

SOMERS LIBRARY BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: NAME AND AUTHORITY

Section 1. The “Somers Library” is an education corporation chartered by the Regents of the State of New York and, as set forth in Chapter 32 of the Code of the Town of Somers, operating per the Education Law of the State of New York.

ARTICLE II: MISSION STATEMENT/STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Section 1. Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide Somers residents of all ages with free informational, recreational and cultural resources and programs in a welcoming atmosphere conducive to learning and enjoyment.

Section 2. The Somers Library provides and seeks to improve free public library service to all residents of the town of Somers, New York, and to residents of Westchester County communities with which the Somers Library engages in cooperative services. Books and Library services are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the communities served. To the extent possible, materials and information will present a wide range of viewpoints on current and historical issues. Material or information will not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Section 3. No person will be denied the right to use the library because of gender, race, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or creed. However, all persons using, visiting and doing business with the Somers Library will be subject to the statement of policy, the library code of conduct and all other policies of the trustees. Anyone willfully violating such policies may be excluded from services and premises of the library.

ARTICLE III: NUMBER OF TRUSTEES AND TERMS OF SERVICE

Section 1. To govern the Somers Library, there are nine trustees as prescribed by the library charter. Appointments of trustees by the town board will be for a term of five years beginning in January.

Section 2. The trustees may recommend to the town board the name of candidates for consideration as trustees by the town board.

Section 3. Any trustees who finds it necessary to resign should submit a written resignation to the board of trustees. The board of trustees may then appoint a successor for the remainder of the unexpired term by a simple majority.

Section 4. Trustees are required to take an oath of office from the Town Clerk, and to comply with the Code of Ethics adopted by the town and library boards.

ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers shall be a president, a first vice president, a vice president for finances and a corresponding secretary, elected from among the trustees by a simple majority vote. The board shall appoint a non-trustee of suitable experience and qualifications as treasurer, an employee of the board.

Section 2. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the president at the October board meeting. This committee will present a proposed slate of officers for election at the organization meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Section 3. Officers shall serve a term of one year from the organizational meeting at which they are elected and until their successors are duly elected. No member of the board may serve as president for more than two consecutive terms, unless voted otherwise by the trustees by the simple majority vote.

Section 4. An officer may be removed for cause per Education Law 226(8) at any time by a two-thirds vote of the trustees. All vacancies among officers may be filled by a majority vote of the full board of trustees.

Section 5. The president shall be the presiding officer at all meetings of the trustees, and shall verify that the bylaws and all resolutions of the trustees are carried into effect. The president shall sign all official documents, written contracts and obligations, unless otherwise provided by resolution of the trustees, or dictated by state or local law. The president shall be the sole spokesperson for the board.

Section 6. The first vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the event of their absence, resignation or inability to perform these duties.

Section 7. The vice president for finance shall have charge of the funds of the library, oversee the employee treasurer. The employee treasurer shall render monthly reports showing the cash balances on hand and in the bank, a list of cash receipts and disbursements during the month, and such other reports as may be required, to be presented by the vice president. All books and records shall be open to inspection by any trustee, and shall be managed to enable ease of disclosure as required by law.

Section 8. The corresponding secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the board of trustees.

Section 9. The minutes of board meetings are taken by an employee of the town. This employee will send a draft of the minutes to all trustees for review and corrections. Prior to the following meeting the employee will make all submitted corrections, send the revised draft to all trustees, to be voted upon at that meeting.

ARTICLE V: COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Somers Library Board of Trustees has no standing committees. Trustees assess priorities for each year and appoint "lead" trustees to oversee the advancement of each priority. Ad-hoc committees or task forces may form around these lead trustees and will be comprised of as many trustees as are needed to adequately address the priority. The lead trustee will arrange for and report action and recommendations of the committee. The president is an ad hoc member of all committees.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Section 1. Time and Place: The trustees shall meet on a designated day each month in the library or any convenient public place as decided by the board of trustees in their organizational meeting in January. All meetings of the trustees are open to the public. Notice of place and time of meetings will be posted in all appropriate media with at least one week's advance notice, and will be posted in the library and on the town calendar at the Town House, as well as the library's website. Upon at least three days' notice, special meetings may be called by the president or a simple majority of the full board of trustees. The

board may put an “executive session”, closed to the public on the agenda, or may decide one is needed during a meeting. Executive session discussions are confidential, and only include matters pertaining to employees, board members, purchase of property, pending or current litigation.

