

MONTAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARIES TRUSTEES

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I — Name

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

ARTICLE II — Purpose

It shall be the duty of the Montague Public Libraries Trustees 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long as its official acts are not at variance with Massachusetts General Laws Section 10, Chapter 78, by which they are superseded.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

1. The Board shall consist of nine elected members, elected through regular town elections.
2. 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, that person must be re-elected during regular town elections.
3. 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. However, no Trustee can be removed from office against their will.
4. If any Trustee should resign before the completion of a term, a replacement shall be appointed by a majority vote of the remaining Board members and confirmed by the Selectboard. That appointment shall last only until the next election.
5. The Board shall act on filling any vacancy within thirty (30) days after receiving a written resignation.

ARTICLE V — General Duties and Responsibilities

1. Board members are expected to attend all meetings. If a Board member is unable to attend a meeting, the member should notify the Library Director at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting, except in cases of illness or emergency.
2. Board members shall participate in committees and serve as officers.
3. Board members shall review agendas and relevant documents in preparation for each meeting.
4. The Board shall review all minutes, and approve with any necessary amendments.
5. Each Board member is entitled to vote on all motions.

6. The Board shall evaluate library services and operations to ensure that the mission of the library is fulfilled.
7. It is the responsibility of each Board member to be informed and knowledgeable concerning library issues.
8. 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.
9. The Board shall 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.
10. The Board shall review written library policies, as put forth by the Library Director and the Strategic Planning Committee, to ensure that they reflect community needs and interests.
11. The Board shall review the bylaws annually at the first Board meeting after the town election. The Board may amend policies and bylaws as needed and will review each in their entirety at least every five years, in years ending in zero and five.
12. The Board shall 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.
13. Each Board member shall support the position of the library before municipal boards, other official groups, and the community.
14. In their official capacity as Library Trustees, Board members shall be guided by the policies, plans and regulations formally established by the Board.

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 Law. 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 online calendar, and must be held in a publicly accessible place. Notices of meetings will be sent to all Trustees at least forty-eight hours in advance.
5. Committees will meet as needed and must follow Open Meeting Law, including posting the meeting agenda forty-eight hours in advance with the Town Clerk and online calendar.

ARTICLE VII — Election of Officers

1. Election of officers shall be held annually following Town elections in May.
2. All Trustees, including those newly elected, are eligible to hold any office except that of Chair. To be elected Chair, a Trustee must have served as a member of the Board for at least one year prior to the May meeting.

3. The Chair shall serve no more than two consecutive years. Vice Chair and Secretary shall serve no more than three consecutive years in the same office.
4. Nominations will come from the floor and may be made at the time of balloting.
5. Notification of election will be included in the posted agenda for the May meeting.
6. Plurality shall elect. A tie vote shall be decided by re-voting.
7. When there is only 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. Chair
2. Vice Chair
3. Secretary

Chair

It shall be the duty of the Chair to:

1. Plan the meeting in consultation with the Library Director, including preparing the agenda and designating the location.
2. Open the meeting at the appointed time by 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. (The Chair may not 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. Designate all committees. The Chair has ex-officio standing on all committees.

Vice Chair

It shall be the duty of the Vice Chair to:

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

Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to:

1. Take minutes at Board meetings.
2. Ensure that all agendas, minutes, and any other pertinent items are sent to all Board members and other interested parties.
3. Ensure that all scheduled meetings and their agendas are posted properly on the town's online calendar.
4. Read all communications; attend promptly and efficiently to all correspondence of the Board.
5. File all papers for future reference.

ARTICLE IX — Committees

1. There will be four standing committees: Budget, Building, Personnel, and Strategic Planning.
2. Standing committee assignments will be determined annually following Town elections in May.
3. Special ad hoc committees may be authorized by the Chair for special, limited purposes and shall serve only until completion of the assignment.
4. All meetings of committees are subject to compliance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law: agendas will be posted, minutes taken.
5. Each committee shall submit approved minutes from each meeting to the Secretary for public filing.
6. All Board members may attend and participate in any and all committee meetings, though 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-Chair of the Board (who serves as the Chair), one member of the Personnel Committee, and one member of the Strategic Planning Committee.

It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Consult with the Library Director during the preparation of the annual library budget.
2. Be available to meet throughout the fiscal year as needed.
3. Report its activities to the Board.

Building Committee

The Building Committee shall consist of at least two 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. Represent the Board before appropriate Town boards and committees.

4. Report its activities to the Board.

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 Strategic Planning committee.

It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Conduct an annual evaluation of the Library Director's job performance.
2. Assist in assessing personnel needs, policies, and procedures in consultation with the Library Director.
3. Ensure that library personnel procedures comply with union requirements.
4. Accompany the Library Director to personnel-related meetings as needed.
5. When seeking a new Library Director: create ad hoc committee/s to recruit and prescreen applicants and conduct the hiring process.
6. Report its activities to the Board.

Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee shall be at least a four-member committee including one member from the Personnel Committee and one member from the Budget Committee.

It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Ensure 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. Work with the Library Director concerning the implementation of new or upgraded services.
4. Represent the Board before appropriate Town boards and committees.
5. Report its activities to the Board.

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 Library Director to:

1. Send an agenda to the Town Clerk and Secretary for physical and online posting at least forty-eight hours in advance of each Board or committee meeting.
2. Attend all Board and committee meetings.
3. Advise the Board on all library matters.
4. Bring to the Board's attention areas of need, specific problems that arise, and any other matters necessitating the Board's attention.

5. For time-sensitive questions between meetings, reach out to Board chair or committee chair as appropriate.
6. Notify the Board of all grants before submission.
7. Administer Board-approved policies.

ARTICLE XII — Amendments

These bylaws 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.

Approved: 11/20/2017
Revised: 3/1/2021, 8/21/2023

William Quale

(printed name)


(signature)

18 September 2023

(date)

Chair, Montague Public Libraries Trustees