

# **Library Bylaws**

## **Bylaws of the Ida Rupp Public Library Board of Trustees**

### **Article I. Name and Location**

#### **I Section A. The Library Board**

This organization shall be called the Ida Rupp Public Library Board of Trustees. Its mailing address shall be:

Ida Rupp Public Library Board of Trustees  
310 Madison Street  
Port Clinton, Ohio 43452 USA

#### **I Section B. The Library**

The library shall be called Ida Rupp Public Library located at 310 Madison Street, Port Clinton, OH 43452 and with two branches, called Erie Islands Library, located at 281 Concord Avenue, Put-in-Bay, OH 43456 and Marblehead Peninsula Branch Library, located at 710 W. Main Street, Marblehead, OH 43440.

### **Article II. Mission**

The Ida Rupp Public Library facilitates free access to materials and services to support the diverse educational, informational, and entertainment needs of our community.

### **Article III. Membership**

The Ida Rupp Public Library is organized as a School District Library. The library's Board of Trustees consists of seven members who are appointed by the Port Clinton City School District Board of Education.

#### **III Section A. Tenure and Qualifications**

Each library trustee is appointed to a seven-year term. Appointments are staggered such that no more than one trustee's term is scheduled to expire in the same year. A trustee must be either a qualified elector of the library district or a qualified elector who resides outside of the library district but within Ottawa County. By law, a majority of the trustees (at least four) must be qualified electors of the library district. No one is eligible for membership of the library's Board of Trustees who is, or has been in the year previous to his or her appointment, a member of the Port Clinton City Schools School Board.

All library trustees serve without compensation. In general, trustees are guided in the performance of their duties by the most recent edition of the *Ohio Public Library Trustees' Handbook*.

### **III Section B. Attendance**

The insight and attention of each trustee is a valuable asset to the board and the library. Therefore, regular attendance is expected.

If a Trustee is absent from three consecutive *regular* meetings or a total of five *regular* meetings in any one calendar year, the board may request that trustee's resignation.

### **III Section C. Filling Vacancies**

An ad hoc committee of the Board of Trustees shall recommend to the full board candidates to fill a vacant trustee position. After review, the board shall by resolution select a candidate for each vacant position and request that the Port Clinton City Schools Board of Education appoint that candidate as a trustee.

#### **Article IV. Duties and Powers of the Board**

The Board of Trustees shall have all the powers and duties granted to it by law and detailed in *Ohio Revised Code 3375.40*. The board shall determine and establish in accordance with the law, the basic policies of the library with respect to:

- The appropriation and budgeting of funds.
- The establishment and maintenance of the library and library services.
- The acquisition, improvement, maintenance, insurance, use, and disposition of properties.
- The hiring, compensation, and responsibilities of, and the personnel policies concerning, library employees.
- The selection, collection, lending, and disposition of library materials.
- The acceptance of gifts.

The policies approved by the board shall remain in effect until changed or rescinded by further action of the board. These policies shall be administered by library staff. The director shall maintain a file of all policies established by the board for consultation and distribution as directed by the board and as required by law.

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for hiring the library director and appointing the library fiscal officer, and for ensuring that the director and fiscal officer carry out the policies of the library in an effective, efficient, and lawful manner.

In order to speak with a consistent voice, all news of board actions or statements by the board released to the media shall be made by the board president or library director speaking for the board. No one board member, other than the president, shall speak for the board unless directed to do so by a majority of board members voting at a scheduled board meeting.

All powers of the library board are vested in it as a board, and none at all in its individual members. The individual trustee has no power to act for the board in any way, unless authorized to do so by the board itself. The Ida Rupp Public Library will provide reasonable coverage to indemnify trustees in the performance of their duties.

## **Article V. Officers of the Board**

At the annual *organization* meeting the board shall elect from its membership a president, vice-president, and secretary, each of whom shall serve a term of one year, commencing immediately upon election and continuing to the election of officers at the next annual *organization* meeting.

No board member shall hold more than one office at a time.

Vacancies in office shall be filled by vote at a *regular* meeting of the board as soon as possible after the vacancy occurs.

An Officer of the Board of Trustees, President, Vice President or Secretary; shall sign, along with the fiscal officer, each check issued by the library. The president and secretary shall sign any conveyance of real property.

