



Library Bylaws of the Board of Trustees
Of the
Mentor Public Library

Adopted and Approved
By
The Board of Trustees
Mentor Public Library
March 16, 2011
Revised 5/21/2014
Revised 6/18/2014
Revised 6/15/2016
Revised 11/16/2016
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Article I. Mentor Public Library

I Section A. The Library Board

This organization shall be called the “Board of Trustees of the Mentor Public Library” existing by virtue of the provisions of “Title XXXIII, Chapter 3375.15-3375.18 (School District Public Library)” of the Ohio Revised Code. Its mailing address shall be:

Mentor Public Library
8215 Mentor Avenue
Mentor, OH 44060

I Section B. The Mentor Public Library

The library shall be called Mentor Public Library located at 8215 Mentor Ave., Mentor, OH 44060 and with two branches: Headlands Branch, 4669 Corduroy Rd., Mentor Headlands, OH 44060, Mentor-on-the-Lake Branch, 5642 Andrews Rd., Mentor-on-the-Lake, OH 44060 as well as a satellite location at Mentor High School in the HUB.

Article II. Purpose of Mentor Public Library

The purpose of the Mentor Public Library is to provide library services in accordance with Ohio law and the mission statement as adopted by the Board of Trustees in its Strategic Plan.

Article III. Membership

The Mentor Public Library is organized as a school district library – members are appointed by the Mentor School Board. The library’s Board of Trustees consists of seven (7) members.

III Section A. Tenure and Qualifications

Each library trustee is appointed to a seven year term. Appointments are staggered such that no more than one trustee’s terms are scheduled to expire in the same year.

No one is eligible to membership on such board of library trustees who is or has been for a year previous to his or her appointment a member of the board of education making such appointment (Mentor School Board). By law, (ORC 3375.15), a majority of the trustees (at least four) shall be qualified electors of the (Mentor) school district, but a minority may be qualified electors of the county who reside outside the school district, and all shall be appointed by the board of education of the school district.

All library trustees serve without compensation. Waiving fines for trustees (considered compensation) is also prohibited. In general, trustees are guided in the performance of their duties by the most recent edition of the *Ohio Public Library Trustee’s Handbook*.

III Section B. Attendance

The insight and attention of each trustee is a valuable asset to the board and the library. Therefore, regular attendance is expected.

If a trustee has three unexcused absences from *regular* meetings during the calendar year, the Library board may address the absences directly and will take further action as needed in concert with the appointing authority. Absences may be excused by prior notice to the president.

III Section C. Filling Vacancies

The Mentor Public Library was established by the Mentor Exempted Village Board of Education. Ohio Revised Code 3375.15 states that “The Board of Education shall make appointments to the Board of Library Trustees not later than forty-five days after the date a member’s term expires or after the date a vacancy occurs, whichever is applicable. If the Board of Education does not make an appointment by that time, the appointment shall be made within the next fourteen days by the probate court of the county in which the library is situated.”

If the member whose term is expiring is requesting reappointment, a letter stating such should accompany the term expiration letter. The notification of a desire to be reappointed is not to be considered a directive to the Board of Education.

The current appointment process of the school board, consisting of a joint committee of members of the school board and the library board, shall be used to fill all library trustee vacancies.

Article IV. Duties and Powers of the Board

The Board of Trustees shall have all the powers and duties granted to it by law and detailed in Ohio Revised Code 3375.40. The board shall determine and establish in accordance with the law, the basic policies of the library.

The policies approved by the board shall remain in effect until changed or rescinded by further action of the board. These policies shall be administered by library staff. The director shall maintain a file of all policies established by the board for consultation and distribution as directed by the board and as required by law.

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for hiring both the library director and the library fiscal officer, for the fiscal officer’s annual appointment at the organizational meeting, and for ensuring that the director and fiscal officer carry out the policies of the library in an effective, efficient, and lawful manner.

In order to speak with a consistent voice, all news of board actions or statements by the board released to the media shall be made by the board president or library director speaking for the board. No one board member, other than the president, shall speak for the board unless directed to do so by a majority of board members voting at a scheduled board meeting.

All powers of the library board are vested in it as a board, and none at all in its individual members. The individual trustee has no power to act for the board in any way, unless authorized to do so by the board itself. The Mentor Public Library will provide reasonable coverage to indemnify trustees in the performance of their duties.

Article V. Officers of the Board

At the annual *organization* meeting the board shall elect from its membership a president, vice-president, and secretary, each of whom shall serve a term of one year, commencing immediately upon election and continuing to the election of officers at the next annual *organization* meeting.

No board member shall hold more than one office at a time.

Incumbent members may rotate up to the next officer position or may serve a second successive term in the current office. Members may also decline to advance.

Members cannot serve more than two successive terms in a position, but may return to a previously held position after a year's absence.

Vacancies in office shall be filled by vote at a *regular* meeting of the board as soon as possible after the vacancy occurs.

