should be conducted in a businesslike manner.
  - Attendance is taken. Those present and absent are noted in the minutes. The attendance record is important proof that the meeting had a quorum present to conduct official business. Late arrivals are noted in the minutes to encourage on-time attendance.
  - Visitors are recognized. Guests such as staff members and reporters are introduced. The board should know who is in attendance.
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- The agenda is approved. It is the board's plan for the meeting and must be formally accepted. Under Freedom of Information (FOI) requirements, the

## Chapter 2: Board Organization

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agenda for all regular meetings must be available at least 24 hours before the meeting. New business not on the agenda may be considered and acted on only with a 2/3 vote of the members. Further information is available at <http://www.ct.gov/foi/>

- The minutes of the last meeting are approved. Minutes are the official record of board actions. They should be scrutinized carefully before the meeting and errors corrected before voting to approve them. Under FOIA, the minutes must be made available to the public within seven days of the meeting. Since the minutes are not formally approved until the next meeting, they may be marked “draft.” The vote of each member on any issue must be put in writing and made available to the public within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.
- The treasurer's financial report is heard. This should come early on the agenda and should not include discussion about where to find new revenues. This issue should be considered by the fundraising committee which reports regularly to the board. Questions about bills should be directed to the administrator prior to the board meeting unless the entire board needs to consider a question.
- The library director's report is heard, for information purposes only. Issues that the library director wishes the board to act on should be included under the New Business section of the agenda.
- Committee reports are heard.
- Old Business is considered. There may be items such as motions tabled or actions not completed at the previous meeting. These may have been intentionally carried over to allow for consideration. For instance, some policies need careful consideration and should be discussed once and then brought back for a decision. All items must be properly noted on the agenda.
- New Business is considered. Any items under New Business should be noted on the agenda prior to the meeting, especially any requiring action.
  - Audience input is heard. Visitors attending the meeting should be allowed to speak for a specified time.
  - Announcements are heard, such as those for future board meetings and activities.
  - The meeting is adjourned. After board business is finished, the chair asks for a motion to adjourn.

Working Together: Library Directors, Boards of Trustees and Friends

Working Together: Roles and Responsibilities Guidelines

Responsibilities of	Library Director	Trustee	Friend
<b>General Administrative</b>	Administer daily operation of the library including personnel, collection development, fiscal, physical plant and programmatic functions. Act as advisor to the board and provide support to the Friends and community groups.	Recruit and employ a qualified library director; maintain an ongoing performance appraisal process for the director in accordance with town charter.	Support quality library service in the community through fund raising, volunteerism and serving as advocates for the library.
<b>Policy</b>	Apprise board of need for new policies, as well as policy revisions. Implement the policies of the library as adopted by the library board.	Identify and adopt written policies to govern the operation and program of the library.	Support the policies of the library as adopted by the library board.
<b>Planning</b>	Coordinate and implement a strategic plan with board, friends, staff and community.	Ensure that the library has a strategic plan with implementation and evaluation components.	Provide input into the library's strategic plan and support its implementation.
<b>Fiscal</b>	Prepare an annual budget for the library in accordance with town charter.	Seek adequate funds to carry out library operations; Assist in the preparation and presentation of the annual budget in accordance with town charter.	Conduct fund raising to support the library's mission and plans.
<b>Advocacy</b>	Promote the mission of the library within the community. Educate the board, Friends and community regarding local, state and federal issues which impact the library.	Promote the mission of the library within the community. Advocate for the library to legislators.	Promote the mission of the library within the community. Advocate for the library to legislators.
<b>Meetings</b>	Participate in board and Friends meetings and ensure that there is a liaison from the board to the Friends and vice versa.	Participate in all board meetings. Appoint a liaison to the Friends board and become a member of the Friends.	Maintain a liaison to the board of trustees.
<b>Networking</b>	Encourage board and Friends to join state and national professional organizations and make them aware of educational opportunities.	Join the Association of Connecticut Library Boards as a resource for policies, operations and advocacy for libraries.	Join the Friends of Connecticut Libraries as a resource to better support the library.



Association of Connecticut Library Boards



CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY

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# Chapter 3:

# Legal Responsibilities

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**This chapter covers:**

- ✓ Legal and ethical responsibilities of trustees
- ✓ Freedom of Information Act
- ✓ Confidentiality of library records
- ✓ Other laws affecting libraries

## Trustees and the Law

All public library trustees must recognize and accept their legal position as governing agents of the library. A trustee of a public library is a public officer who has fiduciary responsibility to the community's citizens and taxpayers. A fiduciary is a person who holds something in trust for another. The public library is a municipal asset which board members hold in trust for the public. If library trustees violate their trust or fiduciary duty, they may be subject to legal consequences. Trustees of governing boards have a legal responsibility to ensure adherence to legal and ethical standards. Trustees need to be aware of the relevant legal requirements, strive to act within the laws and seek expert assistance as appropriate. This section of the handbook is not intended to give legal advice but rather to give general direction on a governing board's responsibility.

The chart on Working Together in Chapter 2 of this handbook describes the differing roles of trustees and directors regarding the legal responsibilities for care of the library. Trustees may rely heavily on the director's expertise and knowledge of local, state and federal laws that affect the library. However, trustees cannot abrogate their responsibility to assure that all policies and practices conform to all local, state and federal legal requirements.

### Municipal Charters and Ordinances

Many Connecticut municipalities are governed by special legislation, charter or ordinances, components of which may or may not relate directly to the library. It is critical for trustees to know if their municipality has such a charter or has plans to implement one and if so, how its provisions affect their library. While trustees have traditionally looked to the Connecticut General Statutes to delineate the rights and responsibilities of trustees to exert "custody and management" over public libraries, a local charter or ordinances may take precedence over these statutes. All trustees should be familiar with the statutes, charter, ordinances and by-laws affecting their library.

If the community is planning a charter change, the board should ensure that at least one trustee becomes familiar with the charter change process and is informed every step of the way about the proposed changes.

### Ethics

Library boards may wish to adopt their own codes of ethics. In general, trustees should not use their position for personal gain for themselves, relatives and friends. Board members also should:

- Represent the interests of all people served by the library and not favor special interest
- Do nothing to violate the trust of those who elected or appointed them to the board
- Never use their service on the board for personal advantage
- Never vote on matters for which they have personal financial interest
- Keep confidential information confidential
- Not hold board meetings without the director
- Observe policies of the board and library
- Not accept complaints from the public or staff on library matters—these complaints are the director's responsibility
- Attend board meetings regularly

The office of State Ethics does not have jurisdiction over municipal ethics issues.

The American Library Association Code of Ethics may be found at:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics.cfm>

## Liability

“Connecticut statutory and common law provides municipal officials with significant protection from civil liability. But the law does not provide total immunity. Thus, under certain circumstances municipal officials can be sued individually. Also, under certain circumstances, the law requires municipalities to indemnify municipal officials who are sued because of actions they took in their official capacity.” (OLR Report 2009-R-0444)

In general those who serve on a municipal board or commission are immune from civil liability resulting from any act, error or omission made in the exercise of their policy or decision-making responsibilities if they were acting in good faith. For a good explanation of the limits of municipal liability, see the Office of Legislative Research Report: Civil Liability of a Municipal Official at:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2009/rpt/2009-R-0444.htm>

Acting in good faith and with due diligence requires a board member to:

- Attend board meetings regularly, coming prepared and having read all material to be discussed in advance of the meeting
- Ask questions and not vote on any motion action having sufficient information on which to base an opinion
- Ensure that minutes are recorded, reviewed for accuracy and made available to the public as required under the Freedom of Information Act
- Review fiscal records and controls at regular intervals
- Implement and regularly review appropriate policies
- Maintain active committees
- Avoid conflict of interest: a generally accepted rule of thumb is that a trustee or his/her family may not receive any gain (tangible or intangible) in dealing with the library

Questions or concerns about the library's liability should be taken up with the local municipal or board counsel.

### Connecticut Statutes Affecting Libraries

The complete Connecticut General Statutes may be found at:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/lco/statutes.asp>

[https://cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_190.htm](https://cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_190.htm)

(This listing includes statutes regarding Freedom of Information, Voter Registration, Confidentiality of Library Records, municipal elections and the Connecticut Education Network as well as statutes specifically concerning public libraries.)