### **V Section A. President**

The president shall preside at all meetings of the board; authorize calls for any special meetings; appoint all committees, with the consent of the board; execute all documents authorized by the board; and perform all other duties generally associated with that office. The president may serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees. The president shall approve all requests for leave, travel expenses, and time sheets submitted by the director.

### **V Section B. Vice President**

If the president is absent or unavailable, or declines to act in the capacity of his office, or if the office of president is vacant, the vice-president shall have all the powers and duties of the president except as otherwise provided by law.

### **V Section C. Secretary**

The secretary shall preside at board meetings in the absence of the president and vice-president. The secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a true and accurate record of meetings of the board.

## V Section D. Trustee Emeritus Board Member

- a. **Establishment of Emeritus Trustee Status.** In recognition and appreciation of their efforts, the Board hereby establishes “Emeritus Trustee Status” for retired members who meet the conditions outlined below.
- b. ***Emeritus Trustee Defined.*** Emeritus Trustees are defined as those retired Board members who have served with distinction for fifteen (15) or more continuous years and have retired from the Board. Emeritus status is not automatic and is reserved for particular trustees as determined by the Board.
- c. **Emeritus Trustee Election.** All candidates shall be nominated by a member of the current Board and confirmed by a majority of the Board. Appointments shall be made for a five-year period, subject to renewal by the Board at its discretion.
- d. **Emeritus Trustee Privileges.** Emeritus Trustees have the following privileges:
  1. Invited to all board meetings and library events
  2. Receive board packets if desired
  3. Allowed to participate in open deliberations of the Board in non-voting status
  4. Can serve on committees that report to the Board
  5. Name is included in all library publications that list the names of the current Board.

## **Article VI. Board Meetings**

### **VI Section A. Meeting Types**

The board may hold meetings of several different types as described in the *Ohio Public Library Trustees' Handbook*. The board will hold an *organization* meeting in January of each year to elect officers, appoint a fiscal officer, and perform other administrative tasks. The *organization* meeting may be part of a *regular* board meeting.

### **VI Section B. Public Notice of Board Meetings**

At its *organization* meeting in January, the board shall establish, by rule, the method for notifying the public and the news media of the various board meetings that may be held throughout the year. Members of the public or news media who wish to be notified when a particular subject will be discussed at a meeting should inform the library director of their interest. The director will then make arrangements to give advance notice by e-mail or phone prior to the scheduled meeting; members of the public who wish to be notified by postal mail should provide the director with self-addressed, stamped envelopes for that purpose.

### **VI Section C. Agenda**

The *regular* meeting agenda is prepared at least one working day before the upcoming *regular* board meeting. It is prepared by the director in consultation with the fiscal officer and board president.

### **VI Section D. Quorum and Rules of Proceedings**

The quorum necessary for the board to transact business shall be four members. Lack of a quorum will automatically adjourn a board meeting. Meetings of the board will follow parliamentary procedures when not inconsistent with these bylaws.

Except when a larger majority is required by law, an affirmative vote of the majority of Trustees present at a meeting at which a quorum exists shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The president may make or second a proposal before the board, may participate fully in discussions, and may vote upon all proposals. Each board member shall have one vote.

### **VI Section E. Suspension of Rules**

Any rule or resolution of the board, whether contained in these bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with the business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be done only at a meeting at which a quorum exists, at least four trustees are present, and a majority of the quorum agrees to the suspension.

## **VI Section F. Executive Session**

The board may enter into executive session for purposes as described in the *Ohio Open Meetings Act*. The motion to hold an executive session shall state the purpose of such a session, and the motion must be approved in open meeting in a roll call vote by a majority of the quorum of the board.

## **VI Section G. Public Participation**

Time is set aside on each *regular* meeting agenda for public participation from the audience. Any member of the public who wishes to speak to the board is asked to sign-in before the meeting is called to order so that he or she may be added to the agenda. Speakers must identify any groups or organizations for which they will speak in an official capacity and indicate the topic that they wish to address. Those who have signed-in to address the board will be recognized in the order in which they signed in. Public comments should be addressed to members of the board.

