

# Board of Trustees By-Laws

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## ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be called the Board of Trustees of the North Hampton Public Library. The Board shall be the governing body of the Library, existing by virtue of RSA 202 of the laws of the State of New Hampshire, and exercising the powers and authority, and assuming the responsibilities, delegated to it under this statute.

## ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

- A. Three (3) legal residents of the Town of North Hampton shall be elected Trustees to the Board of the Library, according to the laws of the State of New Hampshire, RSA 202-A:6.
- B. No Trustee may serve more than three (3) consecutive terms. After a minimum of one year's absence from the Board, past Trustees may return to the Board.
- C. Up to three (3) alternates may be appointed to the Board in accordance with RSA 202-A: 10. Alternates are appointed for one-year terms and have voting rights only when filling in for an absent Trustee.
- D. Vacancies on the Board will be filled in accordance with RSA 202-A: 10.

## ARTICLE III – OFFICERS & THEIR DUTIES

- A. The officers of the Board shall be a Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, elected at a meeting scheduled within one (1) month of the annual Town Meeting.
- B. Officers shall serve a term of one (1) year, beginning at the meeting after Town Meeting, and until their successors are duly elected.
- C. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board, authorize calls for special meetings of the Board, and perform all usual duties associated with the office. The Chair shall prepare and make available to each Trustee an agenda prior to each meeting of the Board. The Chair may move, or second, and vote upon any proposal before the Board. The

Chair shall be an authorized signatory on all Trustee accounts. In the absence of the Treasurer, the Chair shall assume and perform the duties of Treasurer.

- D. The Treasurer shall be the disbursing officer of the Board, shall sign all checks from appropriated funds, provide written monthly financial reports, consult with the Director in preparing the budget, and shall perform such duties generally associated with the office. In addition, the Treasurer shall oversee all other library funds from non-appropriation sources. In the absence of the Chair, the Treasurer shall assume and perform the duties of the Chair.
- E. The Secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meeting of the Board, see that all minutes are permanent file at the Library within 144 Hours (6 days) of each meeting as required by RSA 91-A, shall carry on such correspondence as the Chair or Board shall direct, shall post advance notice of each meeting, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with the office.

#### **ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS**

- A. The Board of Trustees shall meet on a regular monthly basis, at a time and place determined by the Board.
- B. Meetings shall be posted at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting, and shall be open to the public in accordance with RSA 91. Non-public sessions shall conform to RSA 91-A: 3 on executive sessions.
- C. Special meetings may be held at any time at the call of the Chair or two other members of the Board.
- D. Trustees, including alternates, are expected to attend all Board meetings. Three unexcused absences within a year shall be equivalent to a resignation. Absences shall be considered excused if prior notification is given to any other member of the Board or to the Director.
- E. A quorum for transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of two (2) members of the Board being present. An affirmative vote of the majority of a quorum will approve any action before the Board.
- F. The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern in the parliamentary procedures of the Board.
- G. The order of business for all regular meetings shall be as follows:
  - I. Call to order

- II. Reading and approval of the minutes of the last meeting
- III. Report of the Treasurer
- IV. Report of the Librarian
- V. Unfinished business
- VI. New Business
- VII. Adjournment

## **ARTICLE V – FINANCES**

- A. The Board, with the Director, shall prepare the annual budget, present it to the Budget Committee, and be available to answer questions at budget hearings and Town Meeting.
- B. It is the responsibility of the Board to secure adequate funds and proper facilities in order to carry out Library programs and services.
- C. Appropriated funds shall be encumbered or expended annually.
- D. Membership fees for all Trustees to the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association (NHLTA) shall be provided for in the library budget.

## **ARTICLE VI – LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION**

- A. The Board shall employ a competent and qualified library administrator, who shall be the executive administrative officer of the Library, and shall attend all Board meetings. The Board shall also employ, upon the recommendation of the Director, other administrative positions.
- B. The Director shall recommend to the Board the appointment and specify the duties of other non-administrative employees.
- C. The Director shall be held responsible for the direction and supervision of the staff, for the care and maintenance of the library property, for selection of library resources in keeping with policies and procedures established by the Trustees, for the provision of library service to the public, and for financial operations within the limitations of the budget appropriation.
- D. The Director shall make monthly reports to the Board regarding the operations of the Library.

## **ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES**

- A. Committees of one or more members for such specific purposes as may be required from time to time shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Board. Each committee will be discharged upon completion of the purpose for which it was established and after it has given a final report to the Board.
- B. Committees will make regular reports on their progress to the Board.
- C. No committee shall have other than advisory powers.

## **ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended by the majority vote of all members of the Board at any regular Trustee meeting provided that written proposed changes have been submitted to all Trustees at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees, July, 2002. Amended, August, 2005.*

### Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees

Trustees, in the capacity of trust upon them, shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity, and honor.

Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues or the institution.

It is incumbent on any trustee to disqualify himself or herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.

Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophy and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally disagree.

A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.

Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

Trustees who accept library board responsibilities are expected to perform all of the functions of library trustees.

*Approved by the PLA Board of Directors and the ALTA Board of Directors (both divisions of the American Library Association) on July 8, 1985.*

## Mission Statement

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The mission of the North Hampton Public Library is to provide library resources and services to meet the evolving educational, cultural, informational and recreational needs of the community of North Hampton.

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees July, 2002, Revised September 2004*

### **To accomplish our mission we will:**

- ❖ Provide information through collections of materials in print and non-print formats;
- ❖ Offer access to digital information, on the internet and in online databases;
- ❖ Make available a neutral space for members of the community to meet, interact and address community needs.

## Code of Ethics

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The North Hampton Public Library endorses the American Library Association Code of Ethics (see following), and expects that all staff members will strive to maintain the highest levels of personal and professional integrity. Additionally, the Trustees for the North Hampton Public Library will follow the code of ethics established by the American Library Trustees Association in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of their office (see following).

Public employees are held to a high standard of ethical behavior. No staff member may accept or solicit any gift or service that is offered to influence the employee's action, which seeks to curry special privileges or favors, or is given to reward the employee for doing his or her job. Token items, such as food or flowers, may be accepted and shared with other staff; items of value must be refused or returned to the giver. Staff members are also prohibited from using their positions for private gain, and from transacting library business with any entity in which they have a financial interest.

Staff members will receive training and opportunities to discuss areas of librarianship that might present ethical dilemmas. Staff members are encouraged to discuss any concerns about their own handling of potential problems with their supervisor or the Library Director, before or after a situation has occurred.

*Approved by the Board of Trustees May 2001, April 2006.*

## American Library Association Code of Ethics

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- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted
- IV. We recognize and respect intellectual property rights.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

*Adopted June 28, 1995, by the ALA Council*