

## **The Community Library Bylaws**

### **Mission Statement**

The Community Library builds strong communities by preserving the past, enriching the present and inspiring the future.

### **Preamble**

This corporation is and will be known as The Community Library, existing by virtue of the provisions of Absolute Charter Number 24,036 granted by the Regents University of the State of New York on October 7,2005 and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under said charter. Original provisional charter was granted by the Regents of the University of the State of New York on October 6, 1999. The charter was amended by the Board of Regents on December 18, 2008 number 24,677 to specify the authorized number of trustees to be not less than five nor more than fifteen and to recite in the charter that the library's service area is coextensive with the Cobleskill-Richmondville School District.

The Board of Trustees (hereinafter designated as the "Board") of The Community Library, shall be governed by the laws of New York State, the regulations of the Commissioner of Education and by the following bylaws.

### **Bylaws**

#### **1. Name of organization**

The name of the organization shall be The Community Library.

#### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of the organization is to provide quality library service to the residents, adults and children, of the communities of the Cobleskill-Richmondville School District.

#### **3. Fiscal**

The fiscal year of the library shall be the calendar year.

#### **4. Board of Trustees**

- a. The business and affairs of The Community Library shall be governed by a Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as the Board. The Board shall consist of eleven (11) members, elected for terms of five (5) years each. Trustee elections take place annually. Ballots are cast by the registered voters of the Cobleskill-Richmondville School District. Newly elected members will take office following their oath of office at the Board's Annual Meeting in July.
- b. Eligibility shall be limited to adults (18 or older) residing within the geographical limits of the Cobleskill-Richmondville School District. Each nominee shall submit a short resume/biography with their petition stating their qualifications and talents that will be beneficial to the Board and to the Library.
- c. At any election where more than one vacancy is being filled and where one or more persons are to be elected for a full five-year term or terms the candidate receiving the

highest number of votes shall be entitled to fill any of the open terms starting with the five-year terms.

- d. Absence from three consecutive meetings without a valid excuse shall constitute automatic dismissal from the Board unless the Board defers this dismissal by majority vote. The President shall inform the absent Board Member in writing that he/she is no longer on the Board. If dismissal is deferred by Board action, the President shall inform the absent Board Member in writing the conditions of this deferral.
- e. Vacancies which occur for reasons other than expiration of a full term may be filled by Board appointment until the next election. 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.
- f. The Board may remove a Trustee for misconduct, incapacity, neglect of duty, or refusal to carry into effect the library's educational purpose as provided in Education Law 226; subdivision 8.
- g. Each Trustee shall have one vote, irrespective of office held.
- h. A Trustee must be present at a meeting to have his/her vote counted or meet the provisions of New York State's Open Meetings Law.
- i. A majority of the whole Board (including vacancies) is required for any motion to pass.
- j. All actions of the Board shall be of the Board as a unit. No Board member shall act on behalf of the Board, on any matter, without prior approval of the Board. No Board member by virtue of his/her office shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the library nor, as an individual, command the services of any library employee.
- k. All trustees must comply with continuing education requirements outlined in Section 260-d of New York State Education Law. Per education Law, trustee education topics may include financial oversight, accountability, fiduciary responsibilities and the general powers and duties of a library trustee. 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. The State Library has delegated authority to public library systems to approve additional trustee education providers and activities for their member libraries. Failure to meet the trustee education requirements are addressed in the Trustee Education Policy and procedures.
- l. All trustees must comply with the Sexual Harassment Prevention training requirements in New York State Human Rights Law.
- m. All Trustees must comply with Library policies.

## 5. Officers

- a. The officers of the Board shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Officer, and Historian. All but the Treasurer and Historian are elected annually by the Board at the July meeting. These officers shall serve for a period of one year or until their successors have been duly elected.
- b. The duties of such officers shall be as follows:
  - i. The **President** shall preside at all meetings of the Board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by

the Board, serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with the office.

- ii. The **Vice President**, in the event of the absence of the President, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the President.
- iii. 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.
- iv. The **Treasurer** is a Board appointed, non-voting officer of the Board. The Treasurer's duties include signing checks, reviewing monthly financial statements, maintaining an appropriate financial record, presenting a monthly Treasurer's Report to the Board and performing other duties generally associated with the office. The Treasurer shall be bonded and their contract will be reviewed annually.
- v. The **Financial Officer** will be elected at the Annual Meeting to assist the Treasurer including banking.
- vi. The **Historian** collects, maintains, and preserves materials that pertain to the history of the library and its facility, the Board, and library activities. The Historian is a Board appointed position and may or may not be held by a Trustee.

## 6. Library Director

- a. The Board shall appoint a qualified Library Director who shall be the executive officer of the library corporation and shall have charge of the administration of the library under the direction and review of the Board.
- b. The Library Director has the authority to develop job descriptions, select, promote or dismiss all employees. Such employment actions are reported by the Library Director at the next regular Board meeting and are subject to approval by the Board.
- c. The Library Director under direction of the mission of the library shall be responsible for the care of the buildings and equipment; for the adequate and proper selection of library materials in keeping with stated policies established by the board; for the efficiency of the library's service to the public; and for the operation of the library under the financial conditions contained in the annual budget
- d. The Library Director shall render and submit to the Board reports and recommendations of such policies and procedures, which, in the opinion of the Library Director, will improve efficiency and quality of library service.
- e. The Library Director is responsible for distribution of the regular board meeting agenda and associated board packet to trustees.
- f. The Library Director or designee shall attend all Board meetings except the portion of the meeting at which the director's appointment, salary, or performance is to be discussed or decided. The Director or designee may participate in discussion and offer professional advice, but cannot cast a vote.
- g. The duties and expectations may be revised to meet the changing needs of the library.

