
HANDBOOK

for Connecticut Library Friends

The Friends of Connecticut Libraries
April, 2022

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QUOTES

LIBRARY

Here is where people,
One frequently finds,
Lower their voices
And raise their minds.

Light Armour. McGraw-Hill, 1954

“There is not such a cradle of democracy upon the earth as the Free Public Library, this republic of letters, where neither rank, office, nor wealth receives the slightest consideration.”

Andrew Carnegie

“My alma mater was books, a good library.”

Malcolm X

“When I got my library card, that’s when my life began.”

Rita Mae Brown

“Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest.”

Lady Bird Johnson

“Children who are read to learn two things: First, the reading is worthwhile, and second, that they are worthwhile.”

Laura Bush

“Every event that the Friends sponsor, every fundraiser that they run, every program that they support shows the community that there are people in their town who value the library and see it is a vital part of the community.”

*Mary Engels, Friends of the Cora J. Belden
Library & Friends of Connecticut Libraries*

“Getting my own library card was like citizenship; it was like American citizenship.”

Oprah Winfrey

Preface

This handbook is a practical guide to establishing and maintaining local Friends of the Library (FOL) organizations in support of libraries in Connecticut. It is a useful reference for new and experienced Friends officers and board members, community members interested in forming new Friends groups, library directors and staff, trustees, and local government officials.

A note on terminology: There are many variations on the titles of library directors and trustees. We have chosen to use the term “library director” for the person with the main administrative responsibility for the library and “board of trustees” for the governing board of the library. We have used the term “public library” to refer to both municipal and association libraries.

A list of additional resources, containing both printed material, definitions and websites, can be found in the appendix to this handbook. A glossary of acronyms and library terms is also included.

This handbook is also available on the FOCL website: www.foclib.org.

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The Friends of Connecticut Libraries

For over thirty-five years, the Friends of Connecticut Libraries, with the consistent and dedicated support of the Connecticut State Library, has been providing resources to local Friends groups through programming, a newsletter, a website, comprehensive resources, and the extensive knowledge of the officers and board members.

Nationally known and recognized for its service to libraries and to Friends of the Library groups statewide, FOCL includes over one hundred local Friends groups, organizations such as the Connecticut Library Association, Connecticut Library Consortium, Association of Connecticut Library Boards and many individual members. The offices are located at the Middletown Library Service Center.

FOCL fosters communication between Friends groups dispersed throughout the state. Its newsletter, *FOCLPoint*, provides news from various groups and features useful information on Friends issues and activities, such as fundraising, marketing, and membership.

For instant communication among Friends, FOCL established FOCL-Forum, an electronic discussion list for Friends of the Library in Connecticut. Members find that FOCL-Forum is a valuable tool for solving problems. Through the list, local Friends can share ideas and ask questions of each other—and get answers. Messages of general interest are rapidly communicated to the community of Friends.

FOCL promotes advocacy of legislative issues in the state and nation that affect

libraries and their supporters. FOCL also communicates to state and national Friends groups the successes of Connecticut groups and the challenges and issues facing local libraries and local Friends groups.

Each year FOCL sponsors statewide awards for outstanding local programs and contributions by individual members.

FOCL provides advice to new and existing Connecticut Friends groups through regional and statewide workshops and sharing sessions. Workshop topics have included marketing, advocacy, grant-writing, insurance and membership drives. Upon request, FOCL staff and board members will visit local Friends groups to provide information and support. FOCL will assist groups in bolstering an organization that has begun to lose focus or momentum.

The FOCL website at www.foclib.org provides membership information, calendars, information on activities and services, and links to other library resources. FOCL has resources available to all Friends groups containing information about successful fundraisers and membership campaigns, and samples of Friends bylaws, etc. Annually, FOCL publishes a directory of FOCL members.

The help that the Friends of Connecticut Libraries provides to Friends groups is critical to their success to the overall mission of supporting the libraries in our communities.

Annually, FOCL publishes a directory of FOCL members, which includes Friends' activities and a comprehensive calendar of book sales.

Among the goals that FOCL has established for the future are to have a Friends group for every library, to have every Friends group be a member of FOCL, and, to be the first place to which Connecticut Friends groups turn for information.

Why Friends?

Why Support Public Libraries?

The quality of life in our communities and our nation is improved by the public library. Public libraries are truly democratic. They serve every segment of the community—young and old, rich and poor, college graduates and high-school dropouts. Public libraries in Connecticut are free: there are no admission requirements and no admission fees.

Libraries serve individuals, families, and the business community. They foster both economic and personal development in the areas they serve.

Libraries provide books, magazines, databases, multimedia materials, and computer access—and trained librarians and staff to facilitate their use.

Why Friends?

Friends groups are critical to the success of public libraries. Friends support the library and expand its effectiveness in the community. In the process, Friends provide the opportunity for individuals to make a contribution to their community.

- **Friends provide financial support** by generating revenue to supplement the library budget through membership dues and fundraising activities.

- **Friends provide grassroots support** for the library in the community.
- **Friends are good-will ambassadors**, spreading the word in the community. They stimulate greater awareness of the wide array of library programs and services.
- **Friends advocate for the library** in the community by speaking out on local, state, and national issues that affect libraries. Members speak to civic groups in the community, attend meetings, and contact government officials on behalf of their library.
- **Friends sponsor library programs** for children, teens and adults, such as talks by authors, book discussion groups, summer reading programs, art shows, musical events, and other activities of cultural interest to the community.
- **Friends provide volunteer help** in the library when and where it is needed.

Friends: From Concept to Reality

This handbook is a suggested set of guidelines used to establish a Friends group. The basic steps are outlined below. The remainder of this chapter expands upon these steps.

