

## **BYLAWS**

### **THE COMMUNITY LIBRARY 110 UNION STREET COBLESKILL, NEW YORK 12043**

We, being duly elected trustees of The Community Library, do hereby declare this organization to be a Public Library chartered by the State of New York and maintained for the benefit and free use on equal terms of all the people of the Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District and do hereby establish the following bylaws:

#### **ARTICLE I.           NAME**

- I.1 This organization shall be The Community Library, existing by the virtue of the provisions in the Absolute Charter Number 22585 granted by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York on October 6, 1999, and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said charter.

#### **ARTICLE II.           MANAGEMENT**

- II.1 The business and affairs of The Community Library are managed and conducted by a Board of Trustees, (hereafter referred to as the Board), eleven members in number, who serve for a term of five years. Trustee elections take place annually. Ballots may be cast by the registered voters of the Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District.
- II.2 Each nominee shall submit a short resume/biography with their petition stating his/her qualifications and talents that will be beneficial to the Board of Trustees of The Community Library.
- II.3 For any election in which more than one five-year term is to be filled and more candidates are running than there are terms to fill, the candidates who receive the most votes are entitled to fill the terms. The same applies to partial terms that are being filled due to vacancies.
- II.4 The term of members of the Board ends on June thirtieth of the term
- II.5 Vacancies, which occur for reasons other than expiration of a full term, may be filled by Board appointment for the balance of that year. The Board will make every effort to fill a vacancy which occurs more than three (3) months before the next election. The interested candidate shall provide the Trustees with a resume/biography prior to their consideration for appointment. A candidate may be appointed by a majority vote of the Board at a regularly scheduled Board

meeting. The appointee may run for any new five-year term or the remainder of the unexpired term at the next annual election.

- II.6 Any trustee who fails to attend three consecutive regular meetings of the Board without notice shall be deemed to have resigned as a Trustee.

### **ARTICLE III. OFFICERS**

- III.1 The Officers of the Board are elected by its membership at the Annual Meeting in July. Three trustees will be elected by the Board to form the Nominating Committee two months prior to the election of officers. The first trustee elected will hold the position of chair. The Board Nominating Committee will present a slate of officers; additional nominations may be made from the floor. The vote for officers is by secret ballot if two or more trustees have been nominated for one office. Officers positions are President, Vice President, Secretary, Finance Officer, and Historian elected from the Board and a Treasurer, who is not serving as a Trustee, will also be appointed.
- III.2 Officers serve a one-year term.
- III.3 The President presides at all meetings of the Board. The President also calls special meetings, appoints all committee members, executes all documents authorized by the Board, serves as ex-officio voting member of all committees and generally performs duties associated with that office.
- III.4 The Vice President assumes and performs the duties and functions of the President in the event of the absence or disability of the President, or of a vacancy in that office.
- III.5 The Secretary is responsible for keeping a true and accurate record of all meetings of the Board and performs other duties as are generally associated with that office. An Assistant Secretary who need not be a Trustee may be selected by the Board to assist the Secretary in the performance of those duties.
- III.6 The Finance Officer will act as liaison between the Treasurer and the Board., The Finance Officer may oversee the regular audit of claims chair the Board Finance Committee and otherwise serve in such a capacity. An Assistant Finance Officer may be appointed at the Annual Meeting to assist the Finance Officer in the performance of those duties, including banking.
- III.7 The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining appropriate accounting record and provides a monthly Treasurer's Report to the Board. The Treasurer may oversee the regular audit of claims and chair the Board Finance Committee. The Treasurer's contract will be reviewed on an annual basis.

III.8 The Historian collects, maintains, and preserves materials that pertain to the history of the library and its facility, the Board, and library activities.

#### **ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS**

- IV.1 Regular meetings of the Board are held on the second Thursday of each month. Exceptions to this may be established by the Board at the annual meeting.
- IV.2 A quorum for the transaction of business at the meeting is a majority of the existing Board, who shall be present in person. In the absence of a quorum, the Trustees present may adjourn the meeting to a date determined.
- IV.3 The order of business for regular meetings includes but is not limited to, the following items, which are covered in the sequence shown as far as circumstances permit:
- a. Determination of Quorum
  - b. Call to Order
  - c. Guests and Public Comment
  - d. Minutes of the previous meeting
  - e. Communications
  - f. Director's Report
  - g. Treasurer's Report
  - h. Presentation of the Bills & Action
  - i. Standing Committee Reports
  - j. Ad hoc Committee Reports
  - k. Unfinished Business
  - l. New Business
  - m. Adjournment
- IV.4 The Director attends all regular meetings and may participate in the discussion and offer professional advice, but may not vote upon any question.
- IV.5 Special meetings may be called by any Board member for discussion of library business.

#### **Article V. Trustee Requirements**

- V. 1 Each member, elected or appointed, shall be required to complete a minimum of two hours of trustee education annually. (Education Law 260-d added by *Chapter 468 of the Laws of 2021*).
- V. 2 Per education Law, trustee education topics may include financial oversight, accountability, fiduciary responsibilities and the general powers and duties of a library trustee.

