

BY-LAWS  
OF THE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
LA CROSSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 10, 1998

ARTICLE I.      NAME & STRUCTURE

- A. The name of this organization shall be the “Board of Trustees of the La Crosse Public Library” established according to the provisions of Ordinance Section 2.20, City of La Crosse and Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute.
- B. The Library Board shall consist of nine members, one of whom shall be a representative of the school district, and no more than one shall be a representative from the Common Council.
- C. Appointments and terms of office are as provided by the relevant sections of Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes. All members are appointed by the Mayor with confirmation from the Council for three-year terms.
- D. Trustees are expected to attend meetings to conduct business of the Library. It is highly recommended that board members attend all meetings. If unable to attend a meeting, the library board members should notify the Library Director or Board President prior to the date of the meeting. When a member of the Library Board has been absent without notice from three consecutive meetings within a year, or from enough meetings to cause concern about their ability to act as an effective member, the Board President shall meet with the member to discuss whether the Board Appointment is a good fit or if resignation should be considered.
- E. Board members are encouraged to engage in trustee training and other library-related professional development experiences as practical. Costs associated with this engagement may be funded by the Special Trustees’ Fund, pending Library Board approval. The Library Director will be expected to inform the Board regularly regarding such opportunities. Board members should report on their experience at the next regular Library Board meeting.

ARTICLE II.      OFFICERS

- A. The officers of the Board shall consist of a President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer. Their terms of office shall be for one year. Officers shall be elected at the July Board meeting and hold office until their successors are elected and installed. No member shall hold more than one office at a time.
- B. President. The President shall preside at the meetings of the Board, authorize calls for special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board,

and generally perform all duties associated with the office of President. The President may vote upon and may move or second a proposal before the Board. The President shall also be the main liaison between Library Director and the library staff.

- C. Vice President. The Vice President shall, in absence or disability of the President, perform all the duties of President.
- D. Secretary/Treasurer. The Secretary/Treasurer shall, in absence of the President and Vice President, preside over meetings of the Board. The Board may appoint a recording secretary from the staff to record and disperse minutes.
- E. Vacancies. Vacancies in office shall be filled by vote at the next regular meeting of the Board after the vacancy occurs, provided that proper notice of the vote has been given prior to the meeting. Nominations may be made from the floor.

### ARTICLE III. COMMITTEES

- A. Executive. Action required or permitted to be taken at a board of directors' meeting may be taken without a full meeting if the action is approved and taken by all voting members of the executive committee (consisting of the elected officers of the Board). The action shall be evidenced by one or more written consents describing the action taken, signed by each officer and retained by the Business Office of the Library.
  - a. The executive committee, in so acting, may not adopt, amend, or repeal any bylaw of the Library.
  - b. At the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee shall notify the full Board of Directors of the action taken and seek approval by the Board of Directors.
- B. Special. Special committees may be created by the President or the Board for the study and investigation of special problems. Such committees are to serve until the completion of the work for which they were appointed. These committees may also include staff and public representatives, as well as outside experts. The creation of a committee, delegation of authority to a committee or action by a committee does not relieve the board of directors or any of its members of any responsibility imposed upon the board of directors or its members by law.
- C. Standing Committee. The Committee of the Whole is the Board acting in an advisory capacity and shall meet once a month prior to the regular board meeting. This meeting is an opportunity to raise questions and have a full discussion of agenda items and upcoming decisions. Should a member miss the Committee of the Whole Meeting, the member may contact the Vice President or Board President for a recap of the discussion points before the next regular Board Meeting if needed. The Vice President shall preside over this meeting; in the absence of the Vice President, the President shall preside over this meeting.

#### ARTICLE IV. DUTIES OF THE BOARD

- A. Library Director. The Board shall appoint and supervise a properly certified and competent Library Director and determine the duties and compensation of the Director.
- B. Budget. The Board shall approve the budget and ensure that adequate funds are provided to finance the approved budget. The Board shall have exclusive control of the expenditure of all money of the library and shall approve all library expenditures. The Board shall advise in the preparation of the budget and approve it. The Board shall review the budget on a regular basis.
- C. Policies. The Board shall approve library policies, including hours of operation.
- D. Physical Grounds. The Board shall regularly review various physical and building needs to see that they meet the requirements of the total library program.
- E. Legislation. The Board shall study and support legislation that is in the interest of libraries and library users.
- F. Public Relations. The Board shall cooperate with other public officials and boards to maintain vital public relations.

#### ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

- A. Regular Meetings. Regular meetings shall be monthly; date, hours and place to be determined by the Board. Officers are elected at the July board meeting.
- B. Special Meetings. Special meetings may be held at any time at the call of the President or at the call of any three members of the Board, for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting. Notice thereof must be given to all Trustees at least 24 hours in advance.
- C. Open Meeting Laws. Library Board meetings will be held in compliance with Section 19.8119.98 of the Wisconsin Statutes, specifically as follows:
  - a. Date and agenda and other required information concerning each regular meeting shall be shared with the local city clerk's office for distribution.
  - b. Any news media who have filed a written request for notification will receive an agenda not less than 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- D. Agenda. No item of business shall be acted upon which is not on the agenda for that meeting. Any new item brought up for consideration shall be referred to the agenda of a subsequent meeting.
- E. Quorum. A majority of the number currently serving on the Board shall constitute a quorum. Note that the Executive committee is authorized to act in lieu of a quorum (see Article III, Committees).
- F. Vote. An affirmative vote of the majority of the members of the Board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action before the Board. Only members who are present

- in person or by telephone, tele- or video-conference, or other online meeting software, may vote. No member shall be allowed to vote at any meeting where such equipment or technology is unavailable or unusable at the time of the meeting. To vote, the Board member must have been able to hear and respond to Board discussion.
- G. The Library Director or staff designee shall attend all Board meetings except those at which his/her appointment or salary is to be discussed or decided. He/she shall be fully informed of decisions made during his/her absence from those meetings by the President. The Library Director shall have no vote.
  - H. All meetings of the Board are open to members of the public who wish to observe, provided the meeting is in open session.
  - I. Public Comment. Each regular meeting (but not committee meeting) shall provide time for public comment by those who reside in the City of La Crosse.
    - a. Procedure. Residents of La Crosse may register to speak at the next regular meeting of the Library Board by adding their name and address to the signup sheet located at the Circulation Desk of the Main Library during hours the library is open for service.
    - b. Time Limit. It is the intent to provide each participant a fair and equal opportunity to be heard. The La Crosse Public Library Board of Trustees applies its discretion to limit the time for an individual's public comment to 3 minutes. The public comment period is limited to 30 minutes. Board Members may ask clarifying questions of any person speaking, but no action or discussion of the items will be held unless noticed by the agenda. If action is necessary as a result of any such appearance, the matter may be added to the agenda of a subsequent meeting.
  - J. Standard parliamentary practice will be followed at Board meetings.
  - K. Civility and Decorum. Library Board officials and members of the public are expected to conduct themselves with civility and to accord each other a measure of dignity and respect. This includes public comment. Shouting, personal insults, and attacks or any conduct that disrupts the flow of business is considered out of order. At the discretion of Board, disruptive individuals shall be subject to removal from the meeting location unless they agree to maintain civility and decorum.
  - L. Approved meeting minutes of the Board shall be filed with the city clerk and in the library office.
  - M. Order of Business.

The order of business at regular meetings shall include but not be limited to the following:

    - a. Call to Order
    - b. Approval of Minutes
    - c. Staff Reports & Communications
    - d. Committee Reports
    - e. Old Business
    - f. Topics for Future Meetings
    - g. Public Comment
    - h. Adjournment

## ARTICLE VI. LIBRARY DIRECTOR

- A. The Board shall appoint a qualified Library Director who shall be the executive and administrative officer on behalf of the Board and under its review and direction. The Director shall specify the duties of employees and shall be held responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff, for the care and maintenance of the library property, for an adequate and proper selection of library materials, and for the provision of engaging learning/creating experiences, in keeping with the stated policy of the Board, for the efficiency of library service to the public and for its financial operation within the limitations of the budgeted appropriation.
- B. The Library Director or staff designee shall prepare an annual report at the end of each calendar year, which when approved by the Board, shall be presented to the Mayor and Common Council of the City of La Crosse as well as the annual report that is submitted to the Wisconsin Division for Libraries and Technology. Specific responsibilities of the Library Director are as outlined in the Director's job description which may be amended during the annual review process.

## ARTICLE VII. FUNDS IN TRUST

- A. Title to all trust funds shall be vested in the Library Board, according to Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 43 Libraries, Section 43.58.
- B. Special Trustee's Fund (restricted)
  - a. History. The Special Trustee's Fund was established in the 1980s as a repository for funds coming to the library from gifts or bequests. Donations were made with the understanding that gifts would be utilized for specific expenses that the operating budget cannot or should not cover.
  - b. Management. The Special Trustee's Fund is an investment managed by Trust Point Financial Services.
  - c. Restricted Use. This fund has been deemed "restricted" because the Library Board utilizes the fund earnings only for its intended purposes, as specified when the fund began. It may be utilized for opportunities to enrich library service or for capital improvements and may not be utilized for general operating expenses.
  - d. Library Board's Spending Practice. The Library Board's practice is not to spend above the fund's earnings, or to spend principal to meet operating expenses as per their motion to clarify this practice, approved May 15, 2014.

ARTI CLE VIII. AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

These By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with a quorum present by a majority vote. The amendment must be stated in the call for the meeting.

*\*Reviewed and revised by Library Board, November 2014.*

*\*Reviewed and revised by Library Board, October 2016.*

*\*Reviewed and revised by Library Board, February 2018.*

*\*Reviewed and revised by Library Board, May 2020.*

*\*Reviewed and revised by Library Board, December 2022.*

*\*Reviewed and revised by Library Board, March 2024.*