Step 1: Recruit a core group of library supporters

The first step in the process is to enlist a core group of three to five library supporters. This core group will function as a steering committee and may continue on in leadership positions in the new Friends group. At the same time, solicit the support of the library director and trustees. Their support is critical to the success of the Friends. Groups may also contact the Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL). FOCL will provide expert help and guidance throughout the entire organizational process.

Step 2: Hold an invitational meeting

Invoke the core group to meet with the library director, a representative of the trustees, and a representative from the Friends of Connecticut Libraries to formally discuss the establishment of a Friends group. Schedule the meeting in the library.

- Affirm the commitment of the library administration, trustees, and potential “Friends” to the formation of a Friends group. Begin to determine its basic mission and purpose and its basic organizational structure.
- Pass a resolution “That a Friends of the (City/Town) Library be formed to (accomplish certain goals).” An example of a goal is “to support and promote the library in the community.”
- Select an interim chairperson and an interim secretary. The interim chairperson and secretary will serve until a formal election takes place at the first public meeting.
- Select chairpersons for the initial committees: bylaws and nominating.
- Make initial plans for presenting the Friends to the public at a public meeting.

Step 3: Lay the groundwork

The outcome of the initial meeting is the firm commitment of all parties to proceed with the necessary steps to establish a Friends group.

The core group of library advocates and supporters now is essentially a steering or planning committee. Their work continues under the leadership of the interim chairperson with the goal of forming a Friends organization.

The chairperson will establish a schedule for the steering committee to

- Establish the initial role and mission of your Friends group
- Draft the bylaws
- Establish membership categories and dues structure
- Recruit officers and board members

Establish the Initial Role and Mission of Friends Group

The motivation for forming a Friends group differs from one library to another depending on library and community needs.

Friends might want to help build a new library collection or provide a new program or service. From their own funds, Friends provide services, opportunities, and equipment that would otherwise not be possible for the library to have.

It is important to articulate the reason for organizing your Friends group,

as this will have an effect on future decisions. It will have an influence on who will become members and the contributions they will make. Groups should be sure that the library administration, trustees, and potential Friends are in agreement on the expectations for the Friends.

The roles that your Friends group will play will be expressed in the organization's mission statement and bylaws.

Providing financial support

- Undertake projects to support or expand current services
- Assist in a campaign for a new building or renovation
- Raise money for new services and programs
- Secure needed equipment to meet program goals

Volunteer service

- Provide volunteer help for the library, if needed

Programming

- Assist library staff in providing activities of cultural interest to the community

Advocacy

- Speak to groups about the value of the library
- Promote the use of the library in the community
- Advocate for government budget support

Mission Statement

The roles that the Friends will play are reflected in a general way in what is termed a mission statement. See the appendix to this handbook for more information on the use of a mission statement and samples of the mission statements of established Friends groups.

Constitution and Bylaws

Do not be confused by the terms "constitution" and "bylaws." The two are often used interchangeably. Technically speaking, a constitution is a concise statement of purpose, and bylaws provide the framework for the processes. Bylaws contain all the elements of a constitution but are more detailed and specific. A constitution is rarely revised; bylaws are amended regularly.

While the terms seem intimidating, bylaws are simply a formal statement of the fundamental purpose and procedures of a group. Bylaws clarify the group's reason for existence and provide a basic framework for its processes. Bylaws outline the organizational structure within which your Friends group will operate, outlines membership, meetings, officers, and committee structure.

Bylaws need to be in place before your apply for incorporation and tax-exempt status. (See Chapter 8 for details).

What do bylaws include?

1. Name of the organization (the official name that will be used on all legal documents, including the certificate of incorporation and the application for tax-exempt status)
2. Purpose of the organization (the mission statement that will guide future decisions on planning, programming, and spending of the organization's money and define who will be served by the organization)
3. Governing body
 - Titles of officers
 - Terms of office
 - Selection of officers and board members
 - Appointment and duties of standing committees
 - Provision for special committees
4. Membership
 - How to join
 - Dues
5. Meetings
 - Scheduling
 - What constitutes a quorum
6. Fiscal matter (defining the fiscal year, how financial matters will be conducted, and auditing procedures)
7. Procedure for amending bylaws
8. Parliamentary authority (rules of order followed at official meetings, usually Robert's Rules of Order)
9. Dissolution statement (what will happen to the organization's property if the organization dissolves). This statement is needed for the tax-exempt status application.

10. Date of adoption

Suggestions for creating bylaws

You don't need to create the bylaws for your new Friends group from scratch. There are examples in the appendix, and several examples of the bylaws of other Connecticut Friends groups can be found on the FOCL website.

- Make the bylaws clear, but not so detailed that they need to be amended frequently.
- Keep it simple. Don't box yourself in by calling for a meeting on a specific date or setting the number of members needed for a quorum too high. For example, indicate that your general meeting will be held every June, instead of on the second Wednesday of June at 4 p.m.
- Use the language from your original resolution as a foundation for the purpose section.
- Having the bylaws completed will make applying for incorporation easy. Among the requirements for a Certificate of Incorporation in Connecticut are a number of the provisions already set forth in the bylaws, including what will happen if the group dissolves

Establish Membership Categories and Dues Structure

New groups will need to determine the answers to these questions:

- **Who will be eligible for membership?** Generally, membership in Friends groups is open to all individuals, families, seniors, organizations, associations, and businesses.
- **If you will have categories of membership, what will these be, and how will they be determined?** Generally, a board of directors determines this.
- **What will the dues structure be and how will the dues structure be determined?** Generally, a board of directors determines this.
- **What benefits will accrue from membership?** Generally, each member is entitled to one vote at any meeting of the membership.