## Freedom of Information Act

As public agencies, public libraries must comply with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act. Generally FOIA also applies to association libraries because of their government funding and the fact that they perform a governmental function (serving as the town's public library). Any questions on the requirements of FOIA should be addressed to the Commission. Contact information is on page 3-8 of this manual.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (Be sure to consult the appropriate statutes.)**

#### *PUBLIC AGENCIES*

*You have the right to obtain records and attend meetings of all public agencies – with certain limited exceptions.*

*This applies to*

- State and local government agencies, departments, institutions, boards, commissions and authorities and their committees.*
- Executive, administrative or legislative offices, and the judicial branch and the Division of Criminal Justice with respect to their administrative functions.*
- Certain other entities based on the following criteria: (1) whether the entity performs a governmental function; (2) the level of government funding; (3) the extent of government involvement or regulation; and (4) whether the entity was created by the government.*

**PUBLIC MEETINGS**

*I. Meetings, including hearings and other proceedings, must be open to the public except in limited situations.*

*A public meeting is any hearing or other proceeding of a public agency, or gathering of, or communication by or to a quorum of a multi-member agency, to discuss or act on any matter over which it has authority.*

*The following are not public meetings: meetings of certain personnel search committees; collective bargaining strategy and negotiating sessions; caucuses; chance or social gatherings not intended to relate to official business; administrative or staff meetings of a single-member agency (e.g., mayor); and communications limited to notice of agency meetings or their agendas.*

*No registration or other requirements may be imposed on a member of the public seeking attendance at a public meeting.*

*The public, as well as the news media, may photograph, record or broadcast meetings, subject to prior reasonable rules regarding non-interference with the conduct of the meeting.*

*II. Only three kinds of meetings are recognized under the Freedom of Information Act: Regular, Special and Emergency.*

*A state agency must file each year a schedule of its regular meetings with the Secretary of the State. A town or city agency must file each year a schedule of its regular meetings with the clerk of the town or city. A multi-town district or agency must file each year a schedule of its regular meetings with the clerk of each municipal member of the district or agency. A special meeting may be called up to 24 hours (excluding weekends, holidays, and days on which the office of the Secretary of the State or municipal clerk, as the case may be, is closed) before the time set for the meeting. A special meeting is called by filing a notice stating the time, place and business to be transacted.*

*A state agency files this notice with the Secretary of the State; a local agency files this notice with the municipal clerk; a multi-town district or agency files this notice with the clerk of each municipal member of the district or agency.*

*An emergency meeting may be held without complying with the preceding notice requirements. However, the agency must file its minutes, including the reason for the emergency, within 72 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) of the meeting with the Secretary of the State if a state agency; or with the municipal clerk if a local agency; or with the clerk of each municipal member if a multi-town district or agency.*

*III. You are entitled to receive a copy of the notice and agenda of a meeting.*

*An agency is required to send a notice of its meetings, where practicable, at least 1 week prior to the meeting date to any person who has made a written request. The agency may establish a reasonable charge for this service.*

### Chapter 3: Legal Responsibilities

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*Each agency must make available its agenda for each regular meeting at least 24 hours before the meeting to which it refers. New business not on the agenda may be considered and acted on only on a 2/3 vote of the members of the agency.*

*IV. Agency minutes and record of votes must be available to the public.*

*The minutes of each agency meeting must be made available to the public within 7 days of the session to which they refer in the agency's office if it has one; or, if none, in the office of the Secretary of the State for state agencies or in the municipal clerk's office for local agencies. In the case of special meetings, the 7-day period excludes weekends and holidays. The minutes must contain the record of each member's vote on any issue before the agency.*

*The votes of each member on any issue must be put in writing and made available to the public within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, of the meeting at which the votes were taken.*

*The minutes of a meeting at which an executive session occurs must indicate all persons who were in attendance at the closed session, except for job applicants who were interviewed.*

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

*I. An agency may close certain portions of its meetings by a vote of 2/3 of the members present and voting. This vote must be conducted at a public session.*

*Meetings to discuss the following matters may be closed: specific employees (unless the employee concerned requests that the discussions be open to the public); strategy and negotiations regarding pending claims and litigation; security matters; real estate acquisition (if openness might increase price); or any matter that would result in the disclosure of a public record exempted from the disclosure requirements for public records.*

*Any business or discussion in a closed session must be limited to the above areas.*

*The agency may invite persons to present testimony or opinion in the executive session, but their attendance must be limited to only the time necessary for that testimony or opinion.*

#### **PUBLIC RECORDS**

*I. Most records or files of state and local agencies, including minutes of all their meetings, are available to the public for inspection or copying.*

*This includes*

*-Information or data which is typed, handwritten, tape recorded, printed, photographed or computer-stored.*

*-Most inter-agency and intra-agency memoranda or letters.*

*II. Records specifically exempted from disclosure by federal law or state statute are not available to the public. In addition, the following records may not be available to the public: some preliminary drafts or notes; personnel or medical files; certain law enforcement records, including arrest records of juveniles and some*

witness and victim identification information; records relating to pending claims and litigation; trade secrets and certain commercial or financial information; test questions used to administer licensing, employment or academic examinations; real estate appraisals and construction contracts until all of the property has been acquired; personal financial data required by a licensing agency; records relating to collective bargaining; tax returns and communications privileged by the attorney-client relationship; names and addresses of public school students; information obtained by illegal means; certain investigation records of reported misconduct in state government or names of state employees who report such misconduct to the state Attorney General or Auditors; certain adoption records; election, primary, referenda and town meeting petition pages, until certified; certain health authority complaints and records; certain educational records; certain records, when there are reasonable grounds to believe disclosure may result in a safety risk; and certain records, if disclosure would compromise the security or integrity of an information technology system. Also, records of personnel search committees need not be disclosed if they would identify executive level employment candidates without their consent.

III. You may inspect public records during regular office hours, but copies, print-outs or transcripts should be requested in writing.

The fee for a copy of a public record from a state agency must not exceed 25¢ per page. The fee for a copy of a public record from a non-state agency must not exceed 50¢ per page. The fee for a computer disk, tape, printout or for a transcript, or a copy thereof, must not exceed the actual cost to the agency involved. The agency may also require the prepayment of these fees if their estimated cost is \$10.00 or more. No sales tax may be imposed for copies of the public records requested under this Act.

The agency is required to waive any fee for copies if the person requesting the copies is poor and cannot afford it; or if the agency determines that the request benefits the public welfare. There is an additional charge for a certified copy of a public record.

You are entitled to prompt access to inspect or copy public records. If an agency fails to respond to a request within four business days, such failure can be treated as a denial of the request.

If you have any questions regarding the Freedom of Information Act, contact:

Freedom of Information Commission of the State of Connecticut

18-20 Trinity Street

Hartford, CT 06106

(860) 566-5682

TOLL-FREE (CT ONLY): (866) 374-3617

FAX: (860) 566-6474

[FOI@ct.gov](mailto:FOI@ct.gov) or [foi@po.state.ct.us](mailto:foi@po.state.ct.us)

<http://www.ct.gov/foi>

### Confidentiality of Library Records

An important exception to the Freedom of Information requirements as specified in Connecticut General Statutes section 1-210 is the requirement for confidentiality of library records. C.G.S. Sec. 11-25 requires that records maintained by libraries that can be used to identify any library user or link any user to a library transaction, regardless of form, shall be kept confidential. Such records may be released only with the permission of the user or pursuant to a court order. Specifically the statute states:

**Reports by libraries. Confidentiality of records.** (a) *The libraries established under the provisions of this chapter, and any free public library receiving a state appropriation, shall annually make a report to the State Library Board.* (b) (1) *Notwithstanding section 1-210, records maintained by libraries that can be used to identify any library user, or link any user to a library transaction, regardless of format, shall be kept confidential, except that the records may be disclosed to officers, employees and agents of the library, as necessary for operation of the library.* (2) *Information contained in such records shall not be released to any third party, except (A) pursuant to a court order, or (B) with the written permission of the library user whose personal information is contained in the records.* (3) *For purposes of this subsection, "library" includes any library regularly open to the public, whether public or private, maintained by any industrial, commercial or other group or association, or by any governmental agency, but does not include libraries maintained by schools and institutions of higher education.* (4) *No provision of this subsection shall be construed to prevent a library from publishing or making available to the public statistical reports regarding library registration and use of library materials, if such reports do not contain personally identifying information.*

Libraries should have a policy that reiterates this right to confidentiality as well as a procedure that staff should follow when confronted by a request for a patron record. All library staff must be adequately trained regarding this procedure. Sample policies may be found at: <http://www.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/pages/sample-policies-connectic>

### Other Laws Affecting Public Libraries

A guide to laws affecting libraries is available at: <https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/help/handbook>

Included in this listing are laws related to state aid, Connecticut card, voter registration, establishing public libraries, taxing, merger of libraries, contracts for library service and theft of library materials.

State statutes are often revised or repealed, so the latest version available should be checked at: <https://www.jud.ct.gov/lawlib/statutes.htm>

Assistance is available by contacting the State Library legislative reference desk at (860) 757-6590. A link for sending e-mail is available at: <https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/law>

# Chapter 4

## Policies: AN ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRUSTEES

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### This chapter covers:

- ✓ The benefits of library policies
- ✓ Suggested policies for the library
- ✓ Places to find sample policies
- ✓ Elements of successful policies

### General Description

One of the most important responsibilities of library trustees is the development of policies by which the library director, staff and trustees can make consistent service and administrative decisions. These policies must adhere to the library's mission statement and follow local, state and federal laws and provide fair treatment of patrons and staff. State statutes that may relate to policies may be found at:

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/bestpractices/governance>

Policies guide all phases of library operation. They are not detailed descriptions of procedures. Thus, a circulation policy would be a broad statement of goals and objectives for this area of library service providing a framework on which those procedural details would be based. It is not a detailed list of steps on how to check out a book.