## 7. Committees

- a. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the President three months prior to the Annual Meeting who will identify, recruit and develop a slate of officers for election at the Annual Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

- b. Ad Hoc committees for specific purposes may be appointed by the President. Such committees shall serve until the completion of the work for which they were appointed. The Vice President shall serve as chair, and if unavailable, the President will appoint a committee chair.
- c. All committees shall make a progress report to the Board at each of its meetings and present actions to the Board for official discussion and vote.
- d. No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the Board, it is granted specific power to act.
- e. The President shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees, with the exception of the nominating committee.
- f. Standing Committees consist of three or more trustees serving a one-year term on the committee. Committees and duty descriptions follow below.
  - 1. Board Development:
    - a. develop succession plans for key Board leadership positions
    - b. develop and provide orientation for new Trustees
    - c. inform, develop and monitor Trustee training
    - d. assess the strengths and limitations of the Board's composition contributing to the achievement of the mission and long-range plan of service on an annual basis to present to the President, and then the Board
    - e. review and propose Board and officer job descriptions
    - f. review and recommend changes to bylaws on an annual basis
    - g. provide annual recognition for staff and volunteers with the Personnel Committee.
  - 2. Building and Grounds:
    - a. conduct regular building and grounds inspections to keep the Director and Board aware of current conditions or issues
    - b. annually review the operational contracts of the Library and report any necessary changes to the Board with recommendations for improvements or corrections
    - c. seek and interview vendors for building projects, and provide oversight of projects with the Director
    - 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. research grant opportunities or partnerships for major building work
  - 3. Finance:
    - a. conduct oversight of the financial affairs of The Community Library
    - b. recommend fiscal policy items to the Board
    - c. prepare the Annual Budget with the Director
    - d. present the Annual Budget for Board approval during the first quarter of the calendar year
    - e. coordinate with the Director on a monthly basis regarding income, expense and budget amendments
  - 4. 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. review annually the Long Range Plan of Service and its implementation in accordance with the Calendar of Important Duties and Functions. The committee will report to the full board findings of the review, to include any recommended changes
- c. provide assistance/guidance to the Director, community groups and Board committees throughout the calendar year related to Plan implementation

5. Personnel Committee
  - a. recruit, screen and recommend a library director to the Board when a vacancy occurs
  - b. conduct an annual personnel evaluation of the Library Director by December 1
  - c. provide an up-to-date Employee Handbook for the library staff with Regulations and Procedures concerning all persons employed by the Library
  - d. mediate grievances between director and staff, director and board
  - e. provide annual recognition for staff and volunteers in conjunction with the Development Committee
6. 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

## **8. Meetings**

- a. Meetings shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 4 pm. Exceptions to this may be established by the Board at the annual meeting. All meetings shall be in compliance with the New York State Open Meetings Law.
- b. A special meeting of the Board may be called at any time by the President or upon the request of three members for a specific purpose. No business may be transacted at such a special meeting except the stated business. All meetings shall be in compliance with the New York State Open Meetings Law.
- c. The annual meeting shall be held in July of each year. The business transacted at this meeting shall include the election of officers, the swearing in of new members, the designation of the library's newspaper of record, and a confirmation of the library's banking institutions.
- d. A simple majority of the whole Board (including vacancies) shall constitute a quorum for the conducting of all business. A majority of the whole Board (including vacancies) is required for any motion to pass. If a quorum is not present at a regular meeting, the attending members may set a date for another meeting to be held within one week and the presiding officer shall notify the absent members of this specially called meeting.
- e. The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not limited to the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown unless circumstances make an altered order more efficient.
  - i. Determination of a Quorum
  - ii. Call to order
  - iii. Guests and public comment
  - iv. Minutes of previous meeting
  - v. Communications
  - vi. Director's Report

- vii. Treasurer's Report
- viii. Presentation of Bills and Actions
- ix. Standing Committee Reports
- x. Ad Hoc Committee Reports
- xi. Unfinished Business
- xii. New Business
- xiii. Adjournment

**9. Amendments**

- a. Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed at any regular meeting and shall be voted upon at the next regular meeting. Written notice of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be sent to all absent members at least ten days prior to the voting session. A simple majority of the whole Board (including vacancies) shall be sufficient for adoption of an amendment.
- b. Any rule or resolution of the Board, whether contained in these Bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which two-thirds of the members of the Board shall be present and two-thirds of those present shall so approve.

**10. Procedure**

All procedures not specified herein shall be in accord with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

**Approved by The Community Library Board of Trustees**

**Dated: March 13, 2025.**

**January 27, 2026 to adjust meeting date and time.**