

BYLAWS THOMASTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Approved May 3, 2016

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ARTICLE 1 – MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Thomaston Public Library is to provide accurate, timely, and useful materials in a variety of formats and technologies. Library services and programs are conducted in response to public demand and with reference to the informational, educational, recreational, professional, cultural and other needs of the community. The Library supports lifelong learning, the love of reading, and an appreciation of literature.

Programs and services offered to the public shall be available free of charge. Bus trips sponsored by the library may incur a fee. The Library may also host fundraising events with a fee.

ARTICLE II - RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

Section 1 - Role of Trustees

The Thomaston Public Library Board of Trustees has been created by law to act as the governing board of the library. The public supports the Thomaston Public Library and the Board of Trustees is elected to govern this institution as a public trust.

The Board of Trustees acts as a planning and policy-making board for the library. This board has the responsibility for the library's policies, budget and fiscal oversight, gifts, bequests, property donations, and endowments.

Section 2 - Relationships: Trustees, Library Director, Staff, Volunteers

As described in the personnel policies, the Board of Trustees hires, oversees, and evaluates the Library Director; the Library Director reports to the Board and is responsible for day to day operations of the Library; and staff members report to the Library Director.

Library trustees do not determine day to day activities of the library nor do they assign members to perform library functions.

Trustees may from time to time serve as library volunteers. This role is not to be confused with the "volunteer" aspect of serving on the Board of Trustees, which is achieved by election/appointment to the board. With the exception of fundraising activities planned and conducted directly by Trustees to benefit the library (e.g., book sales), Trustees who serve as regular library volunteers do so at the discretion of the Director.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Election of Library Board of Trustees

The Thomaston Board of Trustees shall consist of twelve citizens duly elected by the voters of the community in accordance with state law, for a usual term of 6 years. Trustees may be re-elected. Library employees may not serve as Trustees while employed by the library. The term of office for new members begins two weeks after the election. Board members must be sworn in before taking their seats on the board.

Section 2 – Interim Vacancies

The Board of Selectmen shall fill interim vacancies on the Board in accordance with state election law. However, those serving in interim positions must stand for election at the next regularly-scheduled election at which town officers (Selectmen, Town Clerk, etc.) are elected. Vacancies on the board caused by resignation or departure from the community shall be filed in writing by the departing Trustee with the Town Clerk and with the Chair of the Board of Trustees and Board Secretary.

Section 3 - Failure to Attend Meetings

Any Trustee absent from three meetings without notifying the Chair or Secretary shall be subject to inquiry as to his/her desire to remain a Trustee.

Section 4 – Code of Ethics

Trustees will abide by the [Public Library Trustee Ethics Statement](#) of the American Library Association's Division of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations. (see Appendix I)

ARTICLE IV- MEETINGS

Section 1 – Meeting Schedule: Agendas

The Library Board of Trustees shall meet monthly, September through June, on a regular schedule to be determined annually by the Board of Trustees. The meeting schedule shall be filed annually with the Town Clerk by January 31st of each year. Notice of meetings and the agenda shall be posted 24 hours in advance of the meeting at the Town Clerk's Office. Agendas for regular meetings may be overridden with a 2/3 vote of present members. The Board shall follow requirements established by the Freedom of Information law regarding meetings and requirements for making minutes available on the timeline established by them.

Section 2 – Conduct of Meetings

Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. The usual/regular order of business shall be as follows:

- Call to Order
- Public Comment
- Communications
- Action on Minutes
- Director's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Committee Reports
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Section 3 – Director's Report

The Library Director's monthly report shall be sent in advance of the next scheduled meeting. This report serves as notice of the board meeting and provides Trustees with background information on current library activities.

Section 4 – Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting shall be held in the month of December before the regular meeting.

Section 5 – Special & Emergency Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or upon written request of five members for the purpose of transacting business. There must be at least 24 hours' notice of a special meeting, which shall be filed in the Town Clerk's office. Time, date, and material to be discussed must be included in the notice and nothing else can be discussed at the subsequent special meeting. The time and place of any special meeting and the purpose for which it is called shall be given to each member of the board prior to the meeting time. (*See Freedom of Information Act, Sec. 1-225, Appendix II*).

An emergency meeting is a meeting called for the purpose of dealing with a real or potential emergency involving a clear and present threat to life or property. In the case of any emergency meeting, no notice or agenda is required but minutes must be filed within 72 hours and include the reason for the meeting.

