

TALCOTT FREE LIBRARY DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees

**BYLAWS**

**Regular Meetings**

The regular meeting of the Board of Library Trustees of the Talcott Free Library District shall be on the third Monday of each month. The meeting shall be at the library at 7:00 p.m. The meetings shall be open to the public and noticed in advance. At the beginning of each fiscal year the board shall specify regular meeting dates and times. The secretary of the board shall then post the schedule of meetings in the library and on library website. Both notices shall have the dates, times, and places of such meetings.

**Special Meetings** *(Updated 05/2016)*

Special meetings shall be held at any time when called by the president or secretary or by any three trustees of the board, provided that notice with the agenda of the special meeting is given at least 48 hours in advance, except in the case of a bona fide emergency, to board members, to website, and to any news medium which has filed an annual request for notice under the Open Meetings Act. No business except that stated in the notice and agenda shall be transacted. Notice and agenda shall be posted 48 hours in advance in the front foyer of the library and on the library website, except in the case of a bona fide emergency.

**Quorum**

A quorum at any meeting shall consist of four (4) trustees.

**Open Meeting Act (Updated 11/2021)**

All meetings of the Board of Library Trustees are governed by the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1 et seq.

If a quorum of the members of the public body is physically present as required

by OMA, a majority of the board may allow a member of the board to attend the meeting by other means if the member is prevented from physically attending because of: (i) personal illness or disability; (ii) employment purposes or the business of the public body; or (iii) a family or other emergency. "Other means" is by video or audio conference.

### **Rules Governing Public Comment**

Recognizing its obligation under the Illinois Open Meetings Act to provide members of the public an opportunity to address it, and also recognizing its ability to establish rules governing how such public comment should occur, the Board of Trustees hereby adopts the following rules governing public comment:

1. Members of the public are welcome to provide comment on matters before the Board of Trustees at any of its regularly scheduled meetings. Time at the beginning of each regular meeting will be designated for public comment. Unless otherwise allowed by the President, all public comment will occur only during the public comment portion of the meeting.
2. In order to comment, a person must sign the sign-in sheet available prior to the call to order. The sign-in sheet will request the person's name and topic to be addressed. A person may sign the sign-in sheet until the public comment period begins, at which time public comment will be taken and sign-ins will cease.
3. Public comment will be governed and limited as follows:
  - a. Speakers will be limited to three (3) minutes each.
  - b. A maximum of twenty (20) minutes will be set aside for public comment at each meeting.
  - c. The President may cut off comments which are irrelevant, repetitious, scurrilous, or disruptive.
4. Board members are not obligated to respond to comments from

the public.

(Adopted July 2013)

**Board of Library Trustees** *(Updated 05/2016)*

The term of office for members of the Board of Library Trustees shall be for four years. The Board of Library Trustees of the Talcott Free Library is charged with the responsibility of the governance of the library. The Board will hire a skilled Library Director who will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the library.

The agenda and/or information packet for the meeting will be distributed to the trustees by the Library Director at or before the meeting. Any trustee wishing to have an item placed on the agenda will contact the Library Director in sufficient time preceding the meeting to have the item placed. Any trustee who is unable to attend a meeting will contact the library to indicate that they will be absent. Due to the fact that a quorum is required for each meeting, this contact should be placed as far in advance as possible.

Trustees are not to be compensated pursuant to statute, but will be reimbursed for necessary and related expenses as trustees. To be effective, trustees must attend most meetings, read materials presented for review, and attend an occasional Library System (or other library related) workshop, seminar, or meeting. The Library Director will make the dates of these workshops known to the trustees in a timely manner. Trustees using their own vehicles will be reimbursed at the rate allowed by the IRS for travel to and from any Library System (or other library related) workshop, seminar, or meeting.

**Officers and Terms**

The officers of the Library Board shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer. Those officers shall be elected for 2-year terms at the regular meeting in the month of May. The president shall not serve more than two consecutive terms unless by unanimous board consent. In the event of a

trustee resignation, an appointment to fill the unexpired term of that office will be conducted by vote within 90 days.

### **President**

The president shall preside at all board meetings, appoint all standing and special committees, serve as ex-officio member of all committees, and perform all other such duties as may be assigned by the board. The president shall be the only spokesperson for the Board of Library Trustees in all advisory or disciplinary action directed to the staff.

### **Vice President**

The Vice President, in the absence of the president, shall assume all duties of the president. Vice President will be responsible for reviewing bylaws and policies in odd number years.

