

# Library Board Basics



Association of  
Connecticut  
Library Boards

CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY



# Overview

- ✓ Board Governance
- ✓ Advocacy and Fundraising
- ✓ Effective Board Practices
- ✓ The New ACLB Handbook



# Presenters

- **Sharon Brettschneider**
  - Director of Library Development, Connecticut State Library
- **Betsy McIlvaine**
  - Brookfield Library Board of Directors, President
  - Director, ACLB



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# Library Boards

- The Board of Directors is legally and morally accountable for the health and effectiveness of the Library. The Board ensures that the organization achieves its mission in an ethical, transparent, accountable, and prudent manner.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Developed by Simone P. Joyaux, ACFRE



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# Library Boards in Connecticut

- Appointed
- Elected
- Ex-officio
- Self-perpetuating
- Any combination of the above

# Role of Board

- Governance – Due Diligence
- Ensure adequate support
- Hire and evaluate a qualified library director
- Ensure relevance to community
- Comply with relevant laws and regulations
- Set service-oriented policies
- Strategic Planning – every 3-5 years
- Ensure effective management without intruding on management's role and authority
- Act only as a group



# Who Does What

## Board

- Big Picture
- Governs (policy making)
- Plans
- Budgets
- Evaluates
- Advocates

## Director

- Implements Policy
- Manages Library Operations
- Keep Board informed

## Friends

- Fundraising
- Volunteers
- Advocates

# Fundraising and Advocacy

- Ensure adequate support for the library
  - Understand town budget process
  - Attend town budget meetings in support of library
  - Always be prepared to speak about library
  - Maintain good communication with municipality



# Fundraising and Advocacy

- Support active Friends organization
  - Staff liaison to Friends
  - Friends liaison to Board
  - Good communication
  - Members (but not officers of Friends)
- Participate in any fundraising/capitol campaign
  - Fundraising plan – including on-going donor communication/relationship building
  - Personally contribute to campaign



# Ineffective Boards

- Unfocused meetings
- No clear goals
- Focus on non-governance issues
- Not prepared for meetings
- Overstep Board Roles
- No participation in meetings or committee work



# Effective Boards

- Trustees know what is expected of them
  - Regular attendance
  - Preparation for meetings
  - Participation in meetings
  - Work on committees
- Trustees accept that a board acts as a unit
- Updated bylaws
- Regular self assessment



# Effective Boards

## New Board Member Orientation

- Tour the library and meet staff members
- Become informed about the structure of the Board
- Meet with the library director and trustee chair to learn about the library



# Orientation Kit

- *ACLB Connecticut Public Library Trustee Handbook*,
- **Board**
  - Board members job description
  - Duties of officers, committees and charges
  - Annual calendar
  - List of board members, names, terms and contact info.
  - By-laws of the board, articles of incorporation
  - Board minutes from previous year
- **Personnel**
  - Organizational chart for the library including position descriptions
  - Union contract, if applicable
  - Procedures for evaluation of the library director
- **Statistical reports**



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# Orientation Kit

- **Library promotional materials**
- **Policies and planning**
  - Mission statement, and long
  - Policies
  - Community demographics
  - Most recent library annual report
- **Current budget and financial reports**
- **Local Government**
  - Local ordinances, charter
  - Local government information - list of Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee members
- **Friends/Volunteers**
  - Friends of the Library Officers, documents
  - Volunteer program information



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# Effective Meetings

- Open meetings – Freedom of Information
- Agenda sent in advance
- Stick to agenda topics in meetings
- Preparation before meeting
- Library director attends all meetings
- Regular reporting by staff



# Board Self Assessment

- ✓ Written bylaws
- ✓ Effective committee structure
- ✓ Effective Meetings
- ✓ Agenda and documents distributed in advance
- ✓ Library director attends all meetings
- ✓ Work with municipal governing agents who appoint trustees
- ✓ Represent community
- ✓ Up-to-date policies
- ✓ Current Long range plan
- ✓ Work to secure adequate funding
- ✓ Staff and board attend state and national library meetings



# The New ACLB Handbook

- It's Here!

Find at [ACLB.ORG](http://ACLB.ORG)

Each member will receive one paper copy



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**Resources for Trustees at:**

**[www.aclb.org](http://www.aclb.org)**

**and**

**[ct.webjunction.org/64](http://ct.webjunction.org/64)**



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