

Fletcher Free Library Board By-Laws

I. Purpose of the Library and its Board –

- A. The Fletcher Free Library serves the evolving educational and cultural needs of City of Burlington and assists in meeting those needs for the Greater Burlington community. Our urban public library offers a welcoming place for people to gather and to learn. A trained staff helps patrons locate the materials and information they need for work and pleasure.
- B. The objective of the Board is to represent and promote the interests of the Fletcher Free Library by:
 - 1. Advocating with the City Council, other city departments, the public, the media, and other libraries;
 - 2. Cooperating with other cultural, recreational, and educational bodies;
 - 3. Acting in an advisory capacity by reviewing the budget, by evaluating the director or co-directors, and by reviewing policies and procedures; and
 - 4. Supporting the Library through fundraising.
 - 5. Working with The Friends of the Fletcher Free Library, Inc. to promote the interests of the Library.

II. Membership – appointments, elections

The Board shall be known as the Board of Library Commissioners and consist of ten members. Six of the members of the Board shall be designated the public commissioners and four of such members shall be designated the trustee commissioners. Four of such public commissioners shall be appointed by the city council with the Mayor presiding. One public commissioner shall be the Mayor or his/her designee and one public commissioner shall be an employee of the Library elected by the employees thereof. The four trustee commissioners will be appointed on a self-perpetuating basis by the trustee commissioners.

The four public commissioners appointed by the City Council with the Mayor presiding must at all times be residents of the city of Burlington, Vermont. Neither the public commissioner elected by the library staff nor the trustee commissioners must reside in the city, but all trustee commissioners must reside within Chittenden County. In addition, the Board of Library Commissioners may appoint not more than two additional non-voting advisory members of the Board to serve for terms which the Board shall deem appropriate.

Annually, on the first Monday in June, the City Council, with Mayor presiding, shall appoint public commissioners based upon the expiration of prior terms, all for terms of three years, or until their successors are duly appointed and qualified.

III. **Term of Office**

The term of all voting commissioners other than the Mayor shall be three years commencing the first day of July following their appointment and continuing until their successors have been appointed and qualified. The Mayor's term shall coincide with his/her term of office. The public commissioner elected from the library staff shall be elected for a one year term and shall serve a maximum of three years at which time replacement by another employee shall be required. The terms of the commissioners shall be staggered.

IV. **Officers – election, term of office, duties**

A chair of the Board of Library Commissioners, a Vice chair, and a clerk shall be elected at the first meeting in July. The clerk need not be a member of the Board.

- A. Chair – Ensures the effective action of the Board in governing and supporting the Library, and oversees Board affairs. Acts as a representative of the Board as a whole, rather than as an individual supervisor to staff. Speaks to the media and the community on behalf of the Library (as do the Co-Directors). Represents the Library in the community. Develops agendas for meetings in concert with the Co-Directors. Presides at board meetings. Seeks volunteers for committees and coordinates individual board member assignments. Makes sure each committee has a chairperson, and stays in touch with chairpersons to be sure that their work is carried out. Determines whether ad hoc committee meetings are necessary and convenes the committee accordingly. In concert with the Co-Directors, ensures that board matters are handled properly, including preparation of pre-meeting materials, committee functioning, and recruitment and orientation of new board members.
- B. Vice chair – Presides over Board meetings in the absence of the Chair.
- C. Clerk – Keep minutes of meetings and provide minutes in a timely fashion for review at the following Board meeting.

V. **Board members - duties**

Each member of the Library Board of Commissioners has the responsibility to:

- A. Attend at least 75% of board meetings as well as at least 75% of committee meetings on which they serve over the course of a year, as well as a reasonable number of special events.
- B. In addition to service on the Board, each member is expected to make a personal and/or a financial contribution that is meaningful to them.
- C. Actively participate in one or more fundraising activities.

- D. Act in the best interests of the Library, and excuse themselves from discussions or votes where they have a conflict of interest.
- E. Stay informed about what's going on at the Library. Ask questions and request information. Participate in and take responsibility for making decisions on issues, policies, and other Board matters.
- F. Work in good faith with staff and other board members as partners towards achievement of our goals.
- G. Expect to be contacted by the Board chair if commitments to the Library are not fulfilled.
- H. Serve on a least one committee.

VI. **Meetings – frequency, dates, times, location, special meetings**

The Board shall meet a minimum of six times per year and may meet as often as once per month.

The regular meeting in July shall be considered the Annual Meeting and shall be for the purpose of electing Officers, appointing Standing Committees, receiving reports, and transacting any other business that may arise.

Special meetings of the Board and the Committees may be called by the Chair, the Library Director or Co-Directors, or any two (2) members. All meetings require written or oral notice of at least three (3) days except in cases of emergency.

All meetings except executive sessions shall be open to the public. The method from moving from a regular session into an executive session, and the scope of the topics which may be considered during the executive session, shall be prescribed by Vermont statute.

All meetings shall be warned and conducted in compliance with Vermont's Open Meeting Law 1 § 311-314. The minutes of such meetings and any records of the Library and its Board shall be maintained in compliance with the Public Access to Records Law 1 VSA § 315-320.

VII. **Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of six (6) voting Board members. A vote of the majority of the voting members on the Board, not merely a majority of a quorum, is required to take any action.

VIII. Committees – appointments, functions

There shall be three (3) standing committees of the Board of Library Commissioners. The Chair, with the approval of the Board, shall appoint all Committee members. The Board may establish ad hoc committees as needed. Standing committee members shall serve for a term of one (1) year. Ad hoc committee members shall serve as needed. Standing committees shall meet at least six (6) times per year. Ad hoc committees shall serve a directed.

The committees shall be responsible for fulfilling the purposes for which they were created. Subject to law, and these Bylaws, committees shall be empowered to take all steps necessary to carry out their charges.

These three (3) committees and their functions shall be:

1. **Development and Advocacy**
 - a. To raise money for the Library.
 - b. To increase awareness about the Library.
2. **Board Development and Recruitment**
 - a. Identifying and cultivating potential board members.
 - b. Coordinating relationships with boards of other libraries.
 - c. Training and development of current board members.
3. **Collection**
 - a. Reviews policy statements relating to the acquisition and disposition of Library materials and recommends changes in policy to the Board.
 - b. Reviews policy relating to Library technology.
 - c. Reviews, in light of established policy, communications from the public relating to the Library collection, and takes whatever action may be necessary.

IX. General agenda for meetings

The order of business at regular Board meetings shall be set in an agenda, which shall include a scheduled time for public comment.

X. Procedures for conducting business, decision making

All activities shall be conducted in accordance with accepted parliamentary procedure. The guide for this Board shall be Robert: *Rules of Order* (latest edition). The rules contained therein shall govern the Board in all cases to which they are applicable, provided they are not inconsistent with the By-laws or any special rules of order of this Board. No rules may be made or actions taken which are in conflict with the law or these By-laws.

XI. **Method of amending by-laws**

By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the legal votes cast, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to each Board member at least ten (10) days prior to its consideration.

By-laws should be adopted pursuant to Vermont statutes, Burlington City Charter, and other applicable law.

Approved by the Board of Library Commissioners on

7/9/03

Deborah Lashman

Deborah Lashman
Chair