This structure will need to be in place for the bylaws and, more importantly, to recruit new members. Membership dues are an important part of a new group's budget. Groups often offer several categories of membership so that membership is within financial reach of everyone including students, teens, and retirees. Some groups establish several higher membership levels for those who wish to give more.

There are samples of membership forms in the appendix to this handbook.

Recruit Officers and Board Members

At the invitational meeting, you appointed a chairperson for the nominating committee. It is his or her job to recruit nominees for officers and board members to be presented at the first public meeting. You will need to have nominations for president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer in addition to several members of the board of directors. Generally, one slate of nominees is presented, but nominations can be accepted from the floor. Below are the suggested duties of the officers.

President

- Presides at meetings
- Creates an agenda for each meeting

- Appoints committee chairs
- May sign checks with the treasurer
- Assures a smooth transition for new officers by maintaining files, etc.

Vice-President

- Presides at meetings in the absence of the president
- Fills in if the president cannot complete term

Secretary

- Records attendance and takes minutes at meetings
- Is responsible for all correspondence
- Maintains a permanent record of all minutes, copies of bylaws, Certificate of Incorporation

Treasurer

- Maintains financial records
- Signs all checks
- Prepares the budget
- Reports on the financial status at each meeting
- Prepares and submits all required federal and state tax filings

Members of the board of directors

- Attend each meeting
- Approve annual budget and plans
- Determine membership categories and dues structure

Hints for choosing good officers and board members

- Remember that this is a working group; the appointment is not “honorary”.
- Choose people who work well with others, get things done, and are responsible.
- Choose people who will advocate for the library and personally support it.

- Choose people who are able to make the time commitment necessary.
- Select as president a person who has the ability to run smooth meetings, limit non-productive discussions, and keep the meeting moving toward its goal of supporting library programs and services in the community.

Step 3: Plan and Hold the First Meeting

The first public meeting is a combination business meeting and a library promotional event. At this meeting you will pass the formal resolution establishing the Friends. You will elect officers and approve the bylaws. This meeting is the first of the annual meetings of the membership.

Just as importantly, you will introduce the Friends to members of the public, while gaining their support. You will make more people aware of library needs and will stimulate further interest in the library, as well as recruit leaders and volunteers.

Guidelines for Planning the First Public Meeting

- Hold the meeting at the library itself if possible.
- Promote the resolution “That a Friends of the (City/Town) Library be formed” as the basis of your publicity campaign.
- Define the goals of your Friends group clearly.
- Identify whom you want to invite to the meeting:
 - Seek potential Friends, high-profile community leaders, and library users.
 - Ask library staff to identify library users who might be interested.
 - Invite library staff, trustees and municipal officials.
 - Invite members of Friends groups in neighboring communities.
 - Invite every organization in town to send a representative. Ask the local Chamber of Commerce for a list.
 - Include businesses, community groups, social and civic groups, clubs, posts, and religious groups.
- Ask the library director, a trustee, and a representative from FOCL to speak at the meeting.
- Publicize the meeting widely in print and social media. Send a public service announcement to your local radio and television stations.
- Post an invitation on the library website.

- Provide everyone on the planning committee with an assignment and a deadline.
- Create an agenda.
- Make name tags.

Holding the Public Meeting

At the end of this meeting you will have:

- Formal endorsement by the community
- Officers and board members
- Volunteers for the initial committees
- Initial community interest

Closely following the initial meeting, schedule a board meeting at which you should:

- Appoint standing committees, such as membership, program, publicity and hospitality. See page 20 for committee information
- Appoint a committee to work on the first program or project.
- Appoint a committee to research incorporation and tax-exempt status
- Set a date for the next executive committee meeting

Be sure to

- Write thank-you notes to everyone who helped make the meeting a success
- Follow up with all attendees and potential volunteers, informing them of the progress of the group
- Join Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL), if you have not already done so, at www.foclib.org

Friends Up and Running: the First Year

Conducting the Regular Meetings

At the board meetings—and in between meetings—committees will conduct the real business of the Friends. Committee chairpersons will report at each board meeting on their activities and present recommendations for approval.

Sample agenda for board meetings

1. Call meeting to order
2. Approve minutes and agenda
3. Receive public comment
4. Library Director report
5. Introduce guests
6. Announcements and correspondence
7. President's report
8. Treasurer's report
9. Standing committee reports (for example, program, membership)
10. Special committee reports (for example, book sale, award)
11. Old business
12. New business
13. Adjourn

Tips for good meetings

- Remind members at each meeting of the value of the service they are performing.
- Keep the meeting on track and limit unproductive discussion politely.
- Start and finish meetings on time.
- At the end of each meeting, be sure that everyone knows what his or her assignment is.

Committee Information

Types of Committees–

- Executive – Friends officers
- Bylaws – responsible for drafting bylaws and keeping them up to date
- Nominating – recruits new board members and presents a slate of officers

Add next:

- Budget and Finance- oversees budget and financial activities
- Program – responsible for Friends programs. The committee is often the heart and soul of the Friends.
- Membership – maintains member lists and recruits new members

Add as needed as the organization grows:

- Newsletter – publishes a regular newsletter for members
- Fundraising – does the overall planning for fundraising
- Publicity – works with the board to publicize all Friends activities
- Hospitality – provides refreshments, name tags, etc.
- Special Committees – as need arises

Duties of committee chairpersons:

- Recruit committee members
- Attend board meetings and present reports
- Hold planning sessions with their committee members
- Maintain written records for future reference

Tips for choosing good committee chairs and members

- Look for a good mix of people who are representative of your community.
- Remember that not all committee members need to be on the board.
- Have a mix of “visionaries” and “brass tacks” folks.
- Select as committee chairs people who have the ability to run smooth meetings.
- Choose people who are able to make the time commitment necessary.