An initial appointment as an officer to serve the remainder of an unexpired term shall not count toward the two-year consecutive term limit.

V Section A. President

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; and perform all other duties generally associated with that office. The president may serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees.

V Section B. Vice-President

If the president is absent or unavailable, or declines to act in the capacity of his office, or if the office of president is vacant, the vice-president shall have all the powers and duties of the president except as otherwise provided by law.

V Section C. Secretary

The secretary shall preside at board meetings in the absence of the president and vice-president. The secretary shall validate a true and accurate record of meetings of the board.

Article VI. Board Meetings

VI Section A. Meeting Types

The Organizational meeting will be held in compliance with ORC 3375.32. Items to be considered at the meeting shall include, but are not limited to:

- Seating and swearing in of the new board members
- The election of board officers
- Appointment of the Fiscal Officer
- Discussion of board committees

For the election of board officers, the board nominating committee shall make its recommendation. There shall be requested nominations from the floor.

The Mentor Public Library shall adopt the dates, times and place for all regular meetings at the board's regular January meeting or at prior meeting.

VI Section B. Public Notice of Board Meetings

Members of the public or news media who wish to be notified when a particular subject will be discussed at a meeting should inform the library director of their interest. The director will then make arrangements to give advance notice by e-mail or phone prior to the scheduled meetings; members of the public who wish to be notified by postal mail should provide the director with self-addressed, stamped envelopes for that purpose. Board meeting dates and times will be posted on the library's website.

Any board or committee meeting that is not a regularly scheduled meeting, shall require a 24 hour notice.

Meeting notices shall, in accordance with the Sunshine Laws, be directed to local news media and any person that has requested notification. The notification shall note time, place and purpose of the meeting.

Meeting notices shall be by written notice and/or email/fax. Members who will be absent from a meeting should contact the President or appropriate Committee Chairperson prior to the meeting.

Regular or special meetings shall have written minutes. Minutes shall reflect action taken, Board reports and Public Comment, and shall contain sufficient facts and information to permit the public to understand and appreciate the rationale behind the public body's decisions. Minutes shall record only the general subject under discussion for Executive session and per the Ohio Revised Code 121.22(G).

Committee meeting minutes shall list the committee members present and absent. The minutes shall be topical in nature. Major points of discussion shall be noted. Reference to any reports or pertinent material shall be noted.

VI Section C. Agenda

The regular meeting agenda is prepared at least seven (7) working days before the upcoming regular board meeting. It is prepared by the director in consultation with the fiscal officer and board president.

1. Call to Order – President
2. Minutes of the previous Meeting(s) Action
3. Public Comment of Agenda Items
4. President's Report
5. Director's Report
6. Fiscal Officer's Report
7. Board Committee Reports
8. New Business
9. Old Business
10. Public Presentation to the Board
11. Next Meeting Date
12. Adjourn

The quorum necessary for the board to transact business shall be four members. Lack of a quorum will automatically adjourn a board meeting. Meetings of the board will follow parliamentary procedures as outlined in *Roberts Rules of Order*, latest edition, when not inconsistent with these bylaws.

Except when a larger majority is required by law, an affirmative vote of the majority of Trustees shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The president may make or second a proposal before the board, may participate fully in discussions, and may vote upon all proposals. Each board member shall have one vote.

VI Section D. Suspension of Rules

Any rule or resolution of the board, whether contained in these bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with the business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be done only at a meeting where a quorum exists, and a majority of the quorum agrees to the suspension.

VI Section E. Executive Session

The board may enter into executive session for purposes as described in the *Ohio Open Meetings Act*. The motion to hold an executive session shall state the purpose of such a session, and the motion must be approved in open meeting in a roll call vote by a majority of the quorum of the board.

VI Section F. Public Participation

Time is set aside on each *regular* meeting agenda for public participation from the audience. Any member of the public who wishes to speak to the board is asked to read and complete the Procedure for Speaking at the Mentor Public Library Board of Trustees policy and form before the meeting is called to order so that he or she may be added to the agenda. Speakers must identify any groups or organizations for which they will speak in an official capacity. Those who have signed-in to address the board will be recognized in the order in which they signed in. The public presentation period is to address the Board of Trustees. Public comments should be addressed to members of the board, not staff, administration or members of the audience. While considerable latitude is offered relative to comment content, personal attacks or disparaging comments will not be allowed and the Board President may exercise discretion as warranted.

The main purpose of board meetings is to conduct the business of the library. In order for the board to fulfill its obligation to complete the meeting agenda in an effective fashion, the board president may limit by time the comments of each public participant and will do so by announcing the time limit at the beginning of the meeting, and applying the time equally to all participants.

Article VII. Committees/Commission

Trustees are appointed to committees by the president and committees shall be designated at the president's discretion and/or as required by law.