Because policies provide framework for actions and decisions, it follows that the library's mission statement, board by-laws and long-range plan are also considered policies. Libraries are also strongly encouraged to adopt these professional policies:

The Freedom to Read (from the ALA)

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

The Library Bill of Rights (from the ALA)

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

Two other federal acts bear prudent watching and may affect the policies the board will adopt:

Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

The Patriot Act as it relates to confidentiality of records

### Benefits of Policies

Properly developed and adopted policies:

- Support the overall library plans, goals and objectives
- Guide the library director and staff in implementing board judgments
- Provide direction and consistency in day-to-day service to the community and operation of the library
- Reduce uninformed decision-making and crisis responses to problem situations
- Protect the rights and assure fair treatment of all patrons and staff

### Policy Development

Policies are needed by the director and staff as they carry out their jobs, so these persons usually research, develop and draft policies for presentation to the board for consideration and possible adoption. The board also may choose to write a policy or ask the director and staff to do so.

The following is a core list of policies most often needed by a library. Rather than start from scratch, it is often easier to work from policies developed by other libraries.

Sample policies on these and other subjects may be found at:

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/help/samples>

Alcohol	Internet Policies
By-laws	Job Sharing
Cell Phones	Media
Circulation & Patron Registration	Meeting Rooms
Code of Conduct	Mission Statement
Collection Development	Museum Passes
Confidentiality & Privacy	Personnel
Conflict of Interest	Petitions
Discards	Proctoring
Donations, Gifts & Memorial Funds	Programs
E-Readers & Media Players	Public Access to Personal Computers
Exhibits and Bulletin Boards	Public Relations
Food & Beverage	Security Cameras
Financial Development	Service Animals
Foundations, Investments & Endowments	Social Media
History Room	Soliciting on Library Premises
Holiday Decorations	Staff Development
Home Delivery	Staff Use of Computers & Internet
Interlibrary Loan	Technology Plans
	Unattended Children/Vulnerable Adults
	Volunteers
	Warming/Cooling Station
	Weather-related Closings
	Whistleblowers

To be legally valid, a policy must be approved by the library board at a properly notified public meeting within the standards of the Freedom of Information Act. The approval date and any review dates should be noted (usually at the end of the policy), and the policy should be clearly documented in the formal board minutes.

### **Elements of an Effective Policy**

An effective policy:

- Supports the mission statement
- Does not conflict with the by-laws or long-range plan
- Adheres to local, state and federal laws
- Does not conflict with other policies
- Treats staff and patrons fairly
- Is clear and understandable
- Does not include procedures

- Provides staff and board with clear direction for making decisions
- Follows the best library practices document

When the library board considers a policy for adoption, it should know:

- The subject of the policy
- The way the policy contributes to library goals
- The need for the policy
- Those it will affect
- The person(s) who developed it
- The elements to be included
- Possible options
- The legal ramifications
- The cost (in terms of staff time, budget, collection and facilities)
- The person(s) who should review it before approval
- The person(s) who will enforce it
- The person(s) who will inform and train staff
- The way new hires will be informed
- A regular schedule for review

Once a policy is approved, the library director is responsible for informing the staff and the public. The approved policy is to be supported by the board, the staff and the Friends of the Library, regardless of individual opinions.

Copies of the policy manual should be given to members of the board, involved municipal officials and the library staff and be easily accessible to the public by means including the library's web site.

Trustees should allow adequate time to consider policies before approving them. Policies also need to be reviewed, usually on a yearly basis. Researched and up-to-date policies will reduce trustee and staff liability as well as educate trustees and employees about the complex and varied issues within the library's concern. There also may be policies that trustees and the director will need to defend in a public forum.

Creating policies is hard work involving research, rewriting and time, but that work provides the framework for all phases of the library's operations. Through well thought-out policies library trustees protect that most important aspect of democracy, the freedom of information upon which all other freedoms depend.

# Chapter 5: Planning

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## This chapter covers:

- ✓ Reasons for planning
- ✓ The planning team
- ✓ The planning process
- ✓ Plan follow-up

## Why Plan

One of the most important and often overlooked responsibilities of a library board is strategic planning. Having a plan is like having good insurance – it is always there to fall back on. It is also a road map to tell where the library is going. Size does not matter. Every library needs a plan, no matter how small or how large the library and community may be.

Planning for libraries is a process of envisioning the future of both the community and the library and setting a direction to move the library toward a chosen future vision. Planning helps the staff and board understand the situation of their community, set priorities and establish methods for achieving those priorities. The planning document provides a record of the decisions made during that process. The document also becomes a guide for decision-making and action by staff and the board.

The importance of planning cannot be overemphasized. The library board or director that does not plan is like a shopper going to the store without a shopping list. The library may be offering services that are not really needed by the community while failing to offer the one or two services that might provide a great benefit.

The process followed to create a plan will depend on the size of the library and community involved with the project. Large and even many medium-sized libraries or those accustomed to planning may have the resources and experience to undertake a full-blown process such as that described in *Strategic Planning for Results*—(Nelson, Sanda, ALA, 2008), the Aspen Institute plan or Best Practices in Connecticut Public Libraries (<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/bestpractices>). *Strategic Planning for Results* provides a blueprint for creating a vision of the future for a library and its community along with a blueprint for creating the services that will enable a library to achieve its vision. Because it is so thorough, *Planning for Results* describes a fairly time-intensive process involving a large cast of players. Any library, including smaller ones or those new to planning, will benefit from undertaking the process outlined in *Planning for Results* if the board and staff have the commitment, time and resources to follow through.

Libraries should start with a mission statement, reviewing the current one or crafting a new one. The mission statement defines the library's purpose, describes the functions it performs and for whom, and states why it is valuable to the community. The mission statement should be kept short. One sentence is best.

Sample mission statements may be found at: <https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/help/samples>

A link to mission statements is found here in the list of Connecticut sample policies.

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## Who Plans?

The strategic plan for the library benefits from input from multiple individuals.

The minimum number needed to draft a strategic plan is one. On the other hand, large committees can be a real problem. Ideally, the group should number between seven and nine including two or three trustees, the library director, two or three staff, a government representative and one or two good library customers.

The library director can be relied on to gather statistics about a community. Important statistics include:

- The size of the community broken down by age, gender, racial heritage, etc.
- The existence of large or growing groups of newcomers to the community such as urban or rural transplants, new ethnic groups, etc.
- Economic factors such as household incomes and sources of payrolls
- An educational profile of the community

At the same time the director and staff can gather facts about the library. Questions to ask include:

- What services are currently being offered?
- How have usage patterns been changing in the past few years?
- What is the composition of the collection? How many resources does the library own, including books, recorded books, videos, children's books, etc.?
- How old is the collection? What is the average publication date for each section of the nonfiction collection?

By discussing these and similar facts about the library and the community, the staff and board can reach some basic conclusions with which to plan future services. For example, a library with a small large-print collection in a community with a stable aging population may want to buy more large-print books. A science collection with relatively few titles less than one or two years old probably needs updating.

By talking to other stakeholders, library planners can add to the strength and reliability of their plan as well as obtain buy-in from the public. There is a substantial list of individuals and groups that might be consulted as part of a basic planning process. Which ones a library chooses will depend on its particular situation.

Suggested players include:

- The mayor and city council (or equivalent)
- Municipal employees such as an economic development officer, senior center director or recreation department director
- Representatives from the PTA, teachers and board of education
- Representatives of active service groups such as the Elks, Rotary or Lions
- Representatives of other social service organizations such as those representing growing minority populations
- Representatives of the religious community
- Current library users
- Those not currently using the library

The more people consulted about the community, the more information that will be available to use in creating the strategic plan.

### Gathering Information

Probably the most common mistake library planners make when consulting the community in preparation for a strategic plan is to ask people about the library. Neophyte planners ask what library services people are looking for. The real purpose of consulting all of these community representatives is to find out about *them*—what they are doing and what is important in their lives and work. The library staff and board are the experts in the broad array of possible library services. It is up to the experts to be creative in proposing new services or changes in services to meet emerging needs. For example, the mayor and city council may be interested in developing tourism in a community but they may not think of the library as a vehicle for collecting and disseminating local

information of interest to tourists. If people are asked what the library should be like, they will probably answer based on their preconceptions about what a library is. Instead, they should be asked about community needs. Library resources can be used to develop services to help fill them. There are various ways to ask this large array of players about community needs. One of the simplest but most effective is simply to invite them to the library or a neutral site

and talk to them. Someone experienced in conducting focus group interviews should be brought in. Groups can be built around particular interests or important segments of the community such as children or immigrants. The board can assist the interviewer in eliciting the opinions of interested parties regarding what is important to them.

Library planners often gather information by means of surveys. The following ideas should be considered:

- What are the specific questions to be answered? What hypotheses are being tested?
- How will having the information affect the investigation? Questions should not be posed simply for the sake of asking. For example, if a respondent is asked where he or she went to college, how will this knowledge be helpful?
- How will the information be used?
- Will the survey reach the target audience? Surveys done inside the library are useless for learning the needs and opinions of non-users. Current library users do not necessarily represent a cross section of the community.
- How will the survey be distributed?
- How will the survey be tabulated?

A pretest should be conducted to make sure the respondents have the same understanding of the questions as the library does.

