

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN CONNECTICUT, 3rd EDITION

Instructor's Guide

Chapter 27

Class Discussion

1. Does your City/Town Hall have news coverage provided by a local newspaper? If so, does your local government have a full-time news reporter?
2. Does your local newspaper have their newspaper on a website for the public to read? Do more people use the website and the web for news or read hardcopy?
3. Do your public meetings have a news reporter present to provide press coverage of the meeting?
4. Are all notices of public meetings appropriately posted so citizens know about these meetings? Where are these notices posted?
5. Does your city or town also receive news coverage from local radio or television stations?
6. Do you think that both good and bad news makes the local media, or just the bad news?
7. Did you ever hear of the FOIA before you read this book? Why is it an important agency?
8. What topics can be discussed in an Executive Session? Can a vote be taken in Executive Session?
9. Are you aware of anyone in your community filing a complaint with the FOIC? What was it about?

Class Assignments

1. Find out if your city or town government has a municipal ethics commission. Is there any ethic clause in the town charter or town ordinance? If not, how do you think municipal officials should handle ethics violations in your community?
2. Have you ever read about any possible ethics violations from your local public officials?
3. Does your community provide any ethics training to newly elected or appointed public officials?
4. Check-out your city or town's website to see if any mention is made of their ethics code or expected ethical practices.
5. Do you feel that most types of ethical behavior in local government reflect common sense?
6. Have you ever attended a meeting of your city or town's ethics commission or the State's FOIC?
7. Are you aware of "closed sessions" held by your elected officials on any topics that relate to ethical issues? When was the last one, and what topics did they discuss?

Field Trips-Other Ideas

- What local public official would you have explain your city or town's ethics code to your class?
- Find out the next meeting of your city or town's ethics commission and attend their meeting.
- Invite a member of the press to class to discuss the impact of the FOIC on local government information.