

Thornton Public Library Board of Trustees By-laws

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1.0 General Provisions

1.1 Name

This organization shall be called “The Board of Trustees of the Thornton Public Library” existing by virtue of the provisions of Chapter 75 of the Laws of the State of Illinois (The Illinois Compiled Statutes), exercising its powers and authority, and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute, with the purpose of supporting and maintaining a public library in Thornton, Illinois.

1.2 Purpose

These rules, adopted in accordance with the Illinois Local Library Act, 75 ILCS 5/1-0.1 *et seq.*, and other Statutes, prescribe: 1) the responsibilities and organizational structure of the Thornton Public Library Board of Trustees; 2) the accountability of the library’s Director to the Board; and 3) specific provisions and procedures necessary in carrying out the governance and administration of the library.

1.3 Statutory Compliance

Specific Illinois Statutes are not referenced in these Bylaws except when necessary to provide emphasis or clarification. The Board of Trustees shall comply with all State Statutes and these Bylaws when conducting Board business, including but not limited to Illinois Local Library Act, 75 ILCS 5/1-0.1 *et seq.* and Illinois Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1 *et seq.*.

1.4 Change in Bylaws

Changes to these Bylaws may be proposed at any regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Proposed changes cannot be voted on for approval and ratification until at least the subsequent regular meeting of the board. A two-thirds vote of a quorum is required to approve changes to these bylaws. A copy of the proposed amendment must accompany the call of the meeting.

1.5 Majority Vote Defined

When a majority vote is prescribed in these Bylaws for approval of propositions, a quorum must exist and direct approval (i.e., votes of “aye” or “yes”) must be registered by more than half of the members and voting on the proposition.

1.6 Roll-Call Votes Required

The Board shall use the roll-call voting practice for items regarding the passage of all ordinances, resolutions, policies, and the passage of all motions that create liability against the Library (i.e. a contract) pertain to the appropriation or disbursement of funds, or seek adjournment to enter into a closed meeting. All other motions shall be decided by voice vote unless a roll call vote is requested by one or more Trustees.

2.0 Governance

Thornton Public Library is established by the Village of Thornton and is governed by a seven (7) member Library Board of Trustees. Trustees are elected and serve in accordance with these Statutes. The Village clerk will swear in newly- elected or appointed Trustees.

2.1 Elections to the Library Board

Trustees must be residents of the incorporated Village of Thornton and are elected at a village biennial election for a (6) six-year term. Their election and appointment for filling vacancies is held in accordance with the Statutes. Board members serve without pay, but will be reimbursed for necessary and related expenses as Trustees. All trustees are required to annually file a Statement of Economic Interest with the Cook County Clerk’s Office.

2.1.1 Term

All officers of the Library Board of Trustees shall be elected at the first regular meeting following the biennial election. Terms of each officer shall be two (2) years. Officers shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms, unless unanimous consent of the Library Board. No trustee shall hold more than one (1) office Simultaneously.

2.1.2 Vacancies

Any vacancy occurring on the Board, other than by expiration of the term of office, for which a Trustee is elected, shall be filled by action of the remaining Trustees as prescribed in the Statutes. The Board of Trustees shall give appropriate publicity to the existence of a vacancy (or an election) in an effort to secure the most highly qualified pool of applicants and candidates.

Vacancies on office shall be handled as follows:

- (a) In the event of resignation or incapacity of the President, the Vice-President shall become the President for the unexpired portion of the term.
- (b) Vacancies in offices other than the President shall be filled for the unexpired term by special appointment by the President and the approval of the Board of Trustees.

2.1.3 Appointments

Board members appointed to fill a vacancy serve until the next Consolidated Election. At that time, a Trustee is elected for the remainder of the term. The Village Clerk will swear in newly-elected or appointed Trustees.

2.1.4 Removal

Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the President or Secretary. Such resignation shall be effective when the notice is delivered unless the notice specifies a future date.

Any officer duly elected or appointed may be removed by majority of a quorum of the eligible voting members whenever it is in the best interest of the Library.

2.2 Duties of the Library Board

1. Employ a competent and qualified Library Director.
2. Determine and adopt written policies to govern the operation of the library.
3. Determine the purpose of the Library and secure adequate funding.
4. Establish, support and participate in a planned public relations program and keep the public informed of new programs, materials and current events at the Library.
5. Participate in the preparation of the annual budget; approve figures for the library budget and forward them to the Village for inclusion in the Budget and Appropriations and Levy Ordinances.
6. Trustees are encouraged to attend outside meetings to assist them in their duties. Compensation will be made upon approval of the Board.
7. Trustees may not enter into any contract with any person or persons which will obligate the Board in any manner, without prior Board approval.
8. A Trustee may not accept compensation of any sort from any person or persons doing business with the Library.
9. A Trustee shall not do commercial business with the Board, nor shall be a partner to any such business. If a Trustee works for a company doing business with the Library, they are required to abstain from any vote concerning the company.
10. Trustees shall receive no special privileges and shall abide by all rules set for the general public.
11. When hiring employees for the Library, no immediate family member of a Trustee may be considered for employment.