Suggestions for First Year Projects

1. Meet with the library director for suggestions.
2. Review initial group objectives.
3. Choose projects that are simple and low budget for your first year.
4. Make it a priority to make the Friends and the library more visible in the community.
5. Choose projects that bring people together in their effort to support the library.

Some possible first year projects that could be addressed include programming, community relations, advocacy, fundraising and volunteers.

Annual Membership Meeting

If your organization is a 501(c)(3), an annual meeting is required by the bylaws. It is designed to conduct the required business, highlight accomplishments, and recruit new members and volunteers.

- Schedule the meeting during the same month each year, as set forth in the bylaws.
- Invite all members and the general public to attend.
- Ask the library director or president of the board of trustees to speak on the importance of the Friends.
- Prepare a written report on the highlights of the year's activities, funds raised, etc.

At the meeting itself:

- Conduct a short business meeting in which officers and new board members are presented and elected.
- Report on the highlights of the year's activities.
- Report on the dollars raised and ways in which the money was used.
- Announce future plans and projects.
- Present the program or speaker.
- Recruit new members—have brochures and membership forms on hand.

Roles of the Library Staff, Trustees, and Friends

It is absolutely critical that the library administration be supportive of your Friends group. A group simply cannot be successful without the support of the library itself. A Friends program is most valuable when it moves the total library vision forward.

The Friends, library board of trustees, and library director must be clear about their roles. Although the goal of the Friends, trustees, and library director are to have the best public library possible, their roles in achieving that goal are quite distinct. See the chart printed on the following pages for a description of those roles.

Some Friends groups find it beneficial to have a written operating agreement with the library, outlining the roles of each and indicating how the two groups will communicate and keep each other informed.

The Friends and the library administration need to agree on:

- What initiatives the Friends will support
- What will be done with the money that the Friends raise
- What support the library will give to the Friends
- The role of the Friends in advocating for the library
- The roles and responsibilities of the Friends in planning and presenting programs

Working Together

Responsibilities of	Library Director	Trustee	Friend
General Administrative	Administer daily operation of the library including personnel, collection development, fiscal, physical plant and programmatic functions. Act as technical advisor to the board and ensure staff representation at all friends' board meetings.	Recruit and employ a qualified library director; maintain an ongoing performance appraisal process for the director.	Support quality library service in the community through fund raising, volunteerism and serving as advocates for the library's program.
Policy	Apprise board of need for new policies, as well as policy revisions; implement the policies of the library as adopted by the board; keep friends apprised of all library policies.	Identify and adopt written policies to govern the operation and program of the library including personnel, general operating, and collection development policies.	Support the policies of the library as adopted by the library board; adopt a constitution and bylaws for the friends.
Planning	Coordinate and implement long range planning process with board, friends, staff and community. Long range plan coordination will include preparation of appropriate status reports.	Ensure that the library has a long - range planning process with implementation and evaluation components. The process should include input from friends, community and staff. Support the policies of the library as adopted by the library board; adopt a constitution and bylaws for the friends.	Provide input into the library's long-range planning process and remain knowledgeable as to the status of the plan.
Marketing	Coordinate and implement an ongoing marketing program.	Ensure that the library has an active marketing program.	Promote the library program to the public.

Responsibilities of	Library Director	Trustee	Friend
Fiscal	Prepare an annual budget for the library in consultation with the board and friends; present current report of expenditures against the budget at each board meeting; make the friends aware of the special financial needs of the library.	Secure adequate funds to carry out the library's program; assist in the preparation and presentation of the annual budget.	Conduct fund raising which complements the library's mission and provides funding for special library projects.
Legislative	Educate board and friends regarding current local, state and federal library laws and pending library legislation.	Be familiar with local, state and federal library laws as well as pending library legislation.	Serve as advocates for local, state and national library issues; represent the library program to legislators.
Meetings	Provide written reports at and participate in all board and friends meetings; ensure that there is a staff liaison to the friends.	Attend and participate in all board meetings and see that accurate records are kept on file at the library; comply with Freedom of Information regulations; appoint a liaison to the friends' board to attend their meetings.	Maintain a liaison to the board of trustees to attend all their meetings. Executive board members should attend and participate in all friends' executive board meetings.
Networking	Affiliate with state and national professional organizations and attend professional meetings and workshops; make use of the services and consultants of the Connecticut State Library, Association of Connecticut Library Boards and Friends of Connecticut Libraries.	Attend regional, state, and national trustee meetings and workshops, and affiliate with the appropriate professional organizations. Make use of the services of the Connecticut State Library and Association of Connecticut Library Boards.	Affiliate with state and national friends' organizations and attend their meetings and workshops. Make use of the services and consultants of the Connecticut State Library as well as the Friends of Connecticut Libraries.

The relationship between the Friends and the library will continually evolve. Establish clear lines of communication. One proven effective way of assuring communication is to ask the library director to attend all board meetings. There should be a liaison from the Friends to the library board of trustees.

One way of assuring that Friends work is actually supporting the library is for the library director to prepare each year a “wish” list of library needs for the Friends.

Trustees should be encouraged to become members of the Friends.

What Friends Do

Advocacy

An advocate is a supporter of a cause. The cause that the Friends support is a vital public library. Support can be formal or informal; to be most effective, it should be both. Advocating for your library can be a simple gesture, such as:

- If you work on a Friends book sale or other fundraiser.
- If, at budget time, you attend a budget meeting to show support for your library, whether or not you speak.
- If you work to support a library referendum.
- If you write a letter to the editor in support of the library.
- If you call, write, or email any local, state, or federal official to express your support of your library or libraries in general.

Any formal advocacy campaign must be carried out in conjunction with the library administration and trustees.