Committees serve an advisory role and make recommendations to the board; a committee has no other power, unless, by suitable action of the board, it is granted a specific power to act.

The Board will establish standing and temporary committees as needed.

VII. Section A - Nominating Committee

A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President at least two months prior to the organization meeting and shall present a slate of officers at the organization meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

VII. Section B - Records Commission

The Records Commission shall consist of the Board of Trustees and the fiscal officer. The commission shall meet at least once every twelve months and shall be responsible for overseeing the Library's compliance with the Ohio Records Law as described in Chapter 149 of the *Ohio Revised Code*.

VII. Section C – Ad hoc

Ad hoc or temporary committees may be appointed and charged with specific tasks by the board president as required; such committees are automatically dissolved upon completion of the assigned tasks.

Article VIII. Library Director

The board shall appoint and fix the compensation of the library director. The director shall have full charge of the administration and operations of the library in accordance with the objectives and policies adopted by the board and under the direction and review of the board. The library director has the authority to administer, and is responsible for, the care of all buildings, furnishings, and equipment; for the employment and direction of library staff; for the selection, acquisition, and disposition of library materials; and for maintaining excellent library service.

The director shall serve at the discretion of the board. His or her employment shall be governed by the language of his or her contract and the policies of the library.

Article IX. Fiscal Officer

The board shall appoint and fix the compensation of the fiscal officer. The fiscal officer is the library's chief financial officer and acts as the board's financial agent in library matters. The fiscal officer shall administer and manage the funds of the library in accordance with law and with the objectives and policies adopted by the board and under the direction and review of the board. The fiscal officer has the authority to administer, and is responsible for, the receipt, deposit, and expenditure of funds; the internal control of library expenditures; and the documenting and reporting of financial activity.

The fiscal officer shall serve at the discretion of the board and is appointed for a one-year term annually. His or her employment shall be governed by the language of his or her contract and the policies of the library.

Article X. Ethics/Conflicts of Interest

No member of the Board shall have a pecuniary interest in any contract entered into by the Board, except as otherwise may be permitted by applicable Ohio law. The Board subscribes to "A Statement of Ethics for Library Trustees" of the American Library Association, except to the extent, if any, that the same conflicts with or is inconsistent with the provisions of applicable Ohio law, in which case the latter shall govern. The Board is bound by the applicable statutes of the Ohio Ethics Law and the rulings of the Ohio Ethics Commission.

The Board of Trustees subscribes to the statement of principles promulgated by the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations, a division of the American Library Association as listed below, and is bound by the applicable statutes of the Ohio Ethics Law and the rulings of the Ohio Ethics Commission.

PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEE ETHICS STATEMENT
Official Statement from United for Libraries

Public library Trustees are accountable for the resources of the library as well as to see that the library provides the best possible service to its community.

Every Trustee makes a personal commitment to contribute the time and energy to faithfully carry out his/her duties and responsibilities effectively and with absolute truth, honor and integrity.

- Trustees shall respect the opinions of their colleagues and not be critical or disrespectful when they disagree or oppose a viewpoint different than their own.
- Trustees shall comply with all the laws, rules and regulations that apply to them and to their library.
- Trustees, in fulfilling their responsibilities, shall not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure or fear of criticism.
- Trustees shall not engage in discrimination of any kind and shall uphold library patrons' rights to privacy in the use of library resources.
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the library, acknowledging and supporting the formal position of the Board even if they disagree.
- Trustees must respect the confidential nature of library business and not disclose such information to anyone. Trustees must also be aware of and in compliance with Freedom of Information laws.
- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained as a result of their position or access to privileged library information, for either themselves or others.
- A Trustee shall immediately disqualify him/herself whenever the appearance of or a conflict of interest exists.
- Trustees shall not use their position to gain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others from the library or from those who do business with the library.
- Trustees shall not interfere with the management responsibilities of the director or the supervision of library staff.
- Trustees shall support the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

Approved by the United for Libraries Board in January 2012

Article XI. Amending the Bylaws

The Board President will solicit members periodically to review the bylaws and recommend changes to the board when necessary.

These bylaws may be amended at any board meeting by the affirmative vote of a majority of the full membership of the Board of Trustees provided that a notice of the proposed amendment shall have been included in the agenda for the meeting.

Article XII. Indemnification

The Library shall purchase and maintain insurance for protection of the Library and for protection of any member of the Board of Trustees, officer, employee to the fullest extent permitted by ORC 3375.401. Such policy or policies of insurance may provide such coverage and be upon such terms and conditions as shall be authorized or approved from time to time by the Board of Trustees of the Library. Members of the Board of Trustees are currently covered by the Library's Director's and Officer's Liability Policy, including their liability resulting from either institutional or individual lawsuits.

Adopted by the Mentor Public Library's Board of Trustees, March 16, 2011; Rev. 5/21/14; 6/18/14
6/15/16; 11/16/16; 12/21/2022