

TRUSTEES OF THE MONTAGUE LIBRARIES
BY-LAWS

Approved: November 20, 2017

Amended: March 1, 2021

Gretchen Wetherby

Chair of the Montague Public Libraries Board of Trustees

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be Trustees of the Montague Public Libraries.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

It shall be the duty of the Trustees of the Montague Public Libraries, Town of Montague, to oversee and assist in the development of town libraries and their services to the community.

ARTICLE III

Governance

The Board shall be self-governing so long as its official acts are not at variance with Massachusetts General Laws Section 10, Chapter 78, by which they are superseded.

ARTICLE IV

Membership

The Board shall consist of nine elected members. These members shall be elected through regular town elections and at no time can be removed from office against their will. Board members shall serve the term for which they were elected, no more than three years and no less than one year. If at the end of an elected term a Board member wishes to remain a Trustee of the Montague Public Libraries, that person must be re-elected during regular town elections.

If, for any reason, a Trustee should resign before the completion of a term, a person shall be appointed by a majority vote of the remaining Board members and the Board of Selectman and is appointed only until the next election. The Board shall act on filling any vacancy within thirty days (30) after receiving a written resignation.

ARTICLE V

General Duties and Responsibilities

Board members are required to attend all meetings. If a Board member is unable to attend a meeting, the member should notify the Director of Libraries within 24 hours of the meeting, except in cases of illness or emergencies.

The Board will establish written library policies which reflect community needs and interests.

The Board may amend policies and by-laws as needed and will review each in their entirety at least every five years, in years ending in zero and five.

It is the responsibility of each Board member to be knowledgeable of the fiscal activity of the library and to ensure that all financial matters are in accordance with accepted laws.

The Board shall review the by-laws annually at the first Board meeting after the town election.

1. It is the responsibility of the Board to review, recommend, and work for approval of an annual budget which provides funding that is both fiscally responsible and sufficient to cover all library costs.
2. The Board will be notified of all grants before submission.
3. The Board will hire a Library Director who is qualified by education, experience, and ability, as mandated in 605 CMR 3.00 of the MA General Laws, to direct and manage library resources and services, to advise the Board in library matters, and to administer Board approved policies without direct Board involvement.
4. It is the responsibility of the Board to evaluate library services and operations to ensure that the mission of the library is fulfilled.
5. Board members shall participate in committees and serve as officers.
6. The Board shall approve and amend all minutes.
7. It is each Board member's responsibility to be informed and knowledgeable concerning library issues.
8. Each Board member shall support the position of the library before municipal boards, other official groups, and the community.
9. In their official capacity as Library Trustees, Board members shall be guided entirely by the policies, plans and regulations formally established by the Board.
10. If, in the opinion of the Board, a Trustee is unable to fulfill the duties and responsibilities as stated, the Trustee will be asked to resign. This action requires a two-thirds majority vote.
11. Each member is entitled to vote on all motions.

ARTICLE VI

Meetings, Regular and Special

1. The Board will meet for regular meetings at least ten times per year. It will be the duty of all Board members to attend all regular and special meetings. Members must follow open meeting laws. Special meetings will be scheduled as needed.
2. All meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.
3. A quorum is necessary for the Board to conduct business. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the nine members of the Board.
4. All meetings must be posted forty-eight hours in advance with the Town Clerk and must be held in a publicly accessible place. Notices of meetings will be sent to all Trustees at least two days in advance.
5. Subcommittees will meet as needed and must follow open meeting laws, including posting the meeting agenda with the Town Clerk forty-eight hours in advance.

ARTICLE VII

Elections

Election of officers shall be held annually at the first meeting following the town election. All Trustees including those newly elected are eligible to hold an office except that of Chairperson. To be elected Chairperson, a Trustee must have served as a member of the Board for at least one year prior to the

May meeting. The Chairperson shall serve no more than two consecutive years. Vice Chair and Corresponding Secretary shall serve no more than three consecutive years in the same office.

Nominations will come from the floor and nominations may be made at the time of balloting.

Notification of election will be included in the notice for the May meeting.

Plurality shall elect. A tie vote shall be decided by re-voting.

When there is but one nominee for an office, the elective ballot may be dispensed with and the election done by voice vote.

