

ILS 561: Public Libraries
Unit Four Assignment -
Connecticut

1. *If you were to establish a new public library (municipal library) in the local community of Middleburg in your state, how would you need to proceed? Show the A) steps you'd need to take, B) the people you'd need to involve, the government entities that would be part of the process.*

In Connecticut, to begin the process, either the local government can initiate the request to establish a new library or fifty or more local electors may petition the municipality to levy a tax to establish a free library and reading room for the town's residents. At the next municipal election, the electors will vote; if the majority votes in favor, the tax will be levied and the library established. The chief elected official then must appoint nine people to a board of trustees. The board then must elect one of their members to be the board's president; other officers may be appointed as needed. Once a board has been established, it is then their responsibility to create a budget and manage the library's finances; establish policies; purchase, lease, or accept land; erect, lease, or occupy a building; and hire a library director (C.G.S. Sec. 11-32, 11-33, 11-36)

Depending on the town's fiscal situation, the board may need to apply to the State Library Board for a construction grant (C.G.S. Sec. 11-24c) and/or engage in fundraising activities to accumulate enough funds to establish a library.

2. *Does your state require that a public library have a board of trustees? If so, how many people must it have, and how are they selected? Are there terms limits?*

Unless otherwise stated by the town's bylaws, Connecticut requires a governing board of trustees (C.G.S. Sec. 11-21). The board should be established with nine people and at any given time, the number of board members must be divisible by three (C.G.S. Sec. 11-33, 11-36). The trustees may not receive any form of compensation (C.G.S. Sec. 11-37). Trustees can be appointed by the town's chief elected official or elected by the town's voters. Depending on how the board is established, there may be a six year term limit.

3. *What library law or laws would you like to have added to what's already there?*

The current laws seem sufficient to me. The state statutes give library boards the power to enact reasonable rules and regulations and enforce them, up to banning people to willfully break those rules (C.G.S. Sec. 11-32); this covers a broad variety of different

situations. Also, as a place of public accommodation, all public libraries are required to adhere to the state's non-discrimination laws (C.G.S. Sec. 46a-64).

4. *What is the relationship, if any, between public libraries and the State Library? Does the State Library have any kind of control over public libraries in your state? Make sure to examine your State Library site to help you with this discussion.*

In Connecticut, the State Library does not have control over individual public libraries, though each public library is expected to provide an annual report to the State Library Board (C.G.S. Sec. 11-25). The State Librarian, with approval of the State Library Board, can offer assistance and advice to local public libraries on topics such as aid with administration, cataloging, and management; the state also has Library Service Centers that offer a variety of services to Connecticut's public and school libraries (C.G.S. Sec. 11-23).

References:

Connecticut State Statutes, Chapter 190 – Public Libraries.

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap190.htm>

Connecticut State Library.

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

Association of CT Library Boards

<http://aclb.org>