- V. 3 At the state level, trustee education providers and activities (topics and formats) are approved by the New York State Library acting on behalf of the Commissioner of Education.
- V. 4 The State Library has delegated authority to public library systems to approve additional trustee education providers and activities for their member libraries.
- V. 5 Failure to meet the trustee education requirements are addressed in the Trustee Education Policy and procedures.
- V. 6 All Trustees must comply with Library policies.

## **ARTICLE VI            COMMITTEES**

VI.1 On an annual basis or as needed otherwise, the Board Development Committee recommends membership to the following Standing Committees: Board Development, Building and Grounds, Finance, Long Range Plan of Service, Personnel and Policy. Standing Committees consist of three or more members each serving a one-year term. Standing Committees will report at regular Board meetings and present actions to the Board for official discussion and vote. Additional committees that act only in an advisory capacity may be appointed outside of the Standing Committee structure to address needs as they arise. These committees may include any number of participants from the library board or the general public. Duties of the Standing Committees are detailed as follows:

VI.2 Board Development:

- a. identify, recruit and nominate officers for election at the annual business meeting in July
- b. develop succession plans for key Board leadership positions
- c. develop orientation and ongoing training of all Board members
- d. assess the strengths and limitations of the Board's composition and how it contributes to the achievement of our mission and goals on an annual basis
- e. review and propose Board and officer job descriptions, expectations and ethical standards
- f. review and recommend changes to bylaws every year
- g. provide annual recognition for staff and volunteers in conjunction with the Personnel Committee.
- h.

### VI.3 Building and Grounds:

- a. conduct regular appraisal of facilities and grounds to keep the Director and Board aware of current conditions or issues
- b. annually review the inspection contracts of the Library and report any necessary changes to the Board with recommendations for improvements or correction of any faults found
- c. work collaboratively with the Director to seek and interview vendors for building projects and manage such projects
- d. work collaboratively with the Director to maintain a facility that meets the library's and community's needs by periodically updating and completing cosmetic repairs
- e. investigate grant opportunities or partnerships for major building work

### VI.4 Finance:

- a. have general supervision over the financial affairs of the Library
- b. make policy recommendations to the Board concerning financial issues
- c. prepare the Annual Budget collaboratively with the Director and present it for consideration by the Board during the first quarter of the calendar year
- d. coordinate with the Director regarding income, expense and budget amendments

### VI.5 Long Range Plan of Service

- a. organize and oversee the development of a community-based, written Long Range Plan of Service in accordance with New York State Education Department Regulations § 90.2, Minimum Standards
- b. annually review the Long Range Plan of Service and its implementation in accordance with the Calendar of Duties. The committee will report to the full board regarding this assessment and any changes that may need to be made
- c. involve the appropriate Board committees and community groups in implementing the plan, once it's in place

### VI.6 Personnel:

- a. recruit, screen and recommend a library director to the Board when

needed

- b. conduct a review of the Library Director by December 1 of each year
- c. keep an up-to-date Employee Handbook for the library staff with Regulations and Procedures concerning all persons employed by the Library
- d. provide annual recognition for staff and volunteers in conjunction with the Development Committee.
- e. mediate grievances between director and staff, director and board

VI.7 Policy:

- a. set policy for the governance of the library
- b. maintain a regular schedule for review of all internal and external library policies
- c. collaborate with the Director on suggested policies
- d. represent the Board's interest in public discussions of policy matters

VI.8 Nominating (Ad Hoc):

- a. create a proposed slate of officers
- b. present the slate of officers at the meeting prior to the Annual Meeting
- c. discharge the committee once the slate of officers is presented and accepted

**ARTICLE VII. DIRECTOR**

VII.1 The Board appoints a qualified Librarian who is the executive and administrative officer of the Library under the Board's review and direction. The Director sends the meeting agenda to the trustees with the board packet and announcement of regular meetings

VII.2 The Director develops job descriptions and selects employment candidates for appointment by the Board. No appointments, promotions or dismissals shall be made without this recommendation.

VII.3 The Director has the interim authority to begin employment for positions without prior approval of the Board provided such appointments are formally approved by vote at the next regular board meeting.

VII.4 The Director is responsible for operation and administration of the library, its staff and resources within the budgeted appropriation. The Director serves the mission of the library in providing public access to information, technology and personal enrichment. Duties and expectations may be revised to meet changing needs of the library.

## **ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS**

VIII.1 These Bylaws supersede any and all other Constitution and/or Bylaws adopted by any previous Board.

VIII.2 The Board may amend these Bylaws by a majority vote of all members providing notice of the amendment has been sent or delivered to each member of the Board thirty days prior to the meeting.

VIII.3 The revisions of the amended Bylaws will take effect when they are adopted.

*Adopted September 9, 1999.*

*Amended September 9, 2004*

*Amended September 10, 2009*

*Amended May 10, 2012*

*Amended July 9, 2015*

*Amended January 11, 2018*

*Amended August 9, 2018*

*Amended July 11, 2019*

*Amended September 9, 2021*

*Amended March 9, 2023 to include Article V. Trustee Requirements*

*Amended January 2024 to include changes to the role of Finance Officer and Treasurer.*

*Amended February 2024 to clarify the election process and add the role of nominating committee*