

Phillips Free Library Bylaws

Vision Statement

Phillips Free Library exists to create an equitable world.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to empower and inspire all people to grow and connect with one another to create a better world for all.

The Board of Trustees (hereinafter designated as the "Board") of The Phillips Free Library, a corporation created under a charter granted under Section 253 of the New York State Education Law by the Board of Regents (or Secretary of State) of the State of New York, dated March 29, 1974, shall be governed by the laws of New York State, the regulations of the Commissioner of Education and by the following by-laws.

Bylaws

1. NAME OF ORGANIZATION

- The name of the organization shall be the Phillips Free Library located at 37 South Main Street, in the village of Homer and Cortland County.

2. PURPOSE

- The purpose of the organization is to provide superior library service to the residents, adults and children, of the communities included in the Homer Central School District.

3. FISCAL

- The fiscal year of the library shall run from July 1 to June 30.

4. BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

- The library shall be governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board shall consist of no fewer than 7 and no more than 11 members. Terms of service are 3 years. Newly elected members will begin their terms with January board meeting.

- Eligibility for office shall be limited to adults residing within the geographical limits of the library service area (Homer Central School District) or surrounding area.
- If a Board member misses three consecutive meetings and has not communicated with the Board regarding those absences, it will be taken as a resignation, unless the Board decides otherwise by majority vote. The President shall inform the absent Board Member in writing that he/she is no longer on the Board. If such dismissal is deferred by Board action, the President shall inform the absent Board Member in writing the conditions of this deferral.
- As of January 1, 2023, all Board Members will follow the regulations found in Chapter 468 of the Laws of New York State which require library trustees to complete a minimum of two hours of trustee education annually. Failure to complete trustee education requirements set forth in this regulation may result in removal from the Board.
- No member shall serve for more than two consecutive three-year terms. Terms can be extended for up to six months if needed for extenuating circumstances by a vote of the board.
- Any vacancy shall be filled by special election by the remaining members of the Board for the remainder of the term of that particular position.
- Each Trustee shall have one vote, irrespective of office held.
- Under special circumstances (weather, illness, travel, time constraint, e.g.), the Board may put a motion up for vote via email. A Trustee may then register his or her vote via email, as allowed by NYS law.
- All actions of the Board shall be of the Board as a unit. No Board member shall act on behalf of the Board, on any matter, without prior approval of the Board. No Board member by virtue of his/her office, shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the library nor, as an individual, command the services of any library employee.

5. OFFICERS

- The officers of the Board shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, elected annually by the Board at the annual meeting. These officers shall serve for a period of one year or until their successors shall have been duly elected.
- The duties of such officers shall be as follows:
 - i. The **President** shall preside at all meetings of the Board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board, serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with that office. In addition, the President is authorized to sign checks in the absence of the Director or Treasurer

- ii. The **Vice President**, in the event of the absence or disability of the President, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the President.
- iii. The **Secretary** shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the Board, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office.
- iv. The **Treasurer** shall be (authorized to approve the payment of bills and shall perform such duties as generally devolve upon the office. In the absence or inability of the Treasurer, his/her duties shall be performed by such other members of the Board as the Board may designate.

6. DIRECTOR

- The Board shall appoint a Director who shall be the executive officer of the policies of the Board and shall have charge of the administration of the library under the direction and review of the Board. The Director shall be responsible for the care of the buildings and equipment; for the employment and direction of the staff; for the efficiency of the library's service to the public; and for the operation of the library under the financial conditions contained in the annual budget.
- The Director shall render and submit to the Board reports and recommendations of such policies and procedures, which, in the opinion of the Director, will improve efficiency and quality of library service. The Director shall attend all Board meetings except the portion of the meeting at which the director's appointment or salary is to be discussed or decided.

7. COMMITTEES

- Committees for specific purposes may be appointed by the President. Such committees shall serve until the completion of the work for which they were appointed.
- All committees shall make a progress report to the Board at each of its meetings.
- No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the Board, it is granted specific power to act.
- The President shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees.

8. MEETINGS

- Meetings shall be held a minimum of nine times per calendar year. Email notice of all meetings shall be sent by the Director to each member at least five days before the meeting. All meetings will conform to the Open Meetings Act.
- A special meeting of the Board may be called at any time by the President or upon the request of three members for a specific purpose. No business may be transacted at such special meeting except the Stated business.
- The Annual Meeting shall be held each year. The business transacted at this meeting shall include the election of new trustees and new officers.
- The operating and financial reports for the previous year shall be presented at the regular meeting in February.

- The budget for the subsequent fiscal year, required for submission to the Homer Central School District voters, shall be presented at the regular meeting either in December or January.
- A simple majority of the existing Board shall constitute a quorum for the conducting of all business. If a quorum is not present at a regular meeting, the attending members may set a date for another meeting to be held within one week, and the presiding officer shall notify the absent members of this specially called meeting.
- The library board may, at its discretion, allow for remote participation in Board meeting by board members, as allowed by applicable state law and any regulations in force. Notice to the public that remote connections will be used must be advertised at least seven days in advance. Members of the public who connect remotely will have their microphones muted except during the public comment period or at the request of a trustee.
- The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown unless circumstances make an altered order more efficient:
 - i. Roll call of members
 - ii. Disposition of minutes of previous regular meeting and any intervening special meetings
 - iii. Treasurer's report
 - iv. Old Business
 - v. Director's report
 - vi. New business
 - vii. Other Comments, communications, "Good of the Order"
 - viii. Adjournment

9. AMENDMENTS

- Amendments to these By-Laws may be proposed at any regular meeting and shall be voted upon at the next regular meeting. Email notice of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be sent to all absent members at least five days prior to the voting session. A simple majority of the Board shall be sufficient for adoption of an amendment.
- Any rule or resolution of the Board, whether contained in these By-Laws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which two-thirds of the members of the Board shall be present and two-thirds of those present shall so approve.

10. PROCEDURE

- All procedures not specified herein shall be in accord with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

Approved by The Phillips Free Library Board of Trustees

Updated on: 3/21/22