Enlisting the help of someone experienced in writing and conducting surveys before they begin does not have to cost anything. A volunteer may be found at a local Chamber of Commerce or a nearby university. A local resident who has conducted surveys as part of his or her business may be willing to help. If the library composes its own survey, someone outside the organization should critique it. A poorly executed survey can have less value than none at all. It may even lead to opposite conclusions from those that might have been reached otherwise.

### **Outline of the Strategic Plan**

After all information is gathered, it needs to be organized using a simple plan like this:

Introduction: In discussing the planning process, questions such as these should be considered. Who are the people in the community? What are the library and community like? How was this people in the community? What are the library and the community like? How was this determined? Who was consulted? How were they consulted? What was learned?

**Mission Statement:** What vision of the community is the library trying to support? What is the library's role in supporting that vision? What is the reason the library exists?

**Service Responses:** What are the specific services the library will offer and why?

**Activities:** What activities should be carried out for each of these services? These activities should be listed along with what the library intends to accomplish and the way they relate to the library's mission.

**Evaluation:** How will the library measure the impact these services are having on the target population? Means should be determined by which the library can determine if it is doing the right things and the alternatives available if it is not.

The specific time frame the plan should cover will depend on how ambitious it is or how many activities the library hopes to carry out. There is no formula dictating that the plan should last five years, three years or even one year. The plan should be based on what makes sense for the library and the community. The most important thing is to be adaptive.

### Plan Follow-up

The plan should be followed and revisited along the way to make sure it is taking the library where it wants to go and to revise it as necessary. At the end of the planning cycle when all evaluations are in, it is time to start over, create a new plan and perhaps go a little further in the information-gathering process.

The strategic plan should be used every year to set goals for the library board.

### Other Specialized Plans

- Technology plans
- Facilities plans
- Emergency preparedness plans
- Americans with Disabilities Act

In addition to general strategic planning for the entire library, the board should also consider planning projects focusing on special issues such as technology or disaster preparedness.

Because new technologies can greatly expand the services and resources offered by a library, it is important that all libraries be involved in some type of technology planning.

Most libraries will rarely experience a severe emergency or natural disaster, but it is best to be prepared just in case. Fires, floods, tornadoes and hazardous material accidents can endanger lives and it is important for libraries to have plans and/or policies in place for dealing with these types of emergencies. It is also important for staff to be trained to handle emergencies properly, including medical emergencies.

Plans and/or policies can also be established to prepare for recovery of library materials after an accident or disaster.

#### Sources of Additional Information

Nelson, Sandra. *Strategic Planning for Results*. Chicago, IL: ALA, 2008.

*Disaster Preparedness Clearinghouse* web site

<http://www.ala.org/alcts/resources/preserv/disasterclear> developed by the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services, a division of the American Library Association

Emergency Preparedness for CT Libraries: Emergency Preparedness

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/emergency>

Emergency Preparedness for CT Libraries: Resources for Disaster Preparedness

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/emergency/disaster>

Conservation OnLine (CoOL), *Disaster Preparedness and Response* (at

<http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/disasters/>

Reed, Sally Gardner; Kalonick, Jillian *The Complete Library Trustee Handbook*.

New York: Neal Schuman 2010



# Chapter 6:

# The Library Director

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**This chapter covers:**

- ✓ The role of the library director
- ✓ Procedure for hiring a library director
- ✓ Evaluation of the library director

## **Role of the Library Director**

The Library Director is responsible for the overall operation of the library including personnel, collection development and fiscal, physical plant and programming functions. The director also acts as a technical advisor to the board. A detailed chart of the roles of the director versus the board is included in Chapter 2.

### PLANNING

The library board is ultimately responsible for long-range planning; the director is responsible for carrying out the plan. Through the planning process the board may decide that the library needs to expand its programs and services. The library director has the authority and responsibility to manage the programs.

### ORGANIZING

The library director must organize an internal structure for delivery of library services. Board members may give input about what kinds of staff positions are necessary, but as the manager the library director should be able to create the kinds of positions and internal structure he or she deems necessary.

### STAFFING

The library director is in charge of hiring, firing, evaluating and disciplining all staff members.

### DIRECTING AND LEADING

The library director motivates and leads the staff. He or she should inspire, give direction and communicate with them. Board members direct and lead *only through the director*.

### MONITORING AND CONTROLLING OPERATIONS

The library director monitors and controls the internal operational activities of the library. For instance, the board approves the annual budget but the director makes the day-to-day decisions about how the budgeted monies are spent.

## Hiring the Library Director

The single most important decision of the library board is the selection and appointment of the library director. Finding and retaining a good director is vital for providing excellent library service for the community.

When the need first arises to find another director, the board should use the opportunity to assess the qualifications and skills they will be looking for in the person who will lead the library in the coming years.

The library board is urged to contact the Connecticut State Library for assistance soon after it is determined that a new director search will take place. The following resources also may be helpful:

A two-page check list on hiring a library director

[https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content\\_id=6835832](https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content_id=6835832)

*A Workbook: Selecting a Library Director*, developed by Friends of the Library Development and Services Library, St. Paul, Minn. This workbook gives detailed instructions on the process and includes sample forms that may be used or modified as needed. It is highly recommended that this be studied closely.

[https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content\\_id=6835838](https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content_id=6835838)

If there is a gap between when the current director leaves and the new director is appointed it will be necessary to appoint an acting director and to work closely with that person on an ongoing basis to ensure smooth operations.

Following is a list of steps that the board should undertake when hiring a director.

**1. Review the library's mission statement, long-range plans and short-term goals.**

The board should determine if they are still valid and make adjustments as needed. Consideration should be given to any changes in the community that will necessitate changes in the library's mission and direction.

**2. Conduct an exit interview with the current director if possible.**

Guidelines for exit interviews are included in the resource at

<http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/trusteezone/practical-guides/finding-library-director.pdf>

**3. Discuss the vacancy with the municipality if the situation warrants.**

**4. Review the current job description and amend it as needed.**

The outgoing director's job description should not be used by itself. The board may wish to redefine the job and/or elevate the position.

**5. Review skills and abilities that the new director should possess for maximum achievement of the board's goals for the library.**

Input should be solicited from staff, Friends and other stakeholders.

Topics should include:

- Experience in particular areas such as administration, outreach and programming
- Ability to work with library boards and government officials
- Supervisory ability
- Fiscal skills including budget preparation and administering within a budget
- Policy development
- Customer service
- Leadership
- Dependability
- Management skills
- People skills
- Good written and oral communication skills
- Interest in furthering library development

This analysis should result in clear written documents that define the job and desired qualifications.

**6. Budget for expenses the board will incur for any consultants, ads, travel, etc.**

**7. Set a competitive range for salaries and benefits to be used in the selection and hiring.**

## Chapter 6: The Library Director

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The board may wish to consult the State Library's Statistical Profile of Connecticut Public Libraries as a useful tool in evaluation of an appropriate salary range:

<http://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/stats/annreport>. The board may also wish to consult with municipal human resources personnel.

### 8. Draft the job description.

A clear job description should be written stating the specific duties of the library director. An abbreviated form of the job description may be used in the job advertisement. Trustees should draw up a list of desirable qualifications that can be used to compose a job announcement such as:

- General education and professional training
- Previous library administrative experience
- Minimum qualifications
- Managerial skills and previous supervisory experience
- Qualifications required to assist the library in introducing new technologies
- Information on the following:
  - Area of responsibility for the director
  - Specific duties
  - Salary and fringe benefits
  - Period of probation
  - Desirable areas of expertise

For examples of job descriptions in Connecticut Public Libraries see

[http://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content\\_id=6834413](http://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content_id=6834413)

### 9. Form the search committee.

The full board should appoint a search committee that will initiate the search, conduct the interview and selection process and present a final candidate or candidates to the full board. Besides trustees, others should be included on this committee such as a town or municipal official, respected community representative, librarian from a neighboring library or other local partners.

### 10. Advertise.

The job opening should be advertised to as many candidates as possible. Qualified staff members should be encouraged to apply.

The board should stress that the goal is to select the best person for the job. All applicants should receive consideration and due process in accordance with equal opportunity laws. After reading ads published by other libraries, a carefully worded ad should be composed based on the job description. A deadline should be set for submitting applications and one person should be designated to receive them. Resumes and references should be submitted as well. A list of places where a Connecticut library board may wish to advertise is available at [https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content\\_id=6835838](https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content_id=6835838)

Word of mouth advertising among friends and colleagues is another means of spreading the news of an available position.

**11. Observe Affirmative Action laws.**

Libraries must abide by federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination in relation to hiring, promotion and all other working conditions of employment. It is illegal to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, age, country of origin, individual life style or physical handicap. Policies should demonstrate that the library board makes every effort not to discriminate. Library boards have the responsibility for determining deficiencies in their policies and adopting corrections. It is important to tie the skills and qualifications closely to the job requirements to be sure that no candidate is disqualified unfairly.

Information on federal affirmative action laws is available at <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/hiring/affirmativeact>

Information on Connecticut affirmative action laws is available at <https://www.ct.gov/chro/cwp/view.asp?A=2523&Q=315818>

**12. Evaluate the Applications.**

The committee should develop and follow a process for choosing the best applicants to be interviewed. It is helpful to develop a uniform evaluation form and scale for evaluating resumes based on the qualifications being sought.

