



Pleasant Valley Library

BY-LAWS OF THE PLEASANT VALLEY FREE LIBRARY

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the Pleasant Valley Library is to provide effective, friendly, and responsive service capable of evolving and expanding with the needs of our community.

FUNCTIONS: We believe that the functions of the Pleasant Valley Free Library are

- To serve the community as a center of reliable information.
- To provide opportunity and encouragement for people of all ages to continuously educate themselves, develop effective living skills, and pursue intellectually challenging activities.
- To assemble, preserve, organize, and administer collections of books and other materials possessing cultural, educational, and informational value.
- To promote the public use of Library materials through dynamic encouragement and guidance.
- To serve as a center in the community for cultural, civic, and educational discourse

PRINCIPLES: Maximum realization of our mission and objectives can best be obtained through adherence to the following:

- Service to the public demonstrated through innovation, effort, and attitude.
- Observance of professional standards and ethics in relations between The Board of Trustees, the staff, and the public.
- Fiscal responsibility, including effective budget creation and oversight; planning and execution of traditional fund raising; the development of new funding sources; and the establishment and management of appropriate long range capital funds and endowments for staffing, collection development, and housing.
- Continuing reappraisal of the effectiveness of services, collections, technology, physical facilities; and the exploration of new methods and improvements.

These principles can best be achieved through on-going pursuit of the following specifics:

- Development and maintenance of a strong financial footing anchored in predictable funding sources for daily operation and the accumulation of long-range capital funds.
- Development and maintenance of local collections of books and other materials both to ensure responsiveness to the demands of our patrons as well as to foster new cultural and educational experiences.
- Membership in the Mid-Hudson Library System to facilitate economies of operation and expands access to books, materials, and services not sustainable at the local level.
- Development and maintenance of safe, sufficient, and welcoming library facility for the collections and services.
- Strong community outreach, including programming for both children and adults, a strong online presence, special exhibits, press releases, print and electronic newsletters, event sponsorship, home-bound service, and cooperation with other groups and agencies in stimulating educational and cultural activities.

ARTICLE 1. NAME AND SERVICE AREA.

Section A. Name. This Library shall be known as the Pleasant Valley Free Library and was incorporated in 1903.

Section B. Service Area. Any person residing within the Mid-Hudson Library System boundaries (Dutchess, Putnam, Ulster, Columbia, and Greene Counties) is eligible for a library



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card. However, only persons living in the towns of Pleasant Valley or Salt Point shall have the Pleasant Valley Free Library as their home Library.

ARTICLE 2. BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

Section A. Governing Board.

1. The governing Board of the Pleasant Valley Free Library (hereafter known as The Board) shall consist of nine (9) trustees.
2. Each Trustee shall serve a three (3) year term. No trustee shall serve more than five (5) consecutive terms.
3. Trustees whose terms expire, but who are eligible for renomination, will meet with the President or Chair of the Nominating Committee to assess interest in serving again as well as to discuss The Board's needs at that time.
4. After a person has left The Board due to having served five (5) consecutive terms, a one-year period must elapse before such trustee is eligible for renomination to the Board.
5. Any trustee who misses four regular board meetings or three consecutive meetings in a 12-month period shall be subject to replacement. A majority of board members must be residents of the town of Pleasant Valley.
6. The Library shall not have immediate family members serve on its Board simultaneously. Related immediate family may serve and are encouraged to serve the Library in other non-trustee and non-paid capacities.

Section B. CODE OF ETHICS. It is the responsibility of the Board and the individual trustees to ensure that the Pleasant Valley Library provides quality library services to the residents of the community we serve. All trustees are required to read and comply with the Library's Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy annually.

Section C. YOUTH MEMBER. A Youth Trustee of the Board may be installed in addition to the Board of Trustees. He or she shall be a high school student, preferably in his or her junior or senior year, who shall serve as a liaison between the youth community and the Library. She or he shall attend at least six (6) regular Board meetings a year and shall have all the rights and privileges of a Board member, with the exception of voting and presence in executive sessions.