12. Upon resignation, Trustees shall return to the Library, and materials received during their term which will be useful to incoming Trustees, including policy manuals and books on Trustee responsibilities.
13. The Board of Trustees may issue keys to the Library to a Trustee, if the Trustee's duties require them. Each key holder shall be responsible for the key assigned. This also included a bypass code for the security system.

2.3 Duties and Responsibilities of the Library Trustees

1. Know relevant laws regarding the Library.
2. Attend all Board meetings and see that accurate records are kept on file and are reported to appropriate authorities in a timely fashion.
3. Be cognizant of regional, state and national trustee meetings and workshops, and attend as allowed by the Library budget.
4. Be aware of the services of the Illinois State Library, the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), and other regional cooperatives.
5. Support the decisions of the Library Board to the public.

2.4 Officers

The Officers of the Board shall consist of the following positions: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Officers and the Library Director serve as signers for official Library business.

Two signatures are required on each check. Approved signatures for checks are the President and Treasurer.

President

The President shall preside at all Board meetings, appoint all Special Committees, certify all bills approved by the Board, authorize calls for any Special Meeting, serve as *ex-officio* member of all committees and perform all other duties as may be assigned by law. Assist the Director in establishing the agenda of each board meeting. Agenda items requested by any Board member would be included. The President shall preserve order and decorum and decide questions on order. In the President's Absence, the Vice President shall preside. The President shall be authorized to fulfill the Treasurer's responsibilities when the Treasurer is unavailable for that purpose. The President shall be the official spokesperson for press releases and official messaging.

Vice-President

The Vice-President shall fulfill the duties of the President when the President is not available for that purpose. The Vice-President will be able to co-sign all vouchers for payment of Library expenses in the absence of the President.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be knowledgeable of the financial condition of the Library. The Treasurer shall oversee the receipt of income and the payment of expenses. As Directed by Illinois Freedom of Information Act guidelines all financial records of the Library are stored in the Library and are readily available for public inspection. The Treasurer shall present bills for payment to the Board, and report at each monthly meeting the balance of all Library accounts. The Treasurer will be an authorized signer of all Library bank accounts and a co-signer for all vouchers for payment of Library expenses.

Secretary

The Secretary shall record votes and maintain a file of signed minutes of all Board meetings and other records of the Board not specifically assigned to other officers. The Secretary will maintain an accurate account of all proceedings of the Board Meetings and Special Meetings. As dictated by Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) guidelines, these files are stored in the Library for public inspection. The Secretary shall perform other duties as directed by the Board. In the Secretary's absence, the recording of the minutes shall be assigned by the Board President.

2.5 Committees

Special Committees may be appointed by the President to present reports or recommendations to the Board and shall serve until the completion of the work for which they were appointed. Special Committees shall have a statement of purpose and a date by which the work is to be completed in the call for the committee.

2.6 Meetings

Regular meetings of the Library Board of Trustees are set annually and posted for the public. A quorum shall consist of four (4) members of the Board and is required to conduct business as both regular and Special Meetings of the Board. The Library Director shall ensure that notice and agenda are posted for the meetings. All Board members shall be given notice of the meetings to the Library Board 72 hours prior to meetings. Any board member or member of the public wishing to have an item placed on the agenda must notify the Library Director on or before the Thursday proceeding the meeting. Items will be included if there is sufficient administrative time to prepare the documentation for a discussion.

Roberts Rules of Order, Revised shall govern the parliamentary procedures of the Board unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws. Meeting minutes shall be maintained reflecting the attendance at the meetings and all actions taken.

The Order of Business as all regular meetings shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment (Limited to three (3) minutes per person)
4. Approval of the Minutes – Action item
5. Correspondence
6. Treasurer’s Report / Approval of Bills – Action item
7. Reports by Committee
8. Board President Report
9. Library Director’s report
10. Unfinished Business
11. New Business
12. Executive Session (if Necessary)

13. Items for next agenda
14. Announcements
15. Adjournment

A Board member who is unable to attend a meeting will notify the Library Director to indicate their absence. Because a quorum is required for each meeting, the notification should be far in advance as possible. Electronic conferencing for meeting attendance is possible as long as the conduct of the meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Any Board members attending the meeting through electronic conferencing are not counted as part of the physical quorum and by law cannot vote. Executive sessions prohibit call-ins.

Only Trustees attending in person shall be counted toward establishing a quorum. A majority of the quorum must vote in favor of a trustee attending via communication devices.

2.6.1 Special Meetings

Special Meetings may be called by the President, or upon written request of three (3) Board members. Notice, with the agenda of a Special meeting, must be posted at least 48 hours in advance, except in the case of a bona fide emergency, and notice must be given to Board members and to anyone that has filed for annual request for notice under the Open Meetings Act (OMA). No business except that stated in the notice and agenda shall be transacted.

