

# **Swansea Free Public Library Board of Trustee ByLaws**

## **ARTICLE I. Name and Authorization**

The name of this organization is “The Board of Trustees of the Swansea Free Public Library of Swansea, Massachusetts,” existing by virtue of the provision of Chapter 78, Sections 10-13, and 21 of the General Laws of Massachusetts (MGL), and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute.

## **ARTICLE II. Purpose**

The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to govern the library with the object of ensuring that every individual in the Swansea community has access to library resources in accordance with the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights. The Board supports strong, effective library service and focuses on overall funding, planning, and goals.

## **ARTICLE III. Constituency Served**

The Library primarily serves the residents of the town of Swansea, Massachusetts. The Library shall be an active participant in the Massachusetts Library System and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and shall cooperate with state and national interlibrary lending networks.

## **ARTICLE IV. Trustees**

### **Section 1. Number and Qualifications**

The Board of Library Trustees shall be comprised of six (6) members.

### **Section 2. Term of Office**

The Board of Trustees members shall be elected for terms of three (3) years each at the Annual Town Election arranged so that two are elected each year.

### **Section 3. Officers**

The officers of the Trustees shall be the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

The Chair shall conduct all meetings, appoint all committees, and serve as the official representative of the Board

The Vice-Chair, in the absence of the Chair, shall perform all the duties of the Chair.

The Secretary shall post all meetings as required by law, keep a record of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and be responsible for correspondence as directed by the Board.

The officers of the Trustees shall be elected by the Trustees at the reorganization meeting of the Board following the Annual Town Election. They shall hold office until the next annual reorganization meeting of the Board.

#### **Section 4. Committees**

The Board may organize standing and ad hoc committees for the study and investigation of special issues or for specific tasks. An ad hoc committee is terminated when its purpose is complete. An ad hoc committee need not be limited to Trustees and can include library staff, other town employees, town residents, or others whose contributions are considered valuable. Every standing or ad hoc committee shall report to the Board of Trustees at each Board meeting. An ad hoc committee shall submit a final report when its purpose is completed.

#### **Section 5. Resignations**

Any member may resign by written notice filed with the Town Clerk/Board of Selectman of the Town of Swansea, and with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

#### **Section 6. Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy or vacancies on the Board of Trustees prior to the end of the individual(s) term(s) of office, the Trustees shall recommend to the Board of Selectmen the names of acceptable replacements within thirty (30) days. The Trustees may suggest a single name or multiple names as they deem fit. Appointments shall be made by the Board of Selectmen upon the recommendation of the Board of Library Trustees. Such appointments shall be valid until the next town election when any remaining portion of term of office shall be filled through election.

### **ARTICLE V. Meetings**

#### **Section 1. Meetings**

The Board of Trustees shall hold regular monthly meetings at the Swansea Library or at a place designated at the preceding meeting. The first meeting after the town election shall be the reorganization meeting with the election of officers.

#### **Section 2. Agenda**

The agenda for meetings will be developed by the Library Director and Board Chair and posted on official town form at Town Hall.

#### **Section 3. Open Meeting Law**

All meetings of the Trustees will be subject to the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law, G.L.C. 30A, Sections 18 – 25. In particular: all meetings shall be open to the public unless held in executive session in accordance with the Law; notice of all meetings shall be filed with the Town Clerk, and posted at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. Notice of the meeting shall

include an agenda and all records and/or minutes of the meetings shall be available for public inspection.

#### **Section 4. Quorum**

Four (4) Trustees must be attendance to have a quorum for business to be transacted.

#### **Section 5. Attendance**

Any member who misses four consecutive meetings will receive a letter from the Chair reminding the member that regular attendance is a responsibility of all Trustees and that those unable to attend regularly should consider resigning from the Board. Copies of those letters shall be included in the Board's minutes. In the event of illness or other extenuating circumstance, exceptions to this provision may be made by formal vote of the Board.

#### **Section 6. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Trustees may be called by the Chair or upon written request of two board members, for the transaction of business as stated in the meeting request. Notice stating the time and place of any special meeting and the purpose for which called shall be posted as required by the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law and given to each member of the Trustees at least two days in advance of the meeting.

### **ARTICLE VI. Duties of Trustees**

#### **Section 1. Management, Responsibilities, and Powers**

1. The Board of Library Trustees shall have authority and responsibility for the general management, control, and direction of the Swansea Free Public Library.
2. As provided by MGL, Chapter 78, Section 11, the Board shall have the custody and management of the library. All money raised or appropriated by the town for its support and maintenance shall be expended by the board, and all money or property which the town may receive by gift or bequest for said library shall be administered by the Board in accordance with the provisions of such gift or bequest.
3. The Board of Trustees shall accept legacies, bequests, donations, gifts, or grants to the Swansea Free Public Library for the use and benefit of the Library.
4. Advise in the preparation of the budget, approve the budget, and support it through the Town Administrator, Board of Selectman, and Finance Advisory Board.
5. Attend meetings with municipal finance and administrative boards.
6. Speak and act as an advocate for libraries in the community and maintain vital public relations.
7. Study and support legislation which will bring about the greatest good to the greatest number of libraries.
8. The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting and adopting written polices, rules and regulations to govern the operation and programs of the library, including policies relative to personnel and services and programs in response to the needs and expressed wishes of the community, and particularly including a written policy for the selection of library materials and

for the use of materials and facilities. All said policies shall be in accordance with standards adopted by the American Library Association.

9. The Board of Trustees along with the Library Director is responsible for the development and maintenance of the long-range plan through an ongoing planning process, which assesses needs of the library and the library's role in the community.
10. When a legal opinion is required, such advice and opinion shall be requested through Town Counsel.

### **Section 2: Library Director and Staff**

1. The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for hiring a competent and qualified Library Director, who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the library on behalf of the Board and under its review and direction.
2. The Director shall be responsible for implementation of policies adopted by the Board of Trustees. The Director shall also be responsible for recommending policy changes to the Board of Trustees.
3. The Library Director shall select and appoint other employees and shall be responsible for the proper direction and supervision of staff; for the care and maintenance of library property; for the selection of books and other materials and maintenance of the library's materials collection in keeping with the *Collection Development Policy* adopted by the Board; for the effectiveness of library services to the public; and for the library's financial operation within the limitations of the approved budget.
4. The Library Director shall attend all Board meetings and shall advise the Board in library matters, including making policy and budget recommendations.
5. The Library Board of Trustees will conduct a formal, written evaluation of the Library Director at the end of each fiscal year.

### **ARTICLE VII. Collective Authority of the Trustees**

All decisions of the Board are made by 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 with a quorum present, by a majority vote of the members present, provided that a motion presenting the amendment was duly made and seconded at the previous regular meeting.

Adopted: October 24, 2019