Section 6 – Quorum

The quorum for the transaction of business at a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees shall consist of seven members. In-person meetings are preferred; however, in extenuating circumstances, trustees or members of the community may attend remotely.

Section 7 – Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Thomaston Public Library shall be the same as that of the Town of Thomaston.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1 - Officers

The officers of the Board are as follows:

Chair
Vice Chair
Secretary
Treasurer

Section 2 - Election of Officers

At the Annual Meeting, a Nominating Committee shall present a proposed slate of officers. Nominations from the floor also will be accepted if offered. A vote will be taken to determine who will serve as officers for the ensuing year.

Section 3 – Role of Chair

The Chair of the Board shall preside at all meetings. The Chair shall appoint all committee members and chairpersons, shall authorize the call for all special meetings, shall perform the duties of a presiding officer and oversee the performance of officers and committee members in regard to library matters. The Chair shall act on behalf of the Board as its authorized signatory for the purpose of applying for grants and for any such other purpose as the Board deems appropriate. The Chair shall act as the spokesperson of the Board.

Section 4 - Role of Vice Chair

The Vice Chair shall perform the duties and have the powers of the Chair during the absence or disability of the Chair.

Section 5 - Role of Secretary

The Secretary shall record all proceedings of the Board meetings and shall have responsibility for the minutes and other records of the Board, which will be filed with the Town Clerk.

Section 6 – Role of Treasurer

The Treasurer shall ensure that a written report on the budget status is presented at each meeting. The Treasurer shall sign checks for purchases from the account titled the Thomaston Public Library and ensure that a proper account is kept of all receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer shall ensure that a written report on the balance of the bank account titled the Thomaston Public Library is provided quarterly to the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer shall ensure that quarterly reports shall be provided to the full board on the status/balance of money awarded to the library by the town budget and other non-town budget sources. Any Trustee may request additional information and be given access to all financial records.

Section 7 – Absence of a Trustee

In the case of prolonged absence of any officer of the Board or any committee chairperson, the powers or duties of such officer or committee chairperson may be delegated to other members of the board by the Board Chair until the absent officer is able to resume responsibilities.

ARTICLE VI - STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1- Standing Committees

The duly elected Chair shall appoint the standing committees, their chairpersons and members at the January meeting. However, the Treasurer of the Board shall serve as Chair of the Budget Committee. These committees are as follows:

- Budget
- Bylaws
- Long-range Planning
- Maintenance
- Personnel
- Steering

Section 2 –Membership of Committees

Each of these committees shall consist of three or more members, and the Chair of the Library Board shall be an ex-officio member of each standing committee. The Chair may fill vacancies at any time.

Section 3 – Role of Committee Chairs

The Chair of each Standing Committee shall assign work to each committee member, call committee meetings, direct the action of the committee and report the recommendations of the committee to the Trustees for action.

Section 4 - Role of Budget Committee

The Budget Committee, including the Board Treasurer, shall prepare the annual budget. The committee shall work closely with the Library Director. The proposed budget, after approval by the Board of Trustees, shall be submitted by the Library Director to the appropriate town officials.

Section 5 – Role of the Bylaws Committee

The Bylaws Committee shall review the bylaws every three years or as needed and recommend any proposed changes to the Board of Trustees for action.

Section 6 – Role of the Long-range Planning Committee

The Long-Range Planning Committee in concert with the Library Director shall investigate ways to improve and enhance library services to the local community. The committee shall prepare a long-range plan every 5 years or as needed for future needs, services and improvements.

Section 7 – Role of the Maintenance Committee

The Maintenance Committee inspects and recommends along with the Library Director what equipment should be replaced/repared and shall make annual recommendations along with the Director regarding major repair projects.

Section 8 – Role of Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shall formulate the official personnel policies regarding library employees, including staff appointments, promotions, salary schedules, classification plans and all fringe benefits. Personnel Policies shall be reviewed and revised as necessary.

Section 9 – Role of Steering Committee

The Steering Committee recommends the use of unrestricted bequests and unrestricted memorial gifts.

ARTICLE VII – Special Committees

The Chair appoints special committees as needed for the study and investigation of special problems. The Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee annually.

ARTICLE VIII –Library Director

Section 1 – Appointment of Library Director

The Library Director shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees. (See Personnel Policies for details.)

Section 2 – Responsibilities of Library Director

(See Personnel Policies for details.)

ARTICLE IX –AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended or repealed and other bylaws adopted if written notice of such proposed action has been given in a call for a meeting. No amendment or alteration of these bylaws shall be made except by a vote of two-thirds members of the Board of Trustees.