Volunteer Service

Friends use volunteers in a variety of ways to accomplish their goals. Each board and committee member is a volunteer, contributing his or her time and energy to the success of the library.

The most effective way of recruiting volunteers is to ask—almost everyone likes to be asked. By asking for his or her assistance, you are recognizing that a potential volunteer is of value to your group and the community. For some newly retired people, volunteering offers a way to maintain a connection with the outside world.

Before you recruit, be clear about your needs. By clearly articulating the way in which each volunteer will benefit the organization, you can help give the person donating his or her time a real and meaningful stake in the endeavor. Offer training and mentoring to new recruits.

Suggestions for success

- Include a check off section on your Friends membership form listing volunteer opportunities.
- Be sure to follow up with a phone call to each and every person who volunteers.
- Regularly thank your volunteers. Honor volunteers during National Volunteer Week.
- Keep track of volunteer hours for annual reports and grant applications.

Fundraising

Friends of the Library raise money to supplement material and services that exceed the library operating budget.

Be sure that the Friends, library director and trustees are in agreement about how any monies raised by the Friends will be spent.

Some examples of strategies and projects that other Friends groups have used successfully are:

- Book Sales
- Sales of Friends merchandise
- Fundraising events

Marketing and Community Relations

To be successful, Friends should promote the library and all activities, and the Friends should promote their own membership, events, volunteers, and themselves.

Keeping Friends Energized

What Can You Do to Keep Your Friends?

Friends groups, just like every other group in the community, have cycles where interest ebbs and flows.

The following strategies for revitalization are effective with new groups as well as with groups that have been in existence for many years.

1. Attract and retain members
2. Promote your newsletter, web page or Facebook page
3. Look at your communications for prior contacts
4. Recognize all who contribute to your success
5. Consider collaborating with other community organizations

Establishing Friends Legal Status

Incorporation is the first of six steps in establishing the legal status of your Friends organization in Connecticut. There are required filings with both the state and federal governments. The process may seem intimidating, but if you proceed step-by-step, it is more time-consuming than difficult. The suggestions below should not be considered legal advice.

Essential steps

- Step 1:** Incorporate as an organization in Connecticut. — State
- Step 2:** Obtain an employee identification number (EIN). — Federal
- Step 3:** Obtain tax-exempt status (501(c)3).— Federal
- Step 4:** Obtain Connecticut Income Tax exemption. — State
- Step 5:** Obtain Connecticut Sales and Use Tax exemptions. — State
- Step 6:** Register as a charitable organization. — State

Step 1: Incorporate

- Applicants are required to select a unique name for their organization. There is a form to complete to reserve a name.
- The information needed to complete the application will be in your organization's bylaws.
- To facilitate future federal filings, include in your application a section on dissolution and specify the organization's purpose. The Connecticut Secretary of State's office suggests that groups contact the IRS before completing the application for incorporation.
- Organizations are required to name a "registered agent" for incorporation. The agent for a new Friends group is generally the public library itself.

Step 2: Obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN)

What is an EIN?

- An Employer Identification Number is a federally assigned ID number for an organization.
- It is similar to a Social Security Number for an individual; the Internal Revenue Service assigns it.
- An EIN is also referred to as the federal tax identification number.

How do you apply?

- The IRS website at www.irs.gov has very clear instructions for applying.
- You can apply to the Internal Revenue Service by phone, mail, or online.
- Complete IRS Form SS-4 (Application for Employer Identification Number).

Step 3: Obtain federal tax-exempt status (501(c)(3))

Tips on tax exempt status

- The Friends group must be a registered corporation in Connecticut to apply.
- It may take 3-6 months for the status to be granted.
- Groups may raise funds by noting, "Application for tax-exempt status is in process."
- Organizations may be required to file IRS form 990 if they exceed a monetary threshold.
- Excellent guidelines are available on the Connecticut Council for Philanthropy webpage at www.ctphilanthropy.org.

Step 4: Obtain Connecticut Income Tax exemption

Submit a copy of your *IRS determination letter* along with a completed *Application for Tax Registration Number (REG-1)* to the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services at www.ct.gov/drs.

Step 5: Obtain Connecticut Sales and Use Tax exemption

Nonprofit organizations that sell goods or services are generally required to obtain a *Connecticut Sales and Use Tax Permit* and to collect sales tax on those sales. There are exceptions to the general rule. For example, a nonprofit organization may make sales at up to 5 fundraising events per year without collecting sales tax.

Step 6: Register as a charitable organization

- The Connecticut Solicitation of Charitable Funds Act requires that most organizations register with the Department of Consumer Protection if they solicit money for charitable purposes even if the Friends group is incorporated and has tax-exempt status.
- Registration is with the Connecticut Attorney General's Office at www.ct.gov/ag. See the section on Charities.

Legal Limits on Friends Political Activity

A nonprofit organization (that is, one that has applied for and/or has been granted 501(c)3 status by the Internal Revenue Service) has some limitations placed on it in regards to political activity. For Friends, this means that if you, as a group, lobby legislators or participate in political campaigns, you need to know the legal limits.

Can the Friends endorse a candidate for office?

- No! Friends groups are prohibited from endorsing or financially supporting a candidate for office, whether at the federal, state, or local level.
- Friends (and other non-profits) cannot make partisan comments in official organization publications or at official functions.
- Friends groups may invite political candidates to speak at their events without jeopardizing their status.
- For more information regarding political activities of charities, see the IRS publication, *Election Year Issues*, available from the IRS website at www.irs.gov.

Do Friends Groups Need Insurance?

A recurring question on FOCL Forum and to the Friends of Connecticut Libraries is “Do we need Insurance?” There is no clear cut answer. Each group must consider both its own activities and the specifics of the insurance coverage of the local library and municipality. Here are some questions you should consider.

