

**THE WAREHAM FREE LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES BY-LAWS**

ARTICLE I NAME AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

This organization shall be called The Board of Library Trustees of the Wareham Free Library existing by virtue of the provisions of Chapter 78, Sections 10-13, and 21 of the General Laws of Massachusetts, and the charter of the town of Wareham. The Wareham Free Library will be hereafter referred to as “the Library.” The Board of Library Trustees will be hereafter referred to as “the Board” or “BoLT.” The town of Wareham will be hereafter referred to as “the Town.”

ARTICLE II MISSION

The Wareham Free Library is a welcoming place that stimulates people’s imaginations by fostering and supporting literacy through programming as well as providing resources for children and adults. The Board supports the vision of the Library Director and the library’s objectives and strategic goals while working with other supporting organizations and municipal entities. This organization will benefit the communities in a number of ways, providing access to cultural resources, serving as a location for meetings and events, and serving Wareham’s diverse population.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Number and Qualifications

The governing body of the Library shall be composed of nine members who shall be residents and registered voters of the Town. In addition, each member must hold a current library card and be a library patron in good standing.

Section 2. Terms of Office

Trustees are appointed by the Select Board of the Town of Wareham. Prospective trustees should attend three BoLT meetings, be interviewed by the Board, and complete the volunteer application available on the Town website. Application paperwork for service to the Board is submitted to the Town Clerk’s office or to the Chair of the BoLT. Upon a vote of approval, the BoLT will submit their recommendation to the Select Board. The Select Board will review the application, then schedule an interview and a vote for appointment at a regular meeting. After appointment, the applicant must first complete required paperwork (Certificate for Open Meeting Law) and be sworn in at the Town Clerk’s office. The applicant must also provide a certificate of completion for the MA government Conflict of Interest Ethics Training program to the Town Clerk’s office within 30 days of appointment and update every two (2) years. Copies of all aforementioned paperwork should be kept by the applicant’s records.

A term of a member of the Board shall be three (3) years. The Board may vote to allow additional terms at its discretion. With the recommendation of the BoLT, any Trustee in good standing may request re-appointment by the Select Board to serve additional terms. While it is recommended that Trustees step down for a year before serving additional terms, it is only mandatory after three (3) consecutive terms have been served.

Any vacancy of the Board shall be filled by following the above actions for the new or unexpired term of the Trustee whose vacancy is being filled. If the resigning Trustee's term ("remainder") is filled by a new member, the remainder shall be added to the new member's official term of service. Thus, the new member's three-year term shall begin on July 1st of the fiscal year following the expiration date of the original Trustee's term, instead of the date he/she is sworn in, for the purpose of establishing term lengths.

Section 3. Resignations

Any member of the Board may resign by written notice filed with the Chair or Secretary, and the Select Board

Section 4. Participation Requirement

Any member of the Board who is absent for three consecutive meetings, without the knowledge and approval of the Chair, will be contacted by the Chair to determine their interest in continuing as a Board member. Any member who is absent for four consecutive meetings, or for fifty or more percent of the meetings in a calendar year without the approval of the Chair, can be asked to resign through a vote by the Board.

In the event of illness or other extenuating circumstances, exceptions to this provision may be made.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS AND DUTIES

Section 1. Collective Authority of the Board

All decisions of the Board are made by the Board as a collective body. No individual member may make decisions, act, or speak for the Board unless specifically authorized to do so by a vote of the Board. By previous approval and a vote of the Board, the Chair may approve routine business between meetings on the Board's behalf. The Chair is responsible for reporting any action they take at the next meeting of the Board.

The Board is responsible for setting policy for the Library, adding and revising policies and practices to ensure that the Library is in compliance with its strategic plan, with Town law, and with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, the library certification body for the state of Massachusetts.

Section 2. Officers and Duties

The officers of the Board shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. The term of each office shall be one year, usually from July through June. An officer shall hold office until their respective successor is elected during the June meeting. Officers may serve more than one year in their position if approved by a majority vote of the Board. Officers may be elected throughout the year, if made necessary by a vacancy, with their terms ending in June. There is no set limit for the number of terms for serving as an officer, but consideration should be given to continuity and sharing of responsibilities.