**13. Supply candidates to be interviewed with additional information about the library.**

This should include a current description of the community demographics and a copy of the library's long-range plan, policy manual and the latest annual report.

**14. Interview the candidates and make a selection.**

An evaluation sheet should be developed for use by each member of the interview committee to note the candidates' responses and members' impressions. Time should be allowed between interviews to complete the evaluation sheets.

The questions asked of each candidate must be identical and asked in the same order. This not only helps protect against illegal questions but also helps to focus the interview on pertinent questions relating to the applicant's job-related abilities and to compare applicants when the interview process is completed. Follow-up questions are allowed if clarification is needed.

Freedom of Information Act, FOIA

Under the FOIA C.G.S sec 1-225, *"The meetings of all public agencies, except executive sessions, as defined in subdivision (6) of section 1-200, shall be open to the public."*

However, sec 1-220(2) states, *"Meeting' does not include: Any meeting of a personnel search committee for executive level employment candidates."* Thus, meetings of the personnel search committee do not have to be open to the public. For other implications of FOIA see also the Evaluation section beginning on page 6-7 of this handbook.

**Illegal questions**

During the interview, there are specific questions that are considered discriminatory and which the board is not legally permitted to ask. These include:

- Marital Status, sexual preference, maiden name, spouse's name or occupation
- Nationality, citizenship, religion, age, height, weight

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- Age of children, arrangement for the care of minor children
- Plans to have children, health status, pregnancy, smoking, physical defects, illnesses (unless related to the ability to perform job-related tasks), psychiatric hospitalization
- Military experience, type of discharge
- Arrests, felony or misdemeanor convictions
- Candidacy for public office
- Membership in a labor organization
- Previous salary

### **15. Check candidates' references and present the top candidates to the board for final approval.**

References of top candidates should be checked. This is usually done by phone. A form should be used to record the responses to be shared later with the full committee. The search committee selects the best potential director through adequate discussion, consensus and ranking the candidates based on their resumes and applications, interview evaluations and references. They then present the top candidates to the full board for final approval. Some libraries prefer to narrow the candidates down to the top two or three and have the board choose the final candidate after another round of interviews. The board then decides on a salary offer including any relocation expenses if necessary.

### **16. Offer the job to the top candidate and inform the others that a decision has been made.**

The top candidate should be telephoned to offer him/her the position. The candidate should be given a reasonable deadline to respond with a decision.

The offer should be followed up with an information letter and/or contract specifying the details of the appointment, duties, salary, benefits, evaluation, starting date, probation period if relevant, etc. A second copy should be included for the candidate's signature. A return date should be specified.

All other candidates interviewed should be sent letters thanking them and informing them of the decision *only after* written acceptance has been received and the new director is in place. If the candidate declines, the board should move on quickly to the second choice.

### **17. Welcome the new director.**

News releases and photographic coverage should be arranged. An open house or reception hosted by the board of trustees is a courtesy. The board and staff should conduct an orientation.

## Evaluating the Director

The time and energy spent on the evaluation process is the cornerstone of future library services. There are several good reasons for carrying out a review of the library director. A review:

- Provides the director with formal feedback on his/her job performance
- Can be a tool for motivation, encouragement and direction
- Can provide the board with valuable information about the operations and performance of the library
- Can help establish a record of unsatisfactory performance if there is ever cause to discipline the director or terminate employment
- Can give the board and the director a formal opportunity to evaluate the job description and adjust it as necessary

- Can provide assurance that the director and the board are working toward the same goals for the library

A formal written evaluation of the director should be done annually.

In addition, for the board and director to work well together on an ongoing basis, timely feedback and discussions allow attention to be focused appropriately throughout the year. Problems are best brought to the attention of the director as they occur, rather than stored up for the annual review. Success, accomplishment and simple hard work or dedication should be acknowledged as it is observed as well as at the annual review. No one should be surprised at the formal evaluation.

#### **Who Carries Out the Review?**

Though the board as a whole is responsible for oversight of library operations and the activities of the library director, often boards decide to delegate the task of developing a preliminary evaluation of the director to a personnel committee or specially appointed committee of the board. Whether the whole board takes part or a committee does the work depends on the makeup of the board and the time available to board members. Experienced managers or human resource professionals among its members might be good choices.

The key here is consistency and deciding ahead of time who will take part. At any rate, the entire board should review, discuss and approve the final written evaluation.

#### **How to Conduct the Review**

At the beginning of each fiscal year the board and the director should mutually develop goals, objectives with timelines and criteria upon which the evaluation will be based. For example, consideration should be given to the job description, mission statement, long and short-range goals and expected personal characteristics. Establishing objectives can be an exercise in creativity in searching for new ways to improve the library. A form should be developed that evaluates the achievement or roadblocks to meeting these goals.

The board may wish to gather input from staff, Friends and other stakeholders but the director should agree in advance to any discussion between board members and staff members. Evaluation questions in these instances should be in the same format as that used to gather feedback from board members.

At the same time that the board makes its evaluation it may ask the director to do a self-evaluation. The ensuing conversation can then be more useful.

Once the evaluation is written up, copies should be distributed to all board members and the library director, after which a conversation between a board representative and the director should take place, allowing a meeting of

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minds and perhaps adjustments to the evaluation document and/or job description. If issues arise, the director's input should be requested on how to proceed.

Praise and encouragement for successes and corrective actions for weak spots should be provided as needed. Suggestions for improvement are in order for each weakness.

The director should have the opportunity to respond in writing to reviews placed in his or her permanent file. Written comments should always be part of the permanent record with a copy kept at the library. No performance review should ever be placed in a personnel file without the knowledge of the director.

The director should sign the review indicating that he or she has been given the opportunity to read and discuss the evaluation. Signing a review should not be construed as agreement.

### **Freedom of Information Requirements**

Board meetings at which the evaluation of the director is discussed may be held in executive session unless the director requests that it be an open meeting. The Freedom of Information section of the CT General Statutes, sec 1.200(6) states that *"'Executive session' means a meeting of a public agency at which the public is excluded for one or more of the following purposes: (A) Discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee, provided that such individual may require that discussion be held at an open meeting;..."*

More information on this requirement is available from the Freedom of Information Commission at <https://www.ct.gov/foi/site/default.asp> .

### **Follow-up**

Soon after the review, the board or designated committee should have a planning session with the library director to develop the basis for the following year's review.

Further guidance is available on the tip sheet for evaluating the library director from the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations at:

<http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/trustees/short-takes/Short%20Takes%208.pdf>

# Chapter 7: Fiscal Responsibilities

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**This chapter covers:**

- ✓ Fiscal responsibilities of trustees
- ✓ The budget process
- ✓ Sources of funding

## **Fiscal Responsibilities of Trustees**

Public library trustees are responsible for the securing and supervision of library finances. Neither trustees nor library directors can be expected to be lawyers or accountants, but they should be knowledgeable enough to be sure requirements are fully met. While the trustees have major responsibility for planning, budgeting and securing funds, the board should delegate the handling of day-to-day financial operations of the library to the director.

Trustee responsibilities include:

- Knowing the library's financial base and local, state and federal allocating authorities for library funds
- Becoming familiar with supplementary sources of revenue
- Understanding the financial needs of the library's operation
- Obtaining funds needed for maintenance, growth and expansion
- Understanding the basics of legal requirements and reporting requirements for library funding
- Managing trusts and endowment funds when appropriate

The Connecticut State Library can provide guidance on regulations and practices affecting library finances. Additional assistance may be provided by state and national professional associations. Chapter 11 of this handbook provides helpful resources.

### The Budget

Budget preparation is a cooperative process involving trustees, the library director, library staff and municipal officials.

The library director is in the best position to gather budget information, understand the budget needs for programs and do the balancing act with available funds. Thus the library director is responsible for the preparation of the initial budget request.

Library board members need to know the programmatic goals of the budget and understand the justification for the amounts. To have that kind of knowledge, trustees should be involved in budget development as well as review and approval.

The budget should have a philosophy, a kind of mission statement which explains its purposes, especially if there are new programs or heavy emphasis on a phase of service. Funding agencies need to know what the library does and the budget should supply a summary of proposed activity. Trustees can make the budget process a realistic spending plan for a year of advancement toward the goals and objectives of the library.

The actual budget comes last after all the discussion, planning and decision-making. The budget document will not reveal the depth of debate, the weighing of priorities and the difficulty in dropping good ideas. The board's records should show some of the thinking that has gone into final figures.

#### Characteristics of a Good Budget

The budget document should include four practical characteristics:

- Clarity
- Accuracy
- Consistency—providing period-to-period comparisons
- Comprehensiveness

### **Line Item and Program Budgets**

Line item and program budgets are two of the most popular styles of budgets. The line item budget is organized by categories or lines of expenditures and shows how much is spent on the various products and services that the library acquires. The program budget, designed to assist with planning, is organized around service programs (such as children's, young adult and reference services) and helps the library board and director see how much is spent on these individual areas. Items within each program budget are usually arranged in a line item style so that the individual categories of expenditures for each program are also presented. It is helpful if the library budget includes both line item and program presentations.

