

Bylaws

Margaret Reaney Memorial Library Bylaws

ARTICLE I TRUSTEES

1. The board shall consist of not less than 5 nor more than 11 members with the current number being 7.
2. The term of office shall be 5 years and shall not be limited to years of service. Trustees are recommended by the Library Board to the Village Board of Trustees which makes the official appointments in April.
3. Vacancies other than by expiration of term on the Library Board are filled by a majority vote of the whole Board of Trustees.
4. The Library Board may vote to remove a board member for just cause.
5. If any trustee shall fail to attend 3 consecutive meetings without an excuse accepted as satisfactory by the board, he/she shall be deemed to have resigned. (Ed.Law 226)
6. Board terms expire March 31.
7. In an event of a vacancy of a trustee the Board of Trustees will:
 - a. Provide the potential trustee with an Information Packet (including a list of board members and their contact information, a list of committees and their functions, a copy of the bylaws, an invitation to attend a regular board meeting as well as any committee meeting).
 - b. Request a letter of intent.
 - c. Interview all potential candidates.
8. Trustee Emeritus is a position held by a retired trustee who has served on the board and demonstrated quality service and dedication for the preservation of the library. The candidate must be proposed by a member of the present board of trustees and confirmed by a majority of the trustees present at the meeting. A public ceremony will be held to mark the recipients' public service.
9. Under New York State law, a library has broad authority to manage the affairs of the library, but it is a collective authority. Individual trustees, regardless of their position on the board, do not have the power to command the services of a library staff member, nor to speak or act on behalf of the library, unless they have been specifically granted that authority by a vote of the board.

An important corollary to this concept of collective authority is the need for the board to speak with one voice once a decision has been made. Debate, discussion, and even disagreement over an issue are an important part of policy development and the decision-making

process. However, every trustee has an ethical obligation to publicly support an adopted board decision.

The First Amendment protects the rights of a trustee who disagrees so strongly with a board decision that he or she must speak out publicly against it. However, in such instances the individual must make it clear to all concerned that they do not represent the library and, indeed, may wish to seriously consider resigning from the board if such action interferes with their ability to effectively fulfill their responsibilities as a trustee. (page 22-23 of the NYS Handbook)

ARTICLE II---Officers

1. The officers of the Library Board shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer (who is the treasurer of the Village of St. Johnsville). (p.23 of NYS Handbook for Library Trustees).
2. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the President in April each year and report nominations for President, Vice President, and Secretary in May.
3. Officers will be elected at the last meeting in May by a majority of the Library Board. Terms of offices begin upon the adjournment of that meeting and continue until the successors' terms begin.
4. Vacancies among officers shall be filled by an election at a regular meeting of the board and a majority vote of the whole Board of Trustees shall be necessary.
5. All officers shall have the usual powers associated with their office as described in the NYS Handbook for Library Trustees. (p.23 of the NYS Handbook for Library Trustees)

ARTICLE III---MEETINGS

1. Regular meetings shall be held each month at dates and times to be established by the board at the beginning of the library's fiscal year (June-May) and shall be open to the public.
2. Executive sessions, meetings from which the public and the news media may be excluded, must be convened during an open meeting for a limited number of specific purposes. Those which usually apply to libraries are:
 - a. Discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;
 - b. Collective bargaining negotiations pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law (Taylor law);
 - c. The medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;
 - d. The proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof. (NYS Library Handbook p.27).
3. An executive session is convened **only** as part of a public board meeting, not as a separate meeting. The board must vote to enter executive session and state the general nature of the

session for its minutes. (NYS Library Handbook p.27).

4. A majority of the whole shall be a quorum for the board to vote. (For example, if your Board be chartered to consist of seven members; an affirmative vote of four is **always** required for a motion to pass, regardless of the number of trustees in attendance. Tie votes defeat the motion. (NYS Library Handbook p.29).
5. Vouchers will be available 15 minutes before each regular meeting for review.
6. The order of business shall be set annually at the organizational meeting and may be modified by the President subject to the approval or amendment by the board. Agenda as follows:
 - a. Call to order and roll call
 - b. Adoption of the agenda
 - c. Public expression and guests
 - d. Approval of prior meeting minutes
 - e. Correspondence and communications
 - f. Finance and Vouchers
 - g. Director's report
 - h. Committee reports (standing and possible ad hoc)
 - i. Unfinished business (from Robert's Rules of Order)
 - j. New business
 - k. Public expression
 - l. Date of next meeting
 - m. Other (covers executive sessions)
 - n. Adjournment

ARTICLE IV—Committees

1. The following will be standing committees:
 - a. Museum
 - b. Finance and Personnel
 - c. Fundraising and Public Relations
 - d. Planning, Development and Research
 - e. Building and Grounds
2. Ad hoc committees shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board.
3. The President of the MRML Board of Trustees shall appoint all trustee committee members.
4. Non-trustees may serve on MRML committees.
5. Non-trustees become committee members following recommendation by a majority vote of a given committee, expressed by that committee's chair to the board of trustees' president for placement on the next regular trustees' meeting agenda, for discussion and decision by the full board.

6. Chairperson of a committee must be a trustee of the board.
7. Each committee member, excepting advisory, will have the right to vote on committee issues.
8. The terms of all committee members expire at the end of the regular meeting in May. New committee members assume their responsibilities on June 1.
9. The Director is ex-officio, advisory member on all committees and is eligible to serve as chairperson.
10. All committee actions are subject to approval by a majority of the board.
11. Each committee is responsible for writing its own grants.

ARTICLE V---LIBRARY DIRECTOR

1. The Board of Trustees shall appoint a qualified library director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the Library.
2. The Director shall be responsible for the proper performance of duties as spelled out in the job description provided by the Board of Trustees.
3. It shall be the duty of the Director to attend all meetings of the Board of Trustees, including budget meetings, or public meetings where action may be taken affecting the interests of the library. The Director shall have the right to speak on all matters under discussion at Board meetings but shall not have the right to vote thereon.

ARTICLE VI---RULES OF ORDER

1. Any procedures not covered in the Bylaws, the Charter, or any applicable law shall be governed by the most recent available edition of **Robert’s Rules of Order**.

ARTICLE VII---MODIFICATIONS

1. These Bylaws may be repealed, amended, or added to by a majority vote of the whole board at a regular meeting. Such actions must be presented as a written 1st reading to be followed by a 2nd reading at the next regular board meeting. At this time, they may be voted on for approval and adoption.

Research sources on MRML Bylaws

1. Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State--2015Ed.

Adopted June 18, 2018

1. Rapacz 2. Stagliano MSC