Section 3. Duties of the Chair

The duties of the Chair are to preside at all meetings of the Board, to call special meetings of the Board, to be the public face of the Board, and to appoint or act as liaison between the

Board and other groups and municipal entities. Unless otherwise requested, all communications concerning Board actions come from the Chair.

Section 4. Duties of the Vice-Chair

The duties of the Vice-Chair are to perform the duties of the Chair at their request or absence. Additionally, the Vice-Chair bears responsibility to assist in carrying out the duties of the Chair and should encourage other members to share in taking on Board functions. The Vice-Chair is responsible for seeking volunteers for office and for proposing nominees for office.

Section 5. Duties of the Secretary

The duties of the Secretary are to keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the Board, prepare agendas at the request of the Chair, and disseminate minutes and correspondence to Board members in a timely manner. The Secretary amends minutes as directed by the vote of the Board and delivers agendas and minutes to the town of Wareham offices and the Wareham Free Library for public access.

ARTICLE V LIBRARY DIRECTOR AND RELATIONSHIP TO BOARD

The Board shall appoint members to serve on a search committee when it is necessary to find a Library Director. The Board will forward qualified and recommended candidates for Library Director (“Director”) to the Wareham Town Administrator.

The Director shall be the Executive and Administrative Officer of the Library on behalf of the Board and under its review and direction. The Director shall select and recommend other employees and shall be responsible for the proper direction and supervision of staff, for the care and maintenance of Library property, for the selection of books and other Library materials and maintenance of the Library’s materials collection in keeping with the materials selection policy adopted by the Board. The Director is responsible for creating the Library’s annual budget and presenting it to the Board for consideration.

The Director shall attend all Board meetings, shall provide a written monthly report to the Board, and shall advise the Board in Library matters, including the creation and updating of library policies that best serve the needs of the community.

ARTICLE VI BOARD MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Board will meet monthly according to a prearranged schedule as determined by the Chair.

The June meeting of the Board will be considered the annual meeting, at which time the election of officers will take place. The Library’s annual operating budget approved at Town Meeting, will be reviewed with the Library Director along with its operating plan for the next fiscal year.

Board meetings are to comply with Open Meeting Law and notice must be posted at Town Hall in compliance with Town policy.

Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair or by official request of a majority of Trustees, the purpose for which shall be identified in the minutes of said special meeting.

Section 2. Quorum

A quorum for transaction of business shall consist of a simple majority of Trustees. Only Trustees in attendance at a meeting may cast a vote. There can be no votes taken at any meeting without a quorum.

Section 3. Order of Business

The normal Order of Business at regular meetings shall be:

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Review and Approval of Minutes
3. Announcements
4. Reports: Friends and Foundation
5. Director's Report
6. Trustee Matters
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Public Comment
10. Adjournment

Each agenda must display a Calendar of Meetings for the rest of the year, adjusted over time to begin with the next scheduled meeting.

This order of business may be adjusted at the discretion of the Chair.

Section 4. Open Meeting Law

All meetings of the Board shall be subject to the state of Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, as described in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 39 sections 23A-23C. In particular, all meetings are open to the public unless held in executive session under terms of the law. A notice and agenda for all meetings, except in case of an emergency, shall be filed with the Town Clerk and sent to the Town for electronic posting at least 48 hours in advance. All agendas and approved minutes for meetings shall be available to the public through the Town Clerk's office and at the Wareham Free Library.

Section 5. Robert's Rules of Order

The last revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the parliamentary procedures of the Board.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing/Temporary Committees

There are no required standing committees for the Board. Committees may be established by the Chair or as recommended by majority vote of the Trustees.

Section 2. Committee Appointments

The Chair shall appoint committees for such purposes as business of the Board may require. A committee shall be considered to be discharged upon completion of the purpose for which it was appointed and after the final report is made to the Board.

Section 3. Reports

All committees shall make a progress report to the Board at each of its meetings, which report shall be noted in the minutes.

Section 4. Powers

No committee will have other than advisory powers unless the Board requests and approves specific action.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDING THE BY-LAWS

These By-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with a quorum present, by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that a motion presenting the amendment was made and seconded at the preceding regular meeting. A By-laws committee, consisting of three members, shall be appointed by the Chair every five years to review these by-laws and make changes as needed.

Signed the _____ day of _____ in the
year _____.

Chair

Vice Chair or Secretary

Approved WFL BoT June 14, 2023