### **Operating vs. Capital Costs**

Operating activities are ongoing expenditures for the operation of the library and can be anticipated from year to year. Included as operating expenditures are staff salaries and benefits; books and other media acquired for the library; heating, cooling, regular cleaning and maintenance of the building; and technology.

Capital activities, in contrast, are those that occur irregularly and usually require major purchases. Some require special fundraising efforts. These would include new or remodeled library buildings, major repairs to the building and major upgrades of technology.

Operating and capital activities should be separated for reporting purposes.

### **Income vs. Expenditures**

Income should be broken down by the source of the funding—for instance, municipal appropriation, state aid, grant projects, gifts and donations, fines and fees. Expenditures should be shown in categories (or lines) representing similar kinds of products or services—for instance, wages, benefits, print materials, audio and video materials, telecommunications, and staff and board continuing education.

**Municipal Accounting vs. Library Accounting**

In Connecticut, library board control over finances varies. Some boards have complete control over the budget while in others the municipalities have final control. In some cases library boards must deposit most of their funds with the municipality. Since the municipality holds the funds, it will also keep records of how those funds are used. This municipal accounting should be available to the library board regularly. Even though your municipality performs this accounting function, it is advisable for the library to be knowledgeable about the status of the budget.

In addition, there are types of funds (gifts, bequests, devises (willed property) and endowments) which can be managed directly by the library board. If the board chooses to manage these funds it must, of course, keep records for accountability.

**The Budget Process**

**Role of the Library Director and Finance Committee**

The steps in the budget process are to:

- Develop the budget calendar with key dates for completion, definition of tasks and assignment of responsibility, beginning three to six months before the budget is to be presented
- Review carefully the long-range plan, goals and objectives
- Evaluate the prior year's actual line or program costs to determine if that year's budget decisions accomplished the goals set
- Conduct preliminary discussions with trustees, staff, government officials and the public
- Consider new programs requested by the staff and project anticipated expenditures
- Make preliminary decisions on the library's priorities, project next year's problems and anticipated revenues and develop next year's salary budget

**Role of the Library Director and Staff**

The library staff and director should develop a draft budget that includes program and/or line item analysis defining services, revenues and expenditures.

### **Role of the Finance Committee**

The finance committee should analyze and review the budget draft and be prepared to explain and interpret it in terms of community needs and expectations.

Along with the library director, the finance committee should present the budget draft to the full board to study, scrutinize and amend if necessary. The full board adopts the final budget.

### **Presenting the Budget**

The approved budget is then submitted to the local governing body for action along with the budgets of other municipal agencies. (This may not apply to association libraries.) Trustees should be involved in presenting, explaining and supporting the library budget that was approved by the library board.

Once the funding level is determined, adjustments may need to be made.

As the year progresses, further adjustments may be requested by the library director to respond to actual events.

A budget presentation is actually a political negotiation with town or city officials to determine the exact scope of programs and services to be offered. Trustees must be thoroughly prepared to participate in presenting the budget, to explain, justify and negotiate. The library must be seen as a basic community and information agency, not just an intellectual or recreational frill. Trustees are the front-line defenders of the role of the public library in the community and thus should actively seek support for adequate library funding.

Trustees should not wait until budget time to let the municipal officials know how funds are used and what the library needs. Throughout the year successes, services, and community response should be made known. Testimonials and relevant statistics are usually much more persuasive than demands.

To strengthen its position the library should:

- Invite officials to special programs, receptions and library activities
- Offer library reference service and assistance to local government officials and departments
- Send officials copies of letters of appreciation, awards, staff accomplishments and media coverage
- Use Friends and community supporters to promote the library budget.

## Publicizing the Budget

To make known its budget needs the library should:

- Tell the community what the current funding level will accomplish and inform the community about the value received from library funding

(It is important to be familiar with Sec. 9.369b of the Connecticut General Statutes regarding expenditures of municipal funds to influence votes on the budget.)

- Let the public know how budget cuts may affect the library's offerings
- Use publicity to inform the community about valuable services being provided by the library via brochures, newsletters, newspapers, community meetings and the library's web page

Budgeting is a continuous process. As soon as one year's budget is approved by the governing body, it is time to begin assembling facts and figures for the next year.

## Implementation of the Budget

For libraries formed under Connecticut General Statutes 11-20 and 21, the library board has ultimate budget authority; however, all boards should be familiar with the budget. All trustees have the responsibility of setting priorities and securing funds; the director and staff have the responsibility of implementing the funded program to meet the needs of the community.

Following are best practices of budget implementation:

- The tasks, authority and duties for library spending must be clearly delegated to the director or other staff.
- Trustees may be asked to contribute specific expertise in fiscal management but their major role is planning, budgeting and securing funds.
- Personnel and procedures for handling library funds may vary in local library systems depending on the size of the library budget and staff. Specific procedures and responsibilities should be outlined in the local policy and procedure manuals so that all trustees and staff understand the lines of authority.
- Trustees should delegate the handling of day-to-day financial operations of the library to the director. Trustees fulfill their fiscal responsibilities by maintaining knowledge of the budget and adherence to budget plans and policies.
- The library director is responsible for keeping the trustees informed of budget implementation. Monthly reports should be prepared for the board, the public and various funding sources which may require their own reporting forms.

The board controls and monitors library finances by:

- Careful development and approval of the budget
- Review and approval of all library expenditures
- Review and monitoring of periodic financial statements
- Development of policies for finances and the handling of gifts and donations
- Accurate and complete financial reporting
- Careful attention to internal financial controls and audits

To oversee the finances adequately, the board should study financial statements carefully, ask questions and be sure that they understand any unexpected or unusual expenditures or budget developments.

### Handling Gifts and Donations

The requirements for the handling of gifts and donations depend on the specific situation of each library including whether it is an association or municipal library and whether a Friends organization or foundation exists. However, all boards should adopt a gifts and donation policy. An example may be found at

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/help/samples> .

Every library should undergo an annual audit to ensure that financial matters are being handled responsibly. Municipal libraries will have their accounts audited along with other departments. Association libraries may ask to be included in the municipal audit or budget for an outside auditor to conduct an annual audit. All library audits are public records and must be publicly available. The library board should examine audit reports and carefully follow any recommendations.

### Public Funding

Public libraries in Connecticut are funded primarily by various mixtures of local, state and federal monies. Public libraries receive the majority of their funding from local tax support while state and federal income provides much needed supplemental funding. Many libraries also rely on funding from private sources. Some libraries enjoy substantial endowment income. It is the board's responsibility to identify and actively pursue funding sources and to present a budget request to the funding body. Each trustee should feel personally responsible for obtaining the best possible municipal appropriation for the best library service.

Trustees may need to look further for the discretionary monies needed and turn to other means of financing.

### Friends Organizations and Individual Donations

The local Friends of the Library organization is often a steady source of donations for special projects.

Libraries have historically been beneficiaries of funds from individuals, corporations and foundations. Faced consistently with budgets that do not sufficiently cover the library's services, trustees ought to consider how additional funds can be made available.

### Grants

Grants can be an excellent source of supplementary funds for special projects but should never be used to justify reducing or replacing the community's commitment to public funding.

Grants are available from a variety of sources, including foundations and government entities. The Connecticut State Library maintains a list of possible grant sources and training opportunities at:

<http://www.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/pages/grants-and-reimbursements>

The State Library also maintains an Additional Grants for Libraries Blog at:

<http://librarygrants.blogspot.com/>

U Usually, grants are for new programs. Libraries must be careful to analyze the commitment involved in a grant and consider whether there are strings attached and how they fit into the board's priorities and the library's mission.

### **Federal Funds**

Federal funds come primarily from the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), administered by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services, an independent federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners by helping libraries and museums serve their communities. The use of LSTA funds in Connecticut is administered according to the State Library's Five Year Plan. A portion of the federal funds coming to Connecticut is made available as sub-grants to local libraries under categories called for in the Five Year Plan and approved each year by the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development. Information on these grants may be found at: <https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/lstagrants>

Information on other federal grant opportunities may be found at:  
<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/grants>  
<http://www.grants.gov/>

### **Fundraising Activities**

A detailed discussion of fundraising is presented in Chapter 9.



# Chapter 8: Advocacy

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## **This chapter covers:**

- ✓ What advocacy is
- ✓ Why advocacy is needed for libraries
- ✓ What steps and strategies are appropriate for library advocacy

## **What Advocacy Is**

As noted in “Turning the Page: Supporting Libraries, Strengthening Communities,” a publication of the Public Library Association, advocacy is “the actions individuals or organizations undertake to influence decision-making at the local, regional, state, national and international level that help create a desired policy or funding change in support of public libraries.”

## **Why Advocacy is Needed for Libraries**

As budgets at all levels of government and in all areas of endeavor become ever tighter, competition for funding grows ever greater. In connection with libraries, increasing numbers of people are questioning the very need for them as electronic resources expand to include more and more offerings. Thus, it is more important than ever for library boards and their constituents to make known the value of libraries and the need for continuing and increasing support. A well organized and carefully planned advocacy campaign, especially at the time when municipalities set their annual budgets, is an important tool for gaining the support the library needs to continue providing excellent service to the community and to add new resources and activities to its offerings.