Why would the Friends consider purchasing Insurance?

1. Insurance can protect the organization, its officers, volunteers and board members in case of a lawsuit. Generally, the concerns of Friends are that people might be injured at Friends sponsored events.
2. General Liability Insurance is similar to homeowners insurance. It provides protection from personal injury claims and against loss from fire or other covered perils. This may be especially important if you operate a book store or store books for a sale.

What activities leave groups most vulnerable to lawsuits?

1. The group engages in activities open to the public.
2. The group sponsors and pays directly (to the vendor or performer) for activities which occur at the Library. There is a lower risk if the group reimburses the Library for these expenses.
3. The group operates a bookstore in another location other than the library. If the store is operated in the library there may be an increased risk if the store has its own separate entrance apart from the library entrance(s).
4. The group has employees and/or large assets. If the group has employees there are other types of insurance that must be considered and the group should consult an insurance professional.

Are Friends covered under the Library’s General Liability Policy?

1. Groups need to consult with the library and the municipal office that deals with liability issues. **It is advisable to get a detailed response in writing regarding this issue.**
2. If the Friends hold events in the library they may be covered by the library/municipality policy. If alcohol is served at the event it is usually not covered by the library/municipal policy. The separate policy for the group referenced above may provide coverage provided that there is no charge for the alcohol. If there is a charge a separate policy (or a rider to the liability policy) is needed.
3. In Connecticut, non-profit corporations are governed by the Connecticut Revised Nonstock Corporation Act (the “CRNSCA”). The CRNSCA specifies that individual directors are not personally liable for negligence if the director has acted in good faith and in what the director reasonably believed is in the best interest of the corporation. While this is true, it does not prevent a director

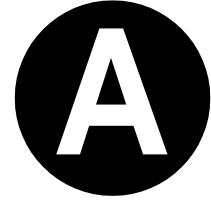
from being sued. It may still cost you money to hire an attorney to appear and get the case dismissed, etc. Some homeowner's policies will provide coverage for this exposure (some have specific requirements about notification that you serve on the board, etc.). It is much more prudent to purchase a "Directors and Officers" Liability policy to provide coverage for the actions of the board of your group.

What type of insurance do Friends most commonly purchase?

1. General Liability Insurance
2. A Business Owners Liability Policy especially if a bookstore is operated at a site other than the library
3. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance
4. Some type of theft or employee dishonestly coverage. This is important if a group has a large amount of money flowing through the group annually or if the group is managing a large amount of assets. (Some General Liability Policies provide this coverage)

Who should you consult before making a decision?

1. The library or municipal official responsible for risk management.
2. Local insurance agents/brokers. It would be wise to consult more than one to get information on the costs and coverage of several different proposed policies. Once coverage is in place it is advisable to "shop" the coverage periodically.
3. An attorney if your situation is complicated or you are unsure of advice/decisions you may have received from the municipality.



Sample Mission Statements

What is a Mission Statement?

- A mission statement defines the core purpose of a group—the reason for its existence. It states what the organization does, for whom, and where. It should be no longer than a paragraph, easily understood, and free of jargon.
- Your Friends group will have had a start on its mission statement in the original resolution presented to the public when the group was in its formative stages.

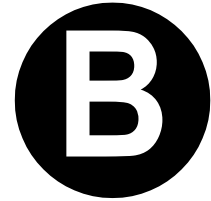
How Will the Mission Statement Be Used?

- You will use the same, or very similar, language to describe the purpose of your organization in the bylaws.
- A version of your mission statement will appear as the purpose of the group in your application to the State of Connecticut for incorporation
- The mission statement should be prominent in all Friends printed and promotional material.
- The mission statement will be used to keep the board focused and on track and in lobbying on behalf of the organization.

Sample Mission Statements of Friends Groups

- The Friends of the James V. Brown Library brings together a group of citizens who actively support the library through advocacy, volunteer services and fundraising.
- The purpose of the Friends shall be to further the services of the Willoughby Wallace Memorial Library to the community by arranging for art, music and other cultural and educational exhibits and activities of interest to all ages.

- The purpose of the Friends is to bring together individuals interested in the Johnson County Library System, promote informed community interest in library functions, resources, services and needs, and to raise supplementary funds for the Johnson County Library.
- The purpose of the Friends shall be to maintain an association of persons interested in good library service; to increase the facilities and service of the Cora J. Belden Library; and thus to enrich the cultural opportunities available to the citizens of Rocky Hill.
- The purpose of the Friends of Killingly's Bugbee Library shall be to focus public attention on library services, facilities, and needs, and to encourage donations, gifts, endowments, and bequests to the library, thereby stimulating increased usage and enhancement of library resources and services, and thus helping enrich the lives of the local community.



Sample Bylaws

Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the need for bylaws, the elements of bylaws, and some suggestions for Friends groups writing bylaws. Below are two examples of the bylaws for Connecticut Friends groups, the Friends of the Cora J. Belden Library in Rocky Hill and the Friends of the E. C. Scranton Memorial Library in Madison. The FOCL *website at www.cslib.org/focl* contains links to the bylaws of several other Connecticut Friends groups.

Note, in particular, in the Belden bylaws:

- Article II—Purpose—This is essentially the mission statement of the group.
- Article III—Membership—Specific dollar figures are not set, but guidelines for setting dues are.
- Article V—Meetings —The annual meeting is set for “spring,” rather than a specific date, such as, “ the third Wednesday of May at 2 p.m.” Some groups set no date at all, but specify that the executive committee will set the date.
- Article VII—Activities and dissolution. The dissolution clause is required for any Friends group seeking 501(c)3 status.

Friends of the Cora J. Belden Library Articles of Association

Article I Name

The name of the Association shall be Friends of the Cora J. Belden Library.