Section D. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. The Board of Trustees shall, among other things:

- Employ a competent and qualified Library Director.
- Determine and adopt written policies to govern the operation and mission of the Library.
- Determine the purposes of the Library and secure adequate funds to continue the Library's mission.
- Prepare and adopt the annual budget.
- Authorize all expenditures and transfers, except as properly delegated.
- Establish Library policies dealing with book and material selection.
- Know the program and needs of the Library in relation to the community; keep abreast of standards, services, and Library trends.
- Know local and state laws; actively support Library legislation in the county, state, and nation.
- Establish, and support a long-range plan of service. Report regularly to governing officials and the community.
- Attend regional, state, and national trustee meetings and workshops, and affiliate with the appropriate professional organizations.
- Meet as a body to conduct the business of the Library. Ensure that accurate minutes of such meetings are kept on file.
- Individual trustees shall be appointed to function as presiding officers over designated committees.
- New trustees shall attend the Trustee Essentials Training offered by the Mid-Hudson Library System within their first year of joining the board. All trustees shall comply with



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the NYS trustee training requirements, annually. Any trustee who fails to attend mandatory training without an excuse accepted as satisfactory by the Board shall be declared to have resigned.

ARTICLE 3. OFFICERS.

Section A. OFFICERS AND TERMS. The board shall elect, at its annual meeting, a President, a Vice-President, a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary, and a Treasurer from among the Board of Trustees. The Board may also appoint a Deputy Treasurer to act in the absence of the Treasurer. Officer terms will be for one-year commencing January 1. No trustee shall serve more than a maximum of six (6) consecutive one-year terms in any particular office.

Section B. THE PRESIDENT. The President shall preside at all meetings, appoint all committees and the chairs, authorize calls for special meetings, and generally perform all the duties of a presiding officer.

Section C. THE VICE PRESIDENT. The Vice-President shall assume all the duties of the President in the absence of the President.

Section D. THE TREASURER. The Treasurer shall coordinate the development and approval of the Annual Budget and shall have charge of all Library funds and be authorized to pay all bills for line-budgeted and uniquely Board approved expenses upon receipt of Director approved bills. A summary report of all income and expenditures shall be delivered to the Board each month, with details provided upon request of any member of the Board.

Section E. THE RECORDING SECRETARY. The Recording Secretary shall keep true and accurate account of all proceeding of the board meetings, and shall have custody of the minutes, a copy of which shall be maintained on file at the Library. Minutes shall be available within two weeks of a board meeting. In the absence of the Recording Secretary at a meeting, the President or Vice-President will appoint someone to take minutes.

Section F. THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY. The Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible for the handling of all correspondence for the Library Board.

ARTICLE 4. LIBRARY DIRECTOR.

Section A. The Library Director shall be a full-time professional position serving at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and in compliance with State of New York regulations. Due to the population of the town of Pleasant Valley, per New York State regulation, the Library Director must hold a master's degree in library science, as well as New York State Public Librarian Certification.

Section B. The Library Director shall be a non-voting participant at the meetings of the Board of Trustees and shall have sole charge of the administration of the Library under the direction and review of the Board. The Library Director shall attend all Board meetings, except those portions at which his or her appointment, retention, or salary is to be discussed. The Library Director shall be the person served with any legal paperwork requesting access to information that is protected by law.

Section C. The Library Director shall manage the Library within policy guidelines set forth by the Board of Trustees and the State of New York, operating within the Annual Budget.

ARTICLE 5. VOTING.

A quorum of the Board is defined as a majority of Board members (5). Votes must be cast in person. In order for a motion to pass, it must be approved by a majority of Board members (5).



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ARTICLE 6. MEETINGS.

Section A: Regular meetings of the Board shall occur on the 3rd Thursday of each month unless rescheduled for unusual circumstances by a polling of the Board. A meeting is defined as a quorum of board members. The December meeting shall be the annual meeting. Other meetings may be called at the discretion of the President.

Section B: All meetings shall be open to the public. Executive sessions may be closed to the public in accordance with the Open Meetings Law. The schedule for all meetings shall be posted on the Library website in advance of the meeting. An agenda shall be made available prior to the start of each said meeting, and draft minutes for any such meeting made public by the second week after the meeting.

Section C: The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall serve as parliamentary authority for all meetings.