## Steps and Strategies for Library Advocacy

Beginning by outlining a plan of action will ensure a smooth flow of activities in the advocacy process. Detailed information on how to go about this is available from a number of online resources, including [www.publiclibraryadvocacy.org](http://www.publiclibraryadvocacy.org) and [www.ala.org/advocacy](http://www.ala.org/advocacy). Since each library's situation is different, each board will want to develop its own action plan. Following are just a few steps that should prove helpful to most boards.

- A **goal** for the campaign should be established, based on the needs to be met or projects to be funded. For example, the goal might be increased funding for ongoing library operations, or financial support for a specific new project or service that the library would like to add.
- **Objectives** should be determined to track the progress of the campaign. These objectives should be specific and measurable to provide a sense of moving ahead step by step.
- An advocacy **team** should be set up that includes members of the various constituencies involved with the library such as board members, administration, staff, Friends of the Library, volunteers and patrons who use the library on a regular basis, all of whom have a stake in its continuing success. The team's role is to reach out to those in a position to help the library achieve its goals.
- Depending on the size and scope of the advocacy campaign, it may be helpful to form **committees** of team members focusing on specific aspects of the effort. These might include an oversight task force to keep things running smoothly, a publications group to ensure consistency in print materials, a media group to coordinate contact with communications outlets and a finance group to keep track of spending on the campaign.
- **Target audiences** should be identified, that is, those segments of the community who need to hear the library's message. These audiences may include elected officials in a position to make decisions affecting the library as well as businesses and private individuals, especially library users, who may be persuaded to aid the library by speaking up for it as well as making donations themselves. If the library does not already have relationships with segments of the target audience, this is the time to form them. Once the audiences have been identified, efforts should be made to communicate with them on an ongoing basis so that they feel a part of the library community and are kept informed on the campaign's progress.
- The main **message** of the campaign should be determined, indicating why the library needs assistance and how it can be provided. The message should also make clear how the library benefits the community being served and what actions the audience can take to help. The message should be consistent throughout the campaign to maintain a sharp focus on what the library hopes to achieve. When appropriate, statistical data can be included to show how much the library does for the community.

- Efforts should be made to involve the **media** in promoting the library by communicating regularly with newspapers, radio and television stations about library services and activities and encouraging media representatives to cover newsworthy events at the library. Since increasing numbers of people rely heavily on social media for information, these resources should also be used creatively to spread the library's message through its web site, Face Book page and other online options commonly in use.

Successful advocacy for any group depends on making a lasting positive impression on decision makers who can advance the organization's goals. Regular and consistent communication with those in positions to assist the library is essential in achieving the support needed to flourish well into the future.

Additional information specific to library advocacy in Connecticut is available on the Connecticut Library Association's web site at <https://ctlibraryassociation.org/Advocacy>.



# Chapter 9: Fundraising

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## This chapter covers:

- ✓ Development of a strategic approach to fundraising
- ✓ Resources to assist with fundraising

## Introduction

For municipal library boards fundraising is not part of the job description. However, it is a major role for the boards of directors of nonprofit (501c3) organizations. Library boards must ensure the fiscal health of their libraries and that often means that fundraising is increasingly part of their job description. In difficult economic times fundraising might be essential to maintain programs and services—while visits and circulation typically increase, funding usually decreases. When economic times improve, fundraising can allow the library to become extraordinary. Fundraising is also important during other times when money is needed to maintain operations.

A study<sup>1</sup> funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation explored attitudes and perceptions about library funding in order to evaluate the potential of a large-scale marketing and advocacy campaign to increase public library funding in the U. S. Among the findings:

- Library funding support is only marginally related to library visitation.
- Perceptions of librarians are an important predictor of library funding support.
- Voters who see the library as a “transformational” force as opposed to an informational source are more likely to approve an increase in taxes for its support.

With this in mind it is easy to see that fundraising is intertwined with the mission of the library and patron satisfaction and should be part of the overall strategic

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<sup>1</sup>. Perceptions of libraries and information resources : a report to the OCLC membership. Principal contributors Cathy De Rosa et al. , c2010. ; OCLC:  
[https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/oclc/reports/2010perceptions/2010perceptions\\_all.pdf](https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/oclc/reports/2010perceptions/2010perceptions_all.pdf)

## Chapter 9: Fundraising

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planning of the library including circulation, technology, collection and programming policies.

### Strategic Approach

By using a strategic approach to fundraising, the library board's effectiveness and efficiency will be increased. The strategic approach includes:

- Defining goals
- Developing a team
- Identifying stakeholders and evaluating targets
- Developing a message
- Determining a plan of action
- Evaluating the results

### Defining goals

Donors will not give to an organization with poorly defined fundraising goals. The first step is to ask basic questions that will help determine why and how funds will be raised. Questions to consider include:

- What is to be accomplished?
- How much money is needed?
- Is it for a single use or an ongoing need such as capital, programming or operating expenses or endowment?
- What is the time frame in which the funds are to be raised?
- How will the library distinguish itself from other fundraisers?
- Who are potential donors?

Once these questions are answered the board or development committee should put the goals in writing, making sure each includes the following components:

- **SPECIFICITY:** What is to be accomplished is described with as much detail as possible.
- **MEASURABILITY:** The goal is described in terms that can be clearly evaluated.
- **REALISTIC OUTCOME:** The goal selected is one that the board is capable of reaching.
- **STATED COMPLETION DATE:** After determining the end date, longer-term goals are broken into shorter objectives with completion dates.
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** Each goal and/or objective is assigned to specific board members, staff or volunteers for completion.

**Sample** of written Goals and Objectives:

Goal/Objective	Time Line	Committee	Completed
<b>1) Fundraising needed to complete a 2021 expansion.</b>			
a) Assess plans and determine the exact amount needed	March 2019	Development/ Building Committee	
b) Establish a detailed plan for completing fundraising that includes a timeline and forecast of funding	April 2019	Development	
c) Develop and send a community mailer	May 2019	Development	
d) Create a list of potential grants with application information including dates and contact information	June 2019	Grants	

### Developing the team

To be successful at fundraising the board needs to have the right people on the team, starting with leadership of the committee. A successful fundraising chairperson:

- Is goal and task-oriented
- Demonstrates strong attention to detail
- Is organized and able to meet deadlines
- Possesses leadership skills
- Maintains a positive attitude toward accomplishing the goals
- Is able to recruit committee members and work with the library director
- Has good oral and written communication skills
  
- Is able to make the necessary time commitment

Once the leader has been determined the team should be appointed. Each board must follow the by-laws and town/city charter for its library in determining who is eligible for serving on the development committee. When possible, going outside the board for volunteers may make it easier to find the skills needed on the committee. In addition, recruiting volunteers from throughout the community increases the circle of influence. Having members from outside the normal group of those who work with the library opens up new opportunities for fundraising.

## Chapter 9: Fundraising

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Additional characteristics and responsibilities for fundraising committee members include:

- Familiarity with the library's mission and current fundraising goals
- Ability to coordinate with the library staff to plan, execute, complete and evaluate fundraising activities and special events
- Ability to identify and cultivate potential donor opportunities
- Ability to make the time commitment to attend meetings, events and community outreach functions
- Ability and willingness to ask for donations
- Willingness to contribute to the drive

### Identifying stakeholders and evaluating the community/audience

Evaluating the community will give information on sources of funding and may provide direction for fundraising activities. This information is also useful for long-range planning and programming. The process should begin with a simple demographic analysis including population, number of households, income per household, number of students, education level, age breakdown, number of taxpayers, lists of businesses and percentage of active and inactive library card holders. Much of this data is available at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). The town clerk's office and board of education can provide additional information. Once a basic knowledge of the community's demographics is established, a plan can be developed using this information. Individuals give money to organizations that do something of interest to them, so interests and trends should be noted. Statistical information that helps tell the library story may be found at:

<http://www.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/pages/library-statistics-connec/>

### **Developing a message**

The core message depends on goals and audience which have already been determined. All team members should know and understand the message which can be fine-tuned for different groups. The following may be included in the message:

- What will be accomplished with the funds raised?
- Why is this important to the community/audience—that is, why is it important to the person receiving the message?
- What is the impact if the goal is not achieved?

Some organizations develop a case for support that includes all the reasons that a potential donor may have for giving to the library.

### **Determining a plan of action**

After defining the goals, developing the team, identifying stakeholders, evaluating targets and developing the message, it is time to execute the plan. Strong leadership and good time management are needed to move forward at this point. Many committees do well with the planning and evaluating phases but struggle with taking action. The action steps are called the objectives. At this point it is time to return to the goal-setting worksheet and add specific objectives/tasks to help meet each goal. The development committee should charge specific individuals with specific objectives to be completed within a certain time frame.

The development committee may want to set up the following subcommittees to assist with the division of tasks:

- **Personal Solicitations.** This sub-committee asks individuals for donations. All board and committee members should be asked if they have personal connections to those targeted for personal solicitations. They may not be comfortable making “the ask” but can provide an introduction.
- **Grants.** This sub-committee researches and applies for grants from government entities and private foundations.
- **Events.** This sub-committee is responsible for events such as dinners and dances with silent auctions, plant sales, etc. This group should work with the Friends of the Library to coordinate activities. The public will not easily distinguish between the groups.