Article II Purpose

Section 1.

It is recognized that the administration of the Cora J. Belden Library is vested in the town of Rocky Hill through the Town Council, the Library Board of Trustees, and the Library Director.

Section 2.

The purpose of the Friends shall be to maintain an association of persons interested

in good library service; to increase the facilities and service of the Cora J. Belden Library; and thus to enrich the cultural opportunities available to the citizens of Rocky Hill.

Section 3.

The activities of the Association shall include sponsorship of special projects; informing the public of the resources and services of the library, securing materials that are beyond the command of the ordinary library budget, and performing other services deemed helpful to the Library.

Article III. Membership

Section 1.

Membership in this organization shall be open to individuals, organizations, and businesses in agreement with its purposes.

Section 2.

There shall be various categories of membership as determined by the Executive Board. There shall be, at minimum, Household category and a Life Member category. Dues of each category shall be determined annually by the Executive Board prior to the Annual Meeting.

Section 3.

Life Membership shall be available to an individual only. Upon payment of the prescribed dues charge for Life Member category, such an individual shall be relieved of payment of dues thereafter.

Section 4.

Each member who has paid dues shall be entitled to one vote.

Article IV Officers

Section 1.

The officers of this Association shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, and a Treasurer. The officers of the Association, along with at least two other individuals, shall constitute the Executive Board. The Library Director or designee, shall be an ex-officio member of the Board.

Section 2.

The Executive Board shall meet at the call of the President. A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3.

The direction of affairs of this Association shall rest with the Executive Board, the President acting as chairman.

Section 4.

The President may appoint chairpersons of standing and ad-hoc committees. Standing committees shall be Membership, Program, Publicity/Public Relations, Finance, and Gifts and Endowments. Other standing or ad-hoc committees shall be formed as deemed necessary, with the approval of the Executive Board.

Section 5.

The President is an ex-officio member of all committees with the exception of the Nominating Committee.

Section 6.

Nominations for officers and the Executive Board shall be presented by a Nominating committee of at least two, to be appointed by the Board.

Section 7.

The officers of the Executive Board shall be elected at the annual meeting.

Section 8.

Vacancies arising on the Board shall be filled by appointment made by the remaining Board members.

Article V Meetings

Section 1.

This association shall hold its annual meeting in the Spring for the purpose of election of officers, to receive various reports, and to enact other business. Public notice shall be made prior to the meeting.

Section 2.

Additional meetings shall be scheduled as recommended by any special committees and approved by the Board.

Article VI Funds

Section 1.

Adequate books of account shall be maintained by the Treasurer who shall be responsible thereof.

Section 2.

All checks shall be signed by the Treasurer or President.

Section 3.

The Executive Board shall appoint an accountant, not an officer, to review the Treasurer's books prior to the annual meeting.

Section 4.

No member of this Association shall be liable except for unpaid dues; and no personal liability shall in any event be attached to any member in connection with any of its undertakings.

Section 5.

The fiscal year of this Association shall be from July 1 to June 30.

Section 6.

One-half of the dues paid by each Life Member shall be held by the Treasurer and shall be expended by the Association.

Article VII Activities and Dissolution

Section 1.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Association is organized exclusively for one or more of the following purposes: religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, or educational purposes, or to foster national or international amateur sports competition (but only if no part of its activities involve the providing of facilities or equipment) or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals, as specified in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

Section 2.

No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except otherwise provided by Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (h), or participating in, or intervening in (including the publication or distribution or statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Section 3.

No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of any member, trustee, director, officer of the Association, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Association), and no member, trustee, or officer shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the assets upon dissolution of the Association.

Section 4.

In the event of dissolution of the organization, the assets of the Association shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the Federal Government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

Article VIII Amendments

These Articles of Association may be amended on prior notice at any meeting of this Association, by a three-fourths vote of the members present, provided that notice of the proposed change was provided with all notices of the meeting.

Approved June 14, 2006

**Friends of the E. C. Scranton Memorial Library
Constitution and By-Laws**

Article I Name

The name of this association shall be the Friends of the E. C. Scranton Memorial Library. It shall be a non-profit, non-sectarian, non-political organization.

Article II Purpose

Section 1.

The purpose of the Friends shall be:

- a To foster closer relations between the Scranton Library and the residents of the town of Madison.
- b To promote knowledge of functions, resources, services and needs of the Library.
- c To foster public support for the necessary development of the Library to the end that it may serve adequately the needs of the town.
- d To provide programs and events for the community that are compatible with the Library's policies and objectives.
- e To conduct for and on behalf of the E.C. Scranton Memorial Library the annual funds solicitation.

It is recognized that the responsibility for the administration of the Library's finances and for the establishment of Library policy and objectives is vested in the Board of Directors of the corporation.

Article III Membership

Section 1.

All persons who donate funds or services to the Library, during the current fiscal year, shall be considered members of the Friends, for that year.

Article IV Officers

Section 1.

The officers of the Friends shall be an Executive Board which shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer, and at least three Members-at-Large and the Executive Librarian as an ex-officio member.

Article V Funds and Liability

Section 1.

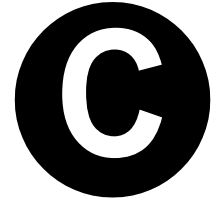
Activities of the Friends shall be self-supporting. All funds accrued by the Friends organization shall be deposited to the account of the Friends of the E.C. Scranton Memorial Library and shall be disbursed by the Treasurer of the Friends as authorized by the Executive Board of the Friends, to be used for the purposes of the Library. Disbursement of all sums over \$100 shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Librarian and/or the Board of directors of the E.C. Scranton Memorial Library.