Section 3. The default order of business for regular meetings shall include, but is not limited to, the following agenda:

Announcements

Public comment

Approval of minutes of prior board meeting

Treasurer’s report

Library Director’s report and the minutes of the latest staff meeting

Friends of the Library report

Somers Library Foundation Report

Old business

New business

The president, when finalizing the agenda, may depart from this order. The board, after convening a meeting, may change the order with a simple majority vote.

Section 4. Quorum: a simple majority of the full board will constitute a quorum at any regular or special meeting.

ARTICLE VII: TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. The trustees are entrusted with the governance of the library and shall determine and adopt written policies and rules to govern the operation and programs of the library. The bylaws and policies shall be reviewed for possible revision annually.

Section 2. The trustees shall employ a library director who shall be the executive to carry out the policies of the trustees and administer the day-to-day operations of the library. The trustees shall prepare a written evaluation of the director on at least an annual basis.

Section 3. The trustees shall establish personnel policies, salary schedules and employee benefit plans. The trustees shall have approval authority for the hiring, promoting and termination of employees, as recommended by the director. The trustees shall also confirm compliance with the applicable civil service regulations and negotiate any applicable salary items or conditions of employment.

Section 4. The board has broad authority to manage the affairs of the library, but it is a collective authority. Individual trustees, regardless of their position on the board, may not speak or act on behalf of the library unless they have been specifically granted that authority by a vote of the board.

Section 5. The building and grounds are the direct responsibility of the town board; however, the trustees shall have an oversight to ensure the building and grounds meet the needs of the library. The trustees shall notify the town board when major repairs are necessary.

Section 6. The trustees ensure the library operates within the budget adopted by the trustees and per the fiscal policies adopted by the trustees.

Section 7. The trustees shall attend all regular and special meeting and shall, when possible, attend regional and workshop meetings for trustees. Three absences from meetings of the board of trustees during one calendar year without an excuse accepted as satisfactory by the board will be considered a cause for termination from the board.

Section 8. Trustees should be constantly aware of the community needs of the library, and work to expand and improve services to fill those needs.

ARTICLE VIII: STATEMENT OF POLICY

Section 1. The trustees shall develop and adopt policies for the library, as well as a “long range plan” that identifies the needs of the community, and how the library plans to meet those needs in consultation with the director. The policies and long-range plans shall be available to the public at the library. The library director shall administer policies of the trustees fairly and equitably to all persons.

Section 2. Serious violations of the policies regarding safety, conduct and respect for people and property may result in suspension/termination of library privileges or a bar from library premises. Any termination of library privileges or access to the premises may be appealed to the board, per the applicable policy.

ARTICLE IX: BUDGET

Section 2. The proposed preliminary annual budget and a proposed transmittal memorandum to the town board shall be prepared annually by the library director for review and approval by the lead trustees appointed by the board. After lead trustee approval, these documents shall be reviewed and adopted by the full library board and submitted to the town board for their final review and inclusion in the town budget.

ARTICLE X: ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Section 1. The library shall observe the “Code of Ethics” and “Library Bill of Rights” of the American Library Association.

Section 2. The library shall maintain a Conflict of Interest policy as required by Article 7 of the Not-For-Proft Corporation Law.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments to these bylaws that are not inconsistent with Federal law, New York State Law, the library charter or town law, may be proposed at any regular meeting of the trustees. Adoption of such amendments can be made by a two-thirds vote of the full board of trustees at a subsequent meeting.

Section 2. Any policy or resolution of the board, whether contained in these bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension must be approved only at a meeting at which two-thirds of the board of trustees shall be present and two-thirds of those present shall approve.