In order for the board to fulfill its obligation to complete the meeting agenda in an effective and efficient fashion each public participant may be allowed five minutes to address the board. The board president may also limit the public comment to only those subjects appearing on the meeting agenda. The board president will do so by announcing the subjects at the beginning of the meeting and applying this limitation to all participants.

## **Article VII. Committees**

The standing committees of the board shall be Wage and Finance, Buildings and Grounds, Policy and Personnel, Audit, and the Records Commission. Ad hoc or temporary committees may be appointed and charged with specific tasks by the board president as required; such committees are automatically dissolved upon completion of the assigned tasks. Trustees are appointed to committees by the president with the consent of the board. Committees serve an advisory role and make recommendations to the board; a committee has no other power, unless, by suitable action of the board, it is granted a specific power to act. All committee actions are subject to approval by a majority of the board. In general, committees will work in conjunction with the director and fiscal officer.

### **VII Section A. Building and Grounds Committee**

The Building and Grounds committee shall advise the board concerning the condition, maintenance, and improvement of the library grounds, building, furniture, fixtures, and equipment.

### **VII Section B. Wage and Finance Committee**

The Wage and Finance committee shall advise the board on all matters relating to the library budget, appropriations, funds, investments, finances, wages, receipts, and disbursements.

### **VII Section C. Policy and Personnel Committee**

The Policy and Personnel committee shall advise the board on objectives and policies relating to personnel practices, standards, and problems, and public service policies and other policies not covered by the other standing committees.

### **VII Section D. Audit Committee**

The Audit Committee shall monitor and review the library's accounting and financial reporting practices, legal compliance, financial condition and controls over safeguarding of assets.

### **VII Section E. Nominating Committee**

A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the president one month prior to the *organization* meeting and shall present a slate of officers at the *organization* meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

### **VII Section F. Records Commission**

The Records Commission shall consist of the Board of Trustees and the fiscal officer. The commission shall meet at least once every twelve months and shall be responsible for overseeing the Library's compliance with the Ohio Records Law as described in Chapter 149 of the *Ohio Revised Code*.

## **Article VIII. Library Director**

The board shall appoint and fix the compensation of the library director. The director shall have full charge of the administration and operations of the library in accordance with the objectives and policies adopted by the board and under the direction and review of the board. The library director has the authority to administer, and is responsible for, the care of all buildings, furnishings, and equipment; for the employment and direction of library staff; for the selection, acquisition, and disposition of library materials; and for maintaining excellent library service.

The director shall serve at the discretion of the board. His or her employment shall be governed by the language of his or her job description and the policies of the library as adopted by the Board of Trustees.



## **Article IX. Fiscal Officer**

The board shall appoint and fix the compensation of the fiscal officer. The fiscal officer is the library's chief financial officer and acts as the Board's financial agent in library matters. The fiscal officer shall administer and manage the funds of the library in accordance with law and with the objectives and policies adopted by the board and under the direction and review of the board. The fiscal officer has the authority to administer, and is responsible for, the receipt, deposit, and expenditure of, funds; the internal control of library expenditures; and the documenting and reporting of financial activity.

The fiscal officer shall serve at the discretion of the board and is appointed for a one-year term at the annual *organization* meeting of the Board of Trustees. His or her employment shall be governed by the language of his or her job description and the policies of the library as adopted by the Board of Trustees.

## **Article X. Ethics**

The Board of Trustees subscribes to the statement of principles promulgated by the American Library Trustee Association as listed below, and is bound by the applicable statutes of the Ohio Ethics Law and the rulings of the Ohio Ethics Commission.

### **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 upon any trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statement between their personal philosophies 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.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July, 1985.  
Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, July, 1985.  
Amended by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July, 1988.  
Approval of the amendment by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association,  
January, 1989.

### **Article XI. Amending of Bylaws**

A Bylaw Committee shall be appointed when necessary to review the bylaws and recommend changes to the board.

These bylaws may be amended at any board meeting by the affirmative vote of a majority of the full membership of the Board of Trustees provided that a notice of the proposed amendment shall have been included in the agenda for the meeting.

### **Article XII. Indemnification**

Members of the Board of Trustees are covered by the library's Director's and Officer's Liability and Entity Liability Policy, including their liability resulting from either institutional or individual lawsuits.