Section 2.

No personal liability shall in any event be attached to any member of this association in connection with any of its undertakings.

Section 3.

In the event of the dissolution of the Friends, all funds shall be disbursed to the E.C. Scranton Memorial Library.



Glossary

Below is glossary of library acronyms and terms that may be helpful to Friends as they attend meetings and participate in discussions.

ACLB (Association of Connecticut Library) Boards An organization for the trustees of public libraries in the state. ACLB sponsors workshops and meetings for trustees.

ACLPD (Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development) An advisory committee to the State Library Board. May create Task Forces to work on specific projects.

ALA (American Library Association) The oldest and largest organization of librarians and libraries in the country. ALA provides leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.

Bibliomation Bibliomation is Connecticut's largest library consortium. Bibliomation is Connecticut's only open source consortium.

CT Humanities (CTH) is a non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. CTH connects people to the humanities through grants, partnerships, and collaborative programs. CTH projects, administration, and program development are supported by state and federal matching funds, community foundations, and gifts from private sources.

CLA (Connecticut Library Association) An association for all Connecticut librarians. Sponsors workshops and an annual conference; provides support for librarians in various areas such as minimum salary guidelines and censorship challenges. CLA's annual Legislative Agenda lobbies for support for library legislation and funding.

CLC (Connecticut Library Consortium) Formed in July 2003 from the merger of the four clsus, CLC is a statewide nonprofit membership organization for public, academic, school, and special libraries providing networking, communications, cooperative purchasing, training, and other services.

Connecticard Statewide public library lending program, which allows Connecticut residents to use their local public library cards in all public libraries in the state.

CSL (Connecticut State Library) The principal library of state government, specializing in law, history, government publications, and public policy. Includes Public Records Administration, the State Archives, and the Museum of Connecticut History. The Division of Library Development provides services and consultants to libraries in the state. State Librarian: Deborah Schander

CSLB (Connecticut State Library Board)

DLD (Division of Library Development) - Connecticut State Library

FOCL (Friends of Connecticut Libraries) Statewide organization of Friends of the Library groups.

FOCL-Forum Electronic discussion list for Friends of libraries in Connecticut

FOCLPOINT Newsletter of the Friends of Connecticut Libraries

ILL (Interlibrary Loan) The process by which a library requests material from, or supplies material to, another library upon the request of a library user.

IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) Federal grant-making agency that promotes leadership, innovation, and a lifetime of learning by supporting the nation's museums and libraries. It administers LSTA funds.

LBPH (Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped) A unit of the Connecticut State Library

LCI (Library Connection Inc.) is a non-profit cooperative of libraries that share an integrated library system and other technological innovations to add through collaboration.

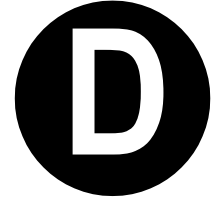
LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) Federal funding for libraries in several areas—technology, interlibrary cooperation, literacy, etc., and for state library agencies. Replaces LSCA (Library Services and Construction Act.)

MLSC (Middletown Library Service Center) A branch of the Connecticut State Library that provides services to public and school libraries.

NELA (New England Library Association) An association of librarians from all types of libraries in New England. Special interest divisions, workshops, and an annual conference.

Researchit CT This has Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Online Educational Resources, including CT Learning Hub, The Amistad Digital Resource, New Census Bureau Resources for Distance Learning and a Spanish-language portal for COVID-19 information.

Webjunction The Webjunction builds the knowledge, skills and confidence of library staff to power strong libraries that are the heart of vibrant communities.



Resources for Forming Friends Groups

A Basic List

Following is a selective list of resources on organizing Friends of the Library. Each of the organizations has a wealth of materials available and a website that is very useful both for new groups and those that are up and running. The list of printed materials includes core resources for Friends.

In addition to their website, the Friends of Connecticut Libraries maintains an extensive library of printed material that is available for loan. FOCL also maintains a resource file, open to all members, containing samples of membership forms, brochures, bylaws, etc. They also have available information about other Friends activities, including fundraisers, book sales, and membership campaigns.

Websites

Connecticut Association of Nonprofits.

www.ctnonprofits.org

A trade organization whose mission is to support and strengthen nonprofit organizations in building and sustaining healthy communities in Connecticut. The association offers resources, training, and links to outside businesses such as insurance firms specializing in serving nonprofits.

Connecticut Council for Philanthropy.

www.ctnonprofits.org

A resource for networking, news and information on grant making and philanthropy in Connecticut. Their website includes guidelines for “Organizing and maintaining a nonprofit corporation in Connecticut.” The guidelines provide step-by-step instructions for incorporation, applying for nonprofit status, and other legal filings.

Foundation Center.

www.foundationcenter.org

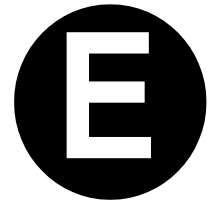
Authoritative source of information on private philanthropy in the United States for grant seekers, grant makers, researchers, and policymakers. Their website offers tutorials on many topics, including “Establishing a Nonprofit Corporation.”

Friends of Connecticut Libraries.

www.cslib.org/focl.

FOCL is the number one resource for Friends groups in Connecticut. (See Chapter 1). FOCL website provides membership information, calendars, information on activities and services, and links to other library resources. Among the features are resources and information on forming and maintaining a local Friends group.

APPENDIX



Sample First Year Budget

Income

Dues (30 members at \$10)	\$300
Contributions (5 gifts of \$25)	\$125
Special fundraising projects	\$175
Total income	\$600

Expenses

Postage	\$125
Supplies	\$75
Hospitality	\$100
Program	\$50
Publicity	\$75
Total expenses	\$500

Balance	\$100
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