ARTICLE VIII

Officers

The officers of the Trustees of the Montague Public Libraries shall be:

1. Chairperson
2. Vice Chairperson
3. Corresponding Secretary

Duties of officers:

Chairperson

It shall be the duty of the Chairperson to:

1. Plan the meeting in consultation with the director, including preparing the agenda and designating the location.
2. Open the meeting at the appointed time by taking the chair and calling the meeting to order having ascertained that a quorum is present.
3. Follow in proper sequence the written agenda.
4. State all proposals and put to a vote all motions that legitimately come before the Board and announce the results of each vote.
5. Participate on all aspects of discussion and exercise the same voting privileges as all members of the board.
6. Ask for motions from the floor; not to initiate motions.
7. Authenticate by signature all documents requiring approval of the Board.
8. Declare the meeting adjourned when the Board so votes.
9. Be knowledgeable about all aspects concerning the library administration.
10. Act as official spokesperson regarding the Board or designate someone to take their place as spokesperson when necessary.
11. Appoint all committees and designate the chairperson for each committee. The Chair has ex-officio standing on all committees.

Vice Chairperson

It shall be the duty of the Vice Chairperson to:

1. Assist the Chairperson.
2. Preside in the absence of the Chairperson.
3. Act as the Chair of the Budget Committee.

Corresponding Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to:

1. Read all communications and attend to all correspondence of the Board, promptly and efficiently.
2. File all papers for future reference.
3. Assure that all agendas, minutes, and any other pertinent items are sent to all Board members and other interested parties.
4. Assure that all meeting notices are posted properly.

ARTICLE XI

Committees

There will be four standing committees: Budget, Building and Maintenance, Personnel, and Special Services. Standing Committee appointments will be made by the Chairperson at the annual meeting. Special Ad Hoc committees may be authorized by the Chairperson for special, limited purposes and shall serve only until completion of the assignment. All meetings of committees will be posted as are other meetings, minutes taken and subject to compliance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. All Board members may attend and participate in any and all committee meetings. Voting will be restricted to appointed members only.

Budget Committee

The Budget Committee shall be at least a three-member committee consisting of the Vice-Chairperson of the Board who serves as the Chair., one member of the Personnel Committee and one member of the Special Services Committee.

It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Consult with the Library Director during the preparation of the annual library budget and throughout the fiscal year as needed.
2. Report its activities to the Board on a regular basis.

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shall be at least a three-member committee including one member from the Budget committee and one member from the Special Services committee.

It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Recruit, prescreen, and make recommendations to the full Board regarding Library Director applicants.
2. Conduct an annual evaluation of the Library Director's job performance.

3. Assist in assessing personnel needs, policies, and procedures in consultation with the Library Director.
4. Ensure that library personnel procedures comply with union requirements.
5. Accompany the Library Director to personnel related meetings as needed.
6. The committee shall report its activities to the board on a regular basis.

Special Services Committee

The Special Services Committee shall be at least a four-member committee including one member from the Personnel Committee, one member from the Budget Committee, and one member from the Maintenance Committee.

It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Assure that quality library services are provided to all members of the community.
2. Develop and maintain a long-range plan of library services to the community.
3. Represent the Board before appropriate Town Boards and Committees.
4. Work with the Director concerning the implementation of new or upgraded services.
5. Meet on an as needed basis throughout the year.
6. Report on its activities and make recommendations to the Board on a regular basis.

Building and Maintenance Committee

The Building and Maintenance Committee shall consist of at least 2 members.

It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Address the utilization, repair, and maintenance of library buildings and equipment.
2. Develop and maintain a long-range plan of building maintenance and improvement.
3. Make recommendations to the Board.
4. Represent the Board before appropriate Town Boards and Committees.

ARTICLE X

Minutes

In accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law minutes will be taken and recorded. The minutes shall be reviewed at the beginning of the following meeting and accepted or amended as appropriate.

ARTICLE XI

Director's Relationship

It is the responsibility of the Director of Libraries to:

1. Attend all committee and Board meetings.
2. Advise the Board on all library matters.
3. Bring to the Board's attention areas of need, specific problems that arise, and any other matters necessitating the Board's attention.
4. Administer Board approved policies.

ARTICLE XII

Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended and accepted at any regular meeting of the Board by two thirds vote of those members present provided the proposals have been read at two consecutive meetings preceding the vote.