ARTICLE 7. ANNUAL BUDGET.

The Annual Budget shall be adopted before the end of the fiscal year. The Board, in conjunction with the Library Director, shall prepare the budget for each year no later than the October board meeting of the previous year and voted on by the next meeting. The Board shall authorize all expenditures and transfers, except as delegated by By-Law and Policy. A copy of the current Annual Budget shall be maintained at the Library.

ARTICLE 8. COMMITTEES.

Section A. The President of the Board is an ex-officio member of all committees and shall be invited to any scheduled committee meetings unless waived by him or her. The chairperson of each committee must be a member of the Board of Trustees but, except as otherwise restricted, committee membership may include other volunteers from the community. Trustees may serve on more than one committee.

Section B. Standing Committees. The following standing committees shall exist:

1. **Executive** – The Executive Committee includes the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and the Secretary. The President shall serve as chair. The committee acts on behalf of the Board as may be necessary for the proper functioning of the Library between meetings of the Board. With the director, it addresses concerns that apply to Library policy. Working with the director, it shall recommend to the Board: staff job descriptions, levels of staff, and resolutions of patron issues. It is responsible for evaluating the Library Director once a year with a subsequent report to the Board; except that the Director shall be evaluated at the third and sixth months within the first year of employment. The committee may audit evaluations of staff by the Library Director. It shall function as a review or appeals body for staff complaints. Only the Director and the President shall have access to staff member personnel files. This committee will propose new information under "New Business" when necessary.
2. **Building and Grounds.** The Building and Grounds committee deals with the maintenance and repair of the physical structure and the property. This committee is often hands-on with being responsible for communicating with St. Stanislaus and the First Presbyterian Church concerning parking, shoveling, plowing, and road work. The committee shall be chaired by a trustee and may have trustees and non-trustees as



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members.

3. **Finance and Insurance.** The Finance and Insurance Committee shall be responsible for audit compliance of Library finances and manage all matters having to do with insurance and claims. It prepares an annual coverage review report with recommendations for carrier selection and terms of contract. It shall recommend the Annual Budget and investment alternatives. Due to the budget and type of library, annual audits are not required; but the Finance committee shall recommend, for budgeting purposes, when it deems audits/reviews are necessary. The committee will make a monthly financial report to the board. The Treasurer will be the chair of the Finance and Insurance Committee and the committee will have three other trustees as its members.
4. **Fund Raising.** The Fundraising Committee shall support the Operations budget with recommendations and coordinate the execution of campaign letters, grant opportunities, and other fund-raisers needed to support Operations, but not handled by the Friends of the Library. Publicity and scheduling for committee efforts shall be coordinated with/or delegated to the Community Outreach committee. The committee shall be chaired by a trustee and may have trustees and non-trustees as members.
5. **Nominating.** The Nominating Committee's responsibility is to solicit candidates for board vacancies, research their backgrounds and start the process of preparing them for possible board service. It should conduct the interview, prepare questions, and submit recommendations as needed to the board. This committee prepares the slate of officers and trustees at the annual meeting in December. The committee shall be chaired by the Vice President and may have three other trustees as members.
6. **Community Outreach.** The Community Outreach committee shall initiate and coordinate the creation and distribution of Trustee newsletters, press releases and other publicity. Only the chair of this committee, the Board President and the Library Director are authorized to speak to members of the Press regarding Library matters. They will take part in communicating to various organizations in the town when events or opportunities arise. This includes organizing with neighbors when events may impact the area. This committee will be chaired by a trustee and may have trustees and non-trustees as members.

Section C. Other Committees. The Board may create Committees other than those hereinabove described, for any other library purpose, by an affirmative vote of the majority of the Trustees. The members of any such Committee shall be appointed by the President and may include Trustees and one or more persons other than Trustees. The Executive Committee shall also designate the chair of any such Committee.

ARTICLE 9. SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS.

The Pleasant Valley Free Library endorses the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View statements of the American Library Association.

ARTICLE 10. AMENDMENTS.

These By-Laws may be amended, or be repealed, by a majority vote of the Trustees then in office at any meeting of the Board, provided that written notice of the proposed change or repeal



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has been provided, in writing to members of