### **Secretary**

The secretary shall keep minutes of all board meetings, record attendance, and record all votes. The secretary shall perform all other such clerical duties as may be assigned by the board.

### **Treasurer** *(Updated 10/2020)*

The treasurer is authorized by the board to sign checks. The treasurer shall keep all financial records of the board. The normal depository of all financial records shall be the library. The treasurer shall have charge of the library funds and income, sign all the checks on the authorization of the board, and report at each meeting the state of the funds. In the absence of the treasurer or when they are unable to serve, the president or vice president may perform the duties of the treasurer. The treasurer shall be bonded in the amount to be approved by the board and according to statute requirement. Treasurer will report:

resolutions, ordinances, annual audit and financial reports, notification of estimate of property tax increase, certificate of estimate of revenue by source, and Truth in Taxation certificate of compliance to the State of Illinois Comptroller, Winnebago County Clerk and local newspaper. If a library accountant is hired by the board, the accountant will assume the responsibility for creating the previously mentioned reports which will then be reviewed by the treasurer and the board as a whole prior to publication. The treasurer will review reconciliation reports quarterly. In the event the reconciliation does not balance, the entire board will review the reconciliation at the next scheduled board meeting.

### **Special Committees** *(Updated 05/2016)*

Special committees may be appointed by the president and shall serve until the completion of the work for which they were appointed.

### **Order of Business** *(Updated 05/2016)*

The following Order of Business shall be followed at regular meetings:

Call to order

Record attendance

Public Comment

Secretary's report, approval of minutes as received or corrected

Financial report, approval of bills payable

Library Director's report

Correspondence, communications and public comments

Unfinished business

New business

Adjournment

### **Parliamentary Procedure**

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall govern the parliamentary procedure of the board, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws.

## **New Trustees**

The Library Director shall meet with new trustees to examine the property and review services and shall present to new trustees a packet which includes the Library Policy and other procedural material, a list of trustees and committees, minutes and financial reports for the previous 12 months, and other pertinent information.

## **Vacancy Notice & Appointment Policy** (added 11/2023)

The vacancy notice policy for the Talcott Free Library Board of Trustees (The Board) aims to establish a clear and transparent process for filling vacant positions on the board. This policy will ensure that qualified and committed individuals are recruited to serve on the board, helping to maintain the library's efficiency, growth, and community engagement. This policy is supplementary to the provisions of the statutes of the State of Illinois as they relate to the vacancy in the office of a library trustee. (Illinois Compiled Statutes, 75ILCS 16/30-25)

### **1. Announcement**

- 1.1. The secretary shall report a vacancy on The Board to the county clerk and the State Librarian within 60 days after it occurs and shall report the filling of a vacancy within 60 days after it is filled (75 ILCS 16/30-40 (d). State vacancy reporting form appended.
- 1.2. When a position on The Board becomes vacant, the secretary and the library director or designated personnel shall initiate the vacancy announcement process within 15 days of the board's formal declaration of a vacancy on the board.
- 1.3. The announcement of the vacancy shall be made publicly available through multiple channels, including but not limited to the library's website, social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) and local newspapers, community bulletin boards.

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

- 2.1. Must be a resident of and have resided within the Talcott Free Library district for one year.
- 2.2. Must have and demonstrate a strong interest in and commitment to the library's mission and services.
- 2.3. Should have no conflicts of interest that could compromise their ability to serve impartially.
- 2.4. Current library staff members, their immediate family members and current board members immediate family members shall be ineligible to apply for a trustee position to maintain objectivity and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
- 2.5. Other criteria as laid out in the Public Library District Act of 1991 (75 ILCS

## 3. Application Process

- 3.1. Interested candidates shall submit a formal application to the secretary of The Board. The application form shall be made available on the library's website and at the library's administrative office.
- 3.2. The application form shall require candidates to provide their contact information, a statement of interest, relevant qualifications, experience, and any additional information that showcases their potential contributions to the board.
- 3.3. The deadline for submitting applications shall be stated in the vacancy announcement.

## 4. Review and Selection

- 4.1. The Board shall meet to review the submitted applications.
- 4.2. Each application shall be assessed against the eligibility criteria and evaluated upon the candidate's potential to participate in and contribute positively to the board. The Board shall determine who

will be invited to be interviewed to further evaluate their qualifications, understanding of the library's mission, and alignment with its strategic goals. All interviews and subsequent discussions will be held in closed session of The Board.