2.6.2 Closed Meetings / Executive Session

Executive session may be used when deemed necessary by the Board in accordance with the Open Meetings Act (OMA) 5 ILCS 120. Attendance at closed meetings of the Board shall be limited to the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director (except those portions of the meeting at which his/her appointment, employment, or salary is to be discussed or

decided) and other specifically invited by the president with the concurrence of the Board to attend for specific reasons. Upon Majority vote of a quorum present at any regular or special meeting, the Board may adjourn to closed meeting to consider matters as are permitted by the Open Meetings Act. The vote of each member on the question of holding a meeting closed to the public and a citation to the specific exception contained in Section 2 of the Open Meetings Act shall be publicly disclosed at the time of the vote and shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the meeting. Only topics specified in the vote to close may be considered in the closed session. No final action may be taken at a closed session. Closed sessions shall be recorded and such recordings shall be preserved for at least eighteen (18) months and shall only be destroyed after the board has approved the minutes of the closed session.

2.6.3 Semi-Annual Review of Executive Session

Semi-Annual review of Executive session tapes and minutes will be held in the months of March and September to determine whether or not the minutes should remain sealed or can be publicly disclosed. These reviews are conducted in closed session and may be held during regular Board meetings.

3.0 Administration

3.1 Director

The Board of Trustees shall hire a Director who shall serve at the will of the Board. The Director shall have sole charge of the administration of the Library, in accordance with the strategic goals and direction determined by the board. No member of the Board of Trustees may individually instruct the Director or any other employee. The Director shall make such reports at the Board meetings as shall be requested by the president or the Board. The Board shall conduct an annual review of the performance and salary of the Director. The performance review period shall be from March 1st through February 28th of the fiscal year. At the Regular March Board meeting, the Board President shall advise the Board that a review of the Director must be performed. At that meeting, The Board shall begin discussions to determine the most effective method to be used for

evaluation. This performance review shall be completed by the regular January board meeting. Any salary increase granted to the Director shall take effect with the first payroll in May of the fiscal year.

3.2 Accounts Payable

The schedule of accounts payable shall be presented to the Board each month after review by the Treasurer.

3.3 Signature requirements for Checks

Two signatures from the authorized signers listed below shall be required on authorized checks and financial transactions. At least one signature must be handwritten. The other signatures may be handwritten, electronically reproduced and printed, or applied using a signature stamp. The authorized signers, in order of preference, shall be:

1. Board treasurer
2. Board President
3. Board Vice President
4. Board Secretary, or
5. Any other Board Trustee who has completed the appropriate financial documents,
6. Director

3.4 Expenditures

The Director shall have the sole discretion to approve all expenditures up to and including a cost of \$10,000. Expenditures for individual items and one-off services or projects which cost over \$10,000 shall require approval by a majority vote of the Board. The Director and Board shall comply with all State Statutes pertaining to competitive bidding, including the Illinois Local Library Act.

The following approvals would be needed in a building related emergency, depending on the emergency costs to be incurred:

1. \$0 to \$10,000 – Approval by executive Director
2. \$10,001-\$24,999 – Approval by majority vote of the Library Board.
3. \$25,000 and up – Approval by at least three quarters (3/4) of the Library Board Trustees to waive competitive bidding pursuant to an emergency pursuant to 75 ILCS 5/5-5.

3.5 Nepotism

No staff member shall be appointed or hired who is a member of the immediate family of a Library Trustee or Village employee. Immediate family is defined as: current spouse or domestic partner, children (including step), parents (including step/in-law), brothers (including half/step/in-law), sisters (including half/step/in-law). No trustee shall be hired by the Library staff while serving as a Trustee. No Trustee may be appointed who is a member of the immediate family of another Trustee or employee of the Thornton Public Library.

4.0 Ethics / Conflict of Interest

The Board subscribes to the Code of Ethics endorsed by the American Library Association (ALA).

Trustees must promote the highest level of Library service while observing ethical standards.

Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library user, colleagues, or the institution.

It is incumbent upon Trustees to disqualify themselves immediately whenever the appearance or a conflict of interest exists.

Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution.

Trustees must respect the confidential nature of Library business while being aware of, and in compliance with, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by group or individuals.

Trustees who accept appointments to the Library Board are expected to perform the duties and responsibilities of a Library trustee.

4.1 Conflict of Interest

No member of the Board of Trustees, or his or her family member by law or in-law, shall benefit financially from the trustee's membership on the Board. Neither shall a trustee create an appearance of a conflict of interest or commitment, or of impropriety. If a Trustee, or his or her family member by law or in-law, is considered for a contract or other financial relationship with the Library, that Trustee must disclose to the full Board that he or she has a conflict of interest. A Trustee with a conflict of interest can participate in limited discussion, but not in lobbying or voting in any matters concerning the conflict of interest.

4.1 Bylaws Amendments

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board of Trustees by a two-thirds (2/3) vote. Written notice with the text of the proposed changes must be distributed to all Trustees a minimum of one regular board meeting prior to a vote.

Amended September 30, 2024