These subcommittees should meet regularly and review goals/objectives and time frames. Each subcommittee should have a regular meeting schedule. Each member should leave meetings with a task list to be completed by the next meeting. The subcommittee should hold each member accountable for completing these tasks. A task list may be added to meeting minutes which should be completed and distributed to each member within a few days of the meeting.

### Evaluation—measuring success

The ultimate measure of any fundraising effort is whether the money needed has been raised. However, regular evaluation will assist the development committee to meet the intended objectives during the process. There are a number of ways to evaluate the success of development activities, such as:

- **Events/Meeting Summary:** After each event or meeting with a potential donor, what worked and what could be improved can be identified.
- **Goals/Objectives Checklist:** This helps to determine if the goals are being met in the established time frame. Reasons can be established as to why certain goals are being accomplished and how these successes can be applied to areas that may not be working as well.
- **Financial Review:** It is helpful to determine what is being spent on fundraising activities and what the return is for these activities. Activities that cost a lot and do not contribute significantly to the end goal should be reevaluated, redesigned or discontinued.
- **Committee/Member Review:** Such an assessment determines if committee members consistently completed tasks, contributed to the committee and had needed resources. Perhaps more or fewer members are needed and/or tasks can be realigned for greater success.

#### DURING A SOLICITATION VISIT TO A POTENTIAL DONOR:

1. Ask for the gift.
2. Ask for a large enough gift.
3. Listen—avoid talking too much.
4. Determine why this individual is interested in giving.
5. Ask intelligent and considerate questions.
6. Emphasize benefits that giving to the library will bring the donor.
7. Be flexible by offering alternative ways of giving.
8. Have prearranged signals between visiting team members.
9. Ask for the gift toward the end, not at the beginning.
10. Remain silent after asking for the gift.

Source: Massachusetts Public Library Trustees Handbook

## Resources

### General fundraising

The **Simone Joyaux** web site provides information on fund development, board and organizational development and strategic planning:

[Simonejoyaux.com](http://Simonejoyaux.com)

- The **ALA Frontline Fundraising Toolkit** covers the basics of annual funds, memorials and tributes, online giving and planned giving. It also teaches how to deepen relationships with donors and move them from being one-time givers to long-term library supporters:  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/frontlinefundraising>

- The **Association of Fundraising Professionals** Tools and Resources tab is especially helpful:  
[www.afpnet.org](http://www.afpnet.org)

Connecticut chapter: <https://community.afpnet.org/afpctchapter/home> .

### **Grants**

- The **Connecticut State Library Division of Library Development** has information on grants from federal, state and private sources:  
<http://www.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/pages/grants-and-reimbursements>
- **Federal Government Grants:**  
[Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov)
- The **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance** is the primary source of information on federal grants and non-financial assistance programs:  
<https://beta.sam.gov/>
- **FirstGov for Nonprofits** is a portal for nonprofit organizations to information about federal grants, loans, and other assistance:  
<https://www.usa.gov/#grants>
- **Foundation Center** is a gateway to information about the grant-seeking process, private funding sources (including national, state, community and corporate foundations), guidelines on writing a grant proposal, addresses of state libraries with grants reference collections and links to other useful Internet websites:  
[www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org)



# Chapter 10: Continuing Education

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## This chapter covers:

- ✓ The need for continuing education for trustees
- ✓ Continuing education providers
- ✓ Organizations for professional involvement

### **Trustee Continuing Education**

Even the most knowledgeable and experienced library trustee needs continuing education to stay informed about new laws, new technologies and new possibilities for library service. Library services and policies must constantly change to keep pace with changing community needs, new laws and new technologies. Library trustees who stay informed about these changes will be better able to provide high quality library service to their community.

Continuing education opportunities are available on the national, state and local level to offer support to both new and experienced trustees. By sharing information, discussing common problems and planning strategies for the future, trustees can most effectively fulfill their responsibilities.

Orientation for new trustees, the beginning of this process, is addressed in Chapter 1.

### **Sources for Continuing Education**

One of the most effective means for trustees to keep their skills and knowledge current is to join the Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB) and participate in their workshops and conferences.

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The Association of Connecticut Library Boards was established in 1965 to achieve the following goals:

- Broaden trustees' knowledge through workshops and other activities to enhance awareness of current developments in the library field
- Improve communication and cooperation between member boards, individual trustees and other library-related groups
- Act as liaison among boards and provide for cooperation and planning
- Provide trustee leadership on matters of regional and national concern
- Participate in the advocacy process to secure strong local, state and national support for public libraries
- Keep members informed on library-related matters through the organization's newsletter

The Connecticut State Library has a formal agreement with ACLB and finances a part of the ACLB Continuing Education Program.

Visit the ACLB website at <https://aclb.wildapricot.org/> for information on their latest training opportunities.

Join ACLB's listserv to receive notifications of events and stay current with any legislative and other statewide news: <http://mylist.net/listinfo/aclb-trusteetalk>.

Trustees are encouraged to join and attend meetings, workshops and conferences of the following organizations:

Connecticut State Library (CSL): <http://www.ctstatelibrary.org/> and the Division of Library Development: <https://ctstatelibrary.org/dld/>

Connecticut Library Association (CLA): [www.ctlibraryassociation.org/](http://www.ctlibraryassociation.org/)

Connecticut Library Consortium: <http://www.ctlibrarians.org/>

Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL): [www.foclib.org/](http://www.foclib.org/)

New England Library Association (NELA): [www.nelib.org/](http://www.nelib.org/)

American Library Association (ALA): [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)

United for Libraries: Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations: <http://www.ala.org/united/>

ALTAFF Trustee Academy:

[http://www.ala.org/united/training/trustee\\_academy](http://www.ala.org/united/training/trustee_academy)

Online training for library trustees

**Other continuing education ideas**

Short continuing education sessions can be held during library board meetings as a way to reach every trustee and involve the board in brainstorming or problem-solving discussions on issues that may be important to the library. The chapters that make up this handbook can be used for short continuing education sessions held during meetings. The meeting agenda should alert board members that a particular chapter will be reviewed at the next board meeting. Each member should read the chapter in advance and bring any questions or thoughts concerning the issues raised by the handbook. Perhaps a board member (especially one with experience on the topic to be covered), the library director or a library system staff person could volunteer in advance to lead the discussion.



# Chapter 11: Helpful Resources

## Organizations

### **Association of Connecticut Library Boards**

<https://aclb.wildapricot.org/>

email: [info@aclb.org](mailto:info@aclb.org)

ACLB is a membership organization that provides training, consulting and support for public library boards in Connecticut.

### **[ACLB-TrusteeTalk](#)**

The Connecticut State Library and ACLB offer an electronic discussion list for Connecticut library trustees. To subscribe go to

<http://mylist.net/listinfo/aclb-trusteetalk> .

This site is accessed by scrolling down to "Subscribing to aclb-trusteetalk" and entering an e-mail address in the "your email address" box (the "your name" and password-related boxes are optional) and clicking the Subscribe button.

### **United for Libraries - Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations**

<http://www.ala.org/united/>

ALTAFF is a national network of enthusiastic library supporters who believe in the importance of libraries as the social and intellectual centers of communities and campuses. No one has a stronger voice for libraries than those who use them, raise money for them and govern them. By uniting these voices, library supporters everywhere will become a real force to be reckoned with at the local, state, and national levels.

United for Libraries Trustee Academy

[http://www.ala.org/united/training/trustee\\_academy/](http://www.ala.org/united/training/trustee_academy/)

### **Connecticut State Library, Division of Library Development**

## **Chapter 11: Helpful Resources**

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<https://ctstatelibrary.org/dld/>.

The Division of Library Development provides consulting services to Connecticut libraries and trustees, leadership, funding, education and statewide services that enhance a local library's ability to deliver high quality service to the community.

Library Director Search

[https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content\\_id=6835838](https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content_id=6835838)

Sample Job Descriptions from Connecticut Libraries

[https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content\\_id=6834413](https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/ld.php?content_id=6834413)

This site contains examples of a variety of job descriptions used by public libraries in Connecticut.

Sample Connecticut Library Policies

<http://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/help/samples>

For libraries revising or creating new policies this site provides a wide range of sample policies from Connecticut public libraries. This site also includes links to other sample collections and policy development resources.

Public Library Statistics

<http://www.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/pages/library-statistics-connec>

The Connecticut State Library publishes extensive statistics about public libraries in Connecticut from the data collected each year in libraries' annual reports.

### **Connecticut Library Association**

<http://www.ctlibraryassociation.org/>

The Connecticut Library Association is Connecticut's professional organization of over 1,000 librarians, library staff, Friends and trustees working together to improve library service to Connecticut; advance the interests of librarians, library staff and librarianship; and increase public awareness of libraries and library services.

### **Friends of Connecticut Libraries**

<http://www.foclib.org/>

The Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL) is a non-profit organization consisting of local Friends groups, organizations and individual members who believe that libraries are an essential resource for the citizens of our state.