- 4.3. Upon completion of the interview process, The Board shall meet and select a candidate for appointment to the vacancy.

## 5. Board Appointment

- 5.1. Upon completion of the review and selection process the final appointment decision shall be made during a regular or special public board meeting.
- 5.2. The candidate with the majority vote from the board members present at the meeting shall be appointed as the new library Board of Trustees member.
- 5.3. The appointed trustee shall be informed of his or her selection and officially welcomed to The Board.

## 6. Orientation and Training

- 6.1. The newly appointed trustee shall receive a comprehensive orientation, conducted by the library's director, covering the library's governance structure, policies, strategic plan, and key staff introductions and more broadly the statutes of the State of Illinois' governing libraries.
- 6.2. The board president shall appoint a member of the board to act as mentor assigned to the new trustee to provide training on a trustee's role and responsibilities, including fiduciary duties, confidentiality, and conflict of interest policies.

## 7. Term of Service

- 7.1. The newly appointed trustee shall serve that portion of the remainder of the term as set forth in 75 ILCS 16/30-25(b).



- 7.2. At the end of the initial term, the trustee may choose to run for election.

### **Authority to Spend Policy** (added 10/2020)

The Library Director is authorized to spend any amount specified in the Working Budget without further Board approval within the guidelines of bid requirements in the Bylaws.

The Library may spend in excess of \$25,000 only after completing the formal bid process as described in Illinois Law.

If the Director becomes aware that a budgeted account in the Working Budget will be overspent, the Director is to notify the Board of Trustees at the next regular meeting.

The Board does not pre-approve individual payments before the checks are distributed, but does vote to confirm them at the next monthly Board meeting.

If the Board has concerns about how the money was spent, the Board will have the Director address the problem, which may include requesting a refund.

The Board authorizes the use of credit cards for Library business by the Director and department heads.

### **Duties of the Library Director** (Updated 05/2016)

The Library Director shall administer the policies adopted by this board. Among duties and responsibilities of the Library Director shall be that of hiring personnel, directing, supervising and disciplining of all staff members, monthly and annual reports as required by the board, and recommending such policy and procedure as will promote the efficiency and service of the library. The Library Director shall attend all board meetings. The Library Director will appoint a senior member(s) of the staff as Director pro-term to perform the duties of the director when the Director plans to be absent for an extended period of time. All authority pursuant to this appointment will cease upon the Director's return.

**Evaluation of the Library Director** *(Updated 03/2017)*

The Library Director shall be evaluated annually by the Library Trustees.

**Amendments**

Amendments to these bylaws, the library policy, or any other policy or procedural document may be proposed at any regular meeting of the board and will become effective if and as adopted by a majority of those trustees present providing they represent a quorum.

**Copyright and Copying**

The library may copy for its own collection, material that has been lost or deteriorated only if such material is not available at a fair cost. It will prominently post all required notices regarding the copying of any materials in the library.

**Administrative Records**

Administrative records of the library shall be kept in the library and shall be available to the general public upon request. These shall include the monthly and annual reports of the library, all financial reports, minutes of the public Board meetings, and other such items as the Board or Library Director shall file there.

Staff personnel records are confidential and shall be kept in a secure place, and only the Library Director or any person authorized by the Library Director shall have access to these records.

Confidential records of the Board, such as personnel records concerning the Library Director shall be kept in the library and only members of the Board shall

have access to these records.

### **Circulation Records**

Circulation records and other records identifying the names of library users with specific materials hereby are recognized as confidential in nature, and access thereto is hereby restricted to library staff and those members of the public with a legitimate interest therein, as hereafter provided for.

All library staff and employees are hereby advised that such records shall not be made available to casual members of the public, the press, or to any agency of State, Federal, or Local government, except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of and pursuant to Federal or State law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigative power.

Library staff shall observe the following procedures: On receipt of any legal process, order, or subpoena, the Library Director will immediately consult with the President of the Board and the Library Attorney to insure that (a) the document is in proper legal form, and (b) there has been a proper showing of good cause for its issuance in a court or administrative body of competent jurisdiction. Until the legality of such process, order, or subpoena has been affirmatively shown to the satisfaction of the Library Attorney, the Library will resist its issuance or enforcement until any such defects have been cured.

### **Policy Review**

Board will review adopted policies and bylaws every two years.

### **Requests for Public Records**

Form for requesting public records is available upon request.