

Ossining Public Library

PREAMBLE

The Board of Trustees (hereinafter designated as the “Board”) of The Ossining Public 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 February 9, 1893, shall be governed by the laws of New York State, the regulations of the Commissioner of Education and by the following Bylaws.

BYLAWS

1. NAME OF ORGANIZATION

- a. The name of the organization is the Ossining Public Library.

2. PURPOSE

- a. The purpose of the organization is to provide easy and equal access to the broadest range of information and ideas of humanity in order to meet the educational and intellectual needs of the diverse members of our community, while enriching his/her/their social and cultural lives.

3. FISCAL

- a. The fiscal year of the library shall be July 1 – June 30.

4. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- a. The library shall be governed by a Board of Trustees (hereafter referred to as the Board). The Board shall consist of five to nine trustees, with the current number being seven members, elected by the voters of the District for terms of three (3) years each. The candidates with the highest number of votes will fill the seats. Any change in the number of trustees will require a change to the bylaws following the process as outlined in Section 11. Newly elected members will take office at the first meeting of the new fiscal year.
- b. The trustees must be residents of the Ossining Public Library’s chartered service area and at least eighteen (18) years of age as of the date of appointment and maintain residency throughout his/her/their term.
- c. During a fiscal year, it is the expectation that trustees attend scheduled meetings. Trustees are required to join and participate in at least one committee. When a trustee is unable to attend, it is expected that the trustee communicate their reason for absence to the Board President. When a trustee has failed to notify the President, the President will reach out to them. Outreach efforts must be documented in writing.
- d. If a trustee has three consecutive absences from regular meetings without responding to the Board President’s communications, this shall set in motion dismissal from the Board. Prior to dismissal, the Board President shall present written documented outreach efforts to the Board. Following a resolution to this effect, the President will inform the absent Board Member in writing that they are no longer on the Board.

- e. Any vacancy caused by an unexpired term shall be filled by special election by the remaining members of the Board until the next regular election at which the remainder of the term shall be subject to public vote.
- f. Each trustee shall have one vote, irrespective of office held.
- g. A trustee must be present at a meeting to have his/her/their vote counted. "Present" means physically present or virtually present as long as the trustee is joining virtually in compliance with [Open Meetings Law](#).
- h. 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/their office shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the library nor, as an individual, command the services of any library employee.
- i. A trustee may resign at any time by giving a written notice of resignation to the President of the Board of Trustees. If the President resigns written notice will go to the Vice President of the Board of Trustees. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon its receipt, and the acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
- j. Newly elected BOT members shall attend the New Board Member Orientation as prepared/approved by the BOT and/or the OPL Director.

5. OFFICERS

- a. The officers of the Board shall be the President, Vice-President, and Secretary 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. The President shall act as Parliamentarian should any procedural issues need to be addressed during a meeting.
 - 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, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office. These duties may be assigned to a library staff person who works in conjunction with the Secretary.

6. VACANCIES AND REMOVALS

Should a trustee resign or die prior to the expiration of his/her/their term, the trustee vacancy will be filled in accordance with the provisions of 4d.

The Board may remove a trustee for misconduct, incapacity, neglect of duty or refusal or failure to carry into effect the library's educational purpose in accordance with Section 3.31 of the Rules of the Board of Regents.

7. DIRECTOR

The Board shall appoint a Director who shall be the executive officer charged with carrying out the policies 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.

8. TREASURER

The Board shall appoint a Treasurer who shall perform the following duties:

- a) Work with the Library Director to make regular financial reports to the Board.
- b) Have check signing authority for disbursements from library accounts. When necessary act as a co-signer on checks in excess of \$5,000.
- c) Execute all forms and documents requiring the signature of a financial officer or Treasurer.
- d) Act as liaison for the Board with the auditors and review draft of annual audit before submission to the Board.
- e) Provide oversight to ensure library is acting on suggestions made by auditors in annual audit about policies and procedures.
- f) Treasurer shall be bonded in an amount as may be required by a resolution of the Board.
- g) Board of Trustees requires the Treasurer to attend monthly meetings at the discretion of the Board.

9. COMMITTEES

- a. The standing committees shall be: Finance Committee, Personnel and Policy/Bylaws Committee, and, Building and Grounds Committee.
- b. Ad Hoc 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.
- c. All committees shall make a progress report to the Board at each of its meetings.
- d. No committee shall have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the Board, it is granted specific power to act.
- e. The President shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees.
- f. Committees must be held in compliance with Open Meetings Law. [Open Meetings Law](#)

10. MEETINGS

- a. Meetings shall be held each month, the date and hour to be set by the Board and announced on the library's web site.
- b. 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. In either case the purpose of such meeting must be stated. No business may be transacted at such special meeting except the stated business. The public shall be notified of any special meeting.
- c. The Reorganization Meeting shall be held in July of each year. The business transacted at this meeting shall include the Oath of Office to new trustees and the election of new officers. The following dates will be placed on the calendar:
 - 1) The election of Trustees and the vote on the budget
 - 2) Open seats on the Board of Trustees announced to the public
 - 3) Trustee candidates must file a petition for candidacy
 - 4) Final adoption of the budget by the Board of Trustees
 - 5) Budget and Trustee candidates are presented to the voters
 - 6) Public budget hearing
 - 7) "Meet the Candidates" night for open seats on the Board of Trustees
- d. The preliminary budget for the subsequent fiscal year, required for submission to the Ossining Public Library voters, shall be presented at the regular meeting in January.
- e. The final budget for the subsequent fiscal year shall be presented for approval at the regular meeting in February.
- f. A simple majority of the existing Board shall constitute a quorum for the conducting of all business. For example, the quorum of a 7 member Board is 4. 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.
- g. 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:
 - Call to Order
 - Library Mission and Vision
 - Adoption of Agenda
 - Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes
 - Public Comment (Each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes)
 - Director's Report and Personnel Report
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Report of receipts and disbursements
 - Warrants
 - Committee Reports
 - President's Report
 - Policy/Bylaws Committee
 - Finance/Budget Committee
 - Personnel Committee
 - Building & Grounds Committee
 - Old Business
 - New Business

Public Comment (Each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes)

Executive Session

Adjournment

- h. Work Sessions will be held each month, the date and time to be set by the Board and posted on the library website. A simple majority of the existing Board shall constitute a quorum for a Work Session. The order of business for Work Sessions shall include a predefined theme or topic for discussion.

11. AMENDMENTS

- a. Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed at any regular meeting and shall be voted upon at the next regular meeting. Written notice of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be sent to all absent members at least ten days prior to the meeting at which the vote will be taken. A two-thirds vote of the entire Board shall be sufficient for adoption of an amendment.

12. PROCEDURE

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

Approved by the Ossining Public Library Board of Trustees, 53 Croton Avenue, Ossining, NY

Second Reading: April 11, 2011

Amended April 16, 2012

Second Reading and Board Approval: December 12, 2022

Draft revised by Policy/Personnel/Bylaws Committee April 1, 2024

First Reading: April 15, 2024

Second Reading and Board Approval: May 20, 2024

Draft Revised by Policy/Personnel/Bylaws Committee April 28, 2025 for First Reading at May 19, 2025

Regular Meeting

Second Reading and Board Approval: June 16, 2025

Draft revised by Policy/Personnel/Bylaws Committee September 19, 2025

First Reading: October 20, 2025

Second Reading and Board Approval: November 17, 2025