

**BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**  
**OF THE TOWN OF FALMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS**

**BYLAWS**

**Article I. Name and Authorization**

This body shall be called the Board of Library Trustees of the Town of Falmouth. It is established under the provisions of the Town Charter, section C4-5, and exercises the powers and authority and assumes the responsibilities provided by the Town Charter and the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL).

**Article II. Trustees**

*Section 1. Composition of the Board*

This body shall be composed of seven (7) members elected by the voters, as provided by the Town Charter.

*Section 2. Term of Office*

The term of office of Library Trustees shall be three (3) years with staggered terms, as provided by the Town Charter.

*Section 3. Resignations and Vacancies*

Any trustee may resign by written notice filed with the Chair  
Vacancies occurring in the membership of the Board of Trustees by death, resignation, or otherwise, shall be filled until the next annual town election by majority vote, taken by ballot, of the remaining Trustees and the members of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Falmouth in joint session (MGL Chapter 41, Section 11). The Trustees shall inform the Board of Selectmen and the Town Clerk in writing within one month of said vacancy.

Members are expected to attend all meetings of the full Board. The Chair shall at his/her discretion require a letter of intent regarding Board participation and membership from a member who has multiple consecutive absences without good cause. Board members should give timely notice to the Chair of anticipated absences and the reason(s) for such absences.

*Section 4. Ex-Officio Members*

The Director of the Library and the Assistant Director shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board.

**Article III. Officers**

*Section 1. Officers*

The officers shall be elected by the Board at the first meeting following the annual Town Election. They shall hold office until their respective successors have been elected.

*Section 2. Duties of the Chair*

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board, establish the agenda and see that all notices are posted by the Director or designee in accordance with the Massachusetts Open

Meeting Law. The Chair shall authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board, and serve as ex-officio voting member of all committees.

*Section 3. Duties of the Vice Chair*

The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair at his/her request or in his/her absence.

*Section 4. Duties of the Secretary*

The Secretary shall ensure that a true and accurate record of all meetings of the Board are kept, that approved minutes are posted for all regular and special meetings, and shall perform other correspondence and duties as are generally associated with that office.

*Section 5. Duties of the Treasurer*

The Treasurer shall maintain Trustee accounts in accordance with recommendations of the full Board, disperse funds, report quarterly to the Trustees on said matters, submit an annual financial report to the appropriate Town official, and chair the committee to develop the Trustees' annual budget for the Board's approval.

*Section 6. Signatories*

The Treasurer and Secretary in that order are empowered to sign documents if the Chair and Vice Chair are unavailable.

**Article IV. Meetings**

*Section 1. Schedule*

- a. At a minimum the Board shall meet on the second Tuesday of every month, unless circumstances require a posted change of date.
- b. Special meetings of the Trustees may be called by the Chair, or upon written request of four members, for the transaction of business as stated in the meeting request. Notice stating the time and place of any special meeting and its purpose shall be posted as required by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and given to each member of the Trustees at least two days in advance of the meeting.
- c. Executive session meetings of the Board shall be called at the discretion of the Chair, and held in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

*Section 2. Order of Business*

The order of business at regular meetings shall include:

1. Call to order
2. Public Comment
3. Reports from Library support groups
4. Secretary's report including approval of minutes
5. Treasurer's report
6. Library Director's report
7. Assistant Director's report
8. Chair's report
9. Committee reports
10. Ongoing business from prior meetings
11. Agenda items for future meetings

### *Section 3. Open Meeting Law*

All meetings of the Board and of any committee or sub-committee of the Board shall comply with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. All meetings shall be open to the public except for duly-noticed executive sessions. All approved and released minutes of meetings shall be available for public inspection.

### *Section 4. Quorum*

A quorum for transaction of business shall consist of a simple majority.

## **Article V. The Duties and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees**

1. To engage in the on-going planning process which assesses the needs of the Library and the role of the Library in the community, and provides oversight to see that these needs are met.
2. To select a competent Library Director and conduct a periodic evaluation of the Library Director's performance.
3. To establish written policies for the selection and disposal of Library materials, and the use of Library materials and facilities in accord with the current standards of the American Library Association, as provided by MGL Chapter 78, section 33.
4. To determine, in consultation with the Library Director, policies for the Library, to maintain a record of those policies, and to provide public notice of those policies.
5. To advise the Director in the preparation of the Library budget, approve the final budget submission, participate in its presentation to Town Boards and officials, and actively support its adoption by Town Meeting.
6. To approve how donations, gifts, and bequests to the Library will be used.
7. To monitor the maintenance of the Library buildings, grounds, and equipment in cooperation with the Director, and regularly review facility needs to see that all requirements of the Library's programs are met.
8. To speak and act as advocates for the Library in the community, and provide opportunities for public input.
9. To study and support legislation which will benefit the Library and the larger Library community of which it is a part.

## **Article VI. Library Director**

### *Section 1. Appointment of the Library Director*

The Library Director shall be appointed by the Board of Library Trustees in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws. The Director shall be the chief administrative officer of the Library under the direction and review of the Board.

### *Section 2. The Duties and Responsibilities of the Library Director*

1. The Director shall select or remove an Assistant Director with the approval of the Board.
2. The Director shall select or remove other employees in accordance with town regulations and union contracts.

3. 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, including selection of books and other materials; and the maintenance of Library collections.
4. The Director shall be responsible for filing required reports to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in a timely manner.
5. The Director shall work with the Town Manager and the Town Finance Director to coordinate the submission of a Library budget that will then be approved by the Board of Trustees and voted at the April Town Meeting.
6. The Director shall report monthly to the Board.

#### **Article VII. Collective Authority of the Board of Trustees**

All decisions of the Board shall be made by vote of a quorum of the Board as a collective body. No individual member may make decisions, or with the exception of the Chair, act or speak for the Board unless specifically authorized to do so by a vote of the membership of the Board.

#### **Article VIII. Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board of Trustees by a two-thirds vote of the full Board, provided that a motion representing the proposed amendment was made and seconded at the preceding regular meeting, and provided the meeting notice includes proposals for amendment to the bylaws.

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Approved by the Board of Library Trustees 10/14/1997; amended 07/20/2011; amended 05/08/2018