

Bylaws of the Racine Public Library Board of Trustees

Article I. Identification

The library shall be called and known as “Racine Public Library” and that shall be the style and signature of all instruments and papers relating to its publications or business. The library is located in the City of Racine, Wisconsin, existing by virtue of the provisions of Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes, and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities granted it thereunder.

Article II. Library Board of Trustees

Section 1. Number and qualifications. Pursuant to the requirements of Wisconsin Statutes Sec. 43.54(1), the governing body of the library (Racine Public Library Board of Trustees, referred to as the Library Board for the remainder of this document) shall consist of nine members of whom are residents of the City of Racine, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Common Council. Not more than one member of the Common Council shall be a member of the Library Board at any one time and one of the Library Board members shall be a Unified School District Administrator or Administrator’s representative. (Sec. 43.54(1)(c), Wis. Stats).

Pursuant to the requirements of s. 43.60(3), Wis. Stats., a County Chairperson, with the approval of the County Board, may appoint additional member(s) of the Library Board from among the residents of the County, as follows:

1. If the annual sum appropriated by the county to the public library is equal to at least one-sixth, but less than one-third, of the annual sum appropriated to the public library by any municipality in which the public library is located during the preceding fiscal year, one additional member.
2. If the annual sum appropriated by the county to the public library is equal to at least one-third, but less than one-half, of the annual sum appropriated to the public library by any municipality in which the public library is located, 2 additional members.
3. If the annual sum appropriated by the county to the public library is equal to at least one-half, but less than two-thirds, of the annual sum appropriated to the public library by any municipality in which the public library is located, 3 additional members.
4. If the annual sum appropriated by the county to the public library is equal to at least two-thirds, but less than the annual sum appropriated to the public library by any municipality in which the public library is located, 4 additional members.
5. If the annual sum appropriated by the county to the public library is equal to at least the annual sum appropriated to the public library by any municipality in which the public library is located, 5 additional members.

Section 2. Term of Office. Library Board members serve three-year terms. Appointment to an unexpired term exceeding 18 months shall constitute a full term for purposes of this section.

Section 3. Disqualifications, Vacancies. A member who changes municipality of residence shall immediately notify the Secretary of the Library Board of such change. If the change of residence disqualifies the member from service on the Library Board under Sec. 43.54, Wis. Stats., the position shall be deemed vacant. A member who misses three consecutive meetings without requesting permission to be excused at least 24 hours before each meeting shall be considered to have resigned and the position shall be deemed vacant. The President shall notify Board Members after their second unexcused absence. The President shall notify the Mayor and/or County Executive of vacancies and the Library Board may suggest to the Mayor and/or County Executive names of persons who may qualify to fill a vacancy.

Article III. Officers.

Section 1. Officers. The members of the Library Board shall elect, from among their number, a President, Vice President, and Secretary. Such election shall be held at the Annual Meeting of the Library Board. Vacancies in office shall be filled by vote at the next regular meeting after the vacancy occurs. Officers shall serve a term of two years from the July annual meeting at which they are elected and until their successors are duly elected. An officer may be re-elected, provided that it does not result in holding the same office for more than two consecutive years. The duties of officers shall be such as usually are performed by like officers of similar organizations, and as may be prescribed by the Library Board.

Section 2. Nominating Committee. A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President one month prior to the Annual Meeting and will present a slate of officers at the Annual Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

Article IV. Meetings.

Section 1. Regular Meetings. The Library Board shall meet regularly each month for the transaction of whatever business may be in order, the date and time to be determined by the Library Board. Five (5) members shall constitute a quorum and the action of a majority of those present shall control, except as otherwise provided herein or by law. The Library Board may, in special circumstances, cancel any regular monthly meeting.

Section 2. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting of the Library Board shall be in July.

Section 3. Order of Business. The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items:

- a) Call to order
- b) Introduction of visitors
- c) Public comment
- d) Discussion of the Future of the Library
- e) Committee reports
- f) Report from City of Racine Alderperson appointed to Library Board
- g) Report from Racine Unified School District designee appointed to Library Board
- h) Items for Library Board action
- i) Consent agenda
 - 1) Approval of the minutes of the prior meeting
 - 2) Personnel Report
 - 3) Action on vouchers

- 4) Dashboard Report
- j) Old business
- k) Items for the next agenda
- l) Adjournment

Section 4. Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called on the written request of the President, or of any five members, stating the reason for the special meeting.

Section 5. Majority Vote of All Members. The following decisions shall require concurrence and support of a majority of all members of the Library Board in attendance:

- Purchase of property
- Location of any library building
- Adoption of Purchasing Policy
- Adoption of major operation policies
- Adoption of Policy on Material Selection
- Adoption of Annual Budget
- Initiation or discontinuance of a service, activity or function

Section 6. Parliamentary Authority. Robert's Rules of Order, latest revised edition, shall govern the parliamentary procedure of the meetings.

Section 7. Meeting Notices. Notice of all meetings shall be made in accordance with Wisconsin law.

Section 8. Attendance.

During a declaration of an emergency, electronic attendance may be acceptable provided:

1. There is electronic access for the meeting that the public can attend.
2. The connection is good enough so discussion can occur naturally and so everyone can hear what people are saying.
3. The meeting is noticed to make clear that some members might appear by phone or video conferencing.
4. This be the exception, rather than the rule.

Article V. Committees

At the next regular meeting after the Annual Meeting, or as soon as practicable thereafter, the President shall appoint members to the following standing committees: Finance and Personnel, and Building and Grounds.

The President may appoint any ad hoc committee which is deemed necessary by board action.

Article VI. Duties of the Library Board

- Determine the policies of the Library and develop the highest possible degree of operating efficiency in the library.
- Select and appoint a competent Executive Director.
- Advise in the preparation of the budget, approve a budget, and ensure that adequate funds are provided to finance the approved budget.
- Through the Executive Director, supervise and maintain buildings and grounds, as well as regularly review various physical and building needs to see that they meet the requirements of the total library program.
- Study and support library-related legislation that will bring about the greatest good to the greatest number of users.
- Cooperate with the City of Racine, Racine County, other municipalities, and the Lakeshores Library System.
- Maintain vital public relations.
- Strive to meet and exceed Wisconsin Standards for Public Libraries.
- Uphold and comply with the Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees developed by the American Library Trustee Association and the Public Library Association, and all municipal and state ethics codes.
- Oversee the management of the library's trust funds.
- Fulfill such other duties as the Library Board deems appropriate.

Article VII. Executive Director

Section 1. Appointment. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Library Board, and at all times shall be under its direction, and hold the position during its pleasure, subject only to the provisions of such written contract of employment as may be entered into. The appointment or termination of employment of the Executive Director shall be made only by concurrence of a majority of all the members of the Library Board.

Section 2. Duties. The Executive Director shall be considered the executive officer of the Library Board and shall have sole charge of the administration of the library under the direction and review of the Library Board. The Executive Director shall be held 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 set forth in the annual budget. The Executive Director shall attend all Library Board meetings and shall act as Recording Secretary to the Library Board and its committees but shall have no vote. The Executive Director shall administer the personnel policies of the library and is charged with the selection of qualified and competent professional, clerical, and custodial personnel to properly staff the library. Recommendations for major changes in Library policy, with reasons for these changes, shall be submitted to the Library Board by the Executive Director.

Section 3. Reports. The Executive Director is to prepare a written report which will be delivered to each Library Board member three days previous to the regular Library Board meeting. Order of business shall be stated in the agenda provided by the Executive Director. The Executive Director is to report completely and fully to the Library Board on personnel changes and other matters of library management.

Article VIII. General

These Bylaws, having been adopted by a two-thirds majority of all members, shall be altered, added to, or repealed, only by the concurrent action of a majority of all members of the Library Board at a regular or special meeting thereof. Further, all Library Board members shall receive written notice of proposed changes in the Bylaws at least two weeks before the regular Library Board meeting.

Bylaws as approved by the Racine Public Library Board of Trustees of Racine, Wisconsin, March 24, 1964, and as amended:

December 15, 1971
November 21, 1990
September 18, 1991
June 19, 1992
May 16, 1996
October 15, 1998
May 18, 2000
September 15, 2005
June 16, 2011
October 13, 2016
April 16, 2020
May 20, 2021
June 17th, 2021