

BYLAWS OF THE CORNWALL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MISSION

The Cornwall Public Library connects people, information and ideas to inspire learning, provoke curiosity, advance knowledge and strengthen our community. We rely on three great resources – our staff, our collections and our physical and virtual spaces - to promote an engaged and informed citizenry.

INTRODUCTION

The Charter, as formed in 1954, established the organization of the Cornwall Public Library (CPL), within the centralized Cornwall School District, in 1959. This Absolute Charter was established “for and in behalf of” the Education department of the State of New York by the Board of regents. This Charter of Organization has continued in effect and forms the legal, structural base for functions of the Board of Trustees (Board) and its governance in the CPL. The following By-laws have been developed within the framework of the Charter. Since 1959, the Board has written appropriate policies and set procedural changes in order to meet new needs and update the provision of Public services by the Library.

BYLAWS

1. NAME OF ORGANIZATION

- a. The name of the organization shall be the Cornwall Public Library (CPL).

2. FISCAL

- a. The fiscal year of the library shall be the July 1 – June 30.

3. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- a. Pursuant to the retirement of the General Code of the State of New York, the library shall be governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board shall consist of seven (7) members, elected for terms of three (3) years each. Those elected prior to our charter amendment of 2016 (changing trustee terms from five (5) to three (3) years), are grandfathered to complete their five (5) year term. Trustees are elected by the qualified voters of the Cornwall Central School District Number One of the Towns of Cornwall, New Windsor, and Woodbury, Orange County, New York. Eligibility for office shall be limited to adults residing or owning property within the geographical limits of the library district.
- b. Newly elected members will take office at the first meeting following the annual meeting.
- c. Unexcused absence from three consecutive meetings 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.
- d. No member shall serve for more than two consecutive terms (see 3a).
- e. The Board shall appoint vacancies due to cause other than the expiration of term until the next Operating Budget Vote and Trustee Election. At that time, the appointee and any other

interested candidates may run for the remainder of the unexposed term. Should a Board member choose to leave the Board prior to their term end, they must notify the Board in writing.

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.

i. 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.

j. The Board shall be responsible for the setting of general CPL policies, the review and approval of the payment of CPL expenses, the review and approval of the Library Director's personnel recommendations, and such other responsibilities as established within these By-Laws.

4. OFFICERS

a. The officers of the Board shall be the President, Vice-President, and Secretary, elected at the first regular meeting in each school district year, which coincides with our fiscal year. These officers shall serve for a period of one year or until their successors shall 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 that office.

ii. The Vice President, in the event of the absence or disability of the President, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the President.

iii. The Secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the Board, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office.

iv. The Treasurer is appointed by, and reports to, the Board and is responsible for the receipt and disbursement of tax monies under Board approval. The Treasurer is not a member of the Board and, therefore, has no voting privileges.

5. LIBRARY DIRECTOR AND STAFF

a. The Board shall appoint a Library Director, possessing a Master's Degree in Library Science, who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the Library on behalf of the Board and serve under its review and direction. The Director shall be responsible for:

the care of the buildings and equipment;

the employment and direction of the staff;

the efficiency of the library's service to the public;

the operation of the library under the financial conditions contained in the annual budget.

b. All personnel actions must be approved by the Board of Trustees at a legal meeting. The Board creates all positions, establishes salaries and formally appoints the staff upon the recommendation of the director. Retroactive appointments can be made if positions must be filled between meetings.

- c. In the case of part-time or temporary employees, the Library Director shall have the interim authority to appoint without prior approval of the Board, until its next regular meeting.
- d. In the absence of the Library Director for vacation, illness or unexpectedly for other reasons, these supervisory responsibilities will fall to the senior, full-time, qualified librarian working under review and direction of the Board.

6. COMMITTEES

- a. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the President two months prior to the Annual Meeting who will present a slate of officers and names of candidates for new officers. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- b. 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.
- c. All committees shall make a progress report to the Board at each of its meetings, as warranted.
- 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. As such, should not be included in the count when determining the number needed for a quorum and they should not be counted when determining if a quorum is present.

7. MEETINGS

- a. Meetings shall be held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Cornwall Public Library or such other time and place as the Board may determine.
- b. A special meeting of the Board may be called at any time by the President or Vice-President upon the request of two (2) members of the Board, provided that written notice thereof is given to the paper of record in advance, and posted on the CPL website and other appropriate social media outlets.
- c. A quorum at any meeting shall consist of four (4) or more trustees.
- d. The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown unless circumstances make an altered order more efficient:
 - i. Call to Order and roll call of members
 - ii. Disposition and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
 - iii. Public Remarks (limited to three(3) minutes per speaker)
 - iv. Financial Reports
 - v. Communication and Correspondence
 - vi. Scheduled Presentations
 - vii. Library Director's Report
 - viii. Committee Reports
 - ix. Unfinished Business
 - x. New Business
 - xi. Adjournment
- e. All procedures not specified herein shall be in accord with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

8. BUDGET AND PUBLIC VOTING

- a. In order to maintain and develop services of the CPL, the Board will start review of expenditures, staff, and planning for the next fiscal year by January of each year. Working with

the Library Director, the Board will prepare a final budget plan in time for adoption at the Board meeting in March.

b. The budget will be presented to the public with time for public review and voting in April for approval or rejection. Election of a Trustee for each open position will be made at the same public vote.

c. As CPL is a School District Public Library, public voting for the proposed budget, for election of Trustees, or for any needed, special bond expenses will be carried out in accordance with voting rules of the Cornwall Central School District.

9. AMENDMENTS

a. Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed at any regular meeting and shall be voted upon at the next regular meeting. Any of the foregoing rules may be temporarily suspended by a unanimous vote of all the Trustees present at any meeting.

10. RECONSIDERATION OF POLICY

a. Patrons may request that the Board of the CPL reconsider a policy. Patrons should contact Library staff for a copy of the Request for Reconsideration of a Policy Form. The form should be completed and returned to the Information Desk for the Library Director to submit during the New Business section of the next regular meeting.

Revisions Approved by the Cornwall Public Library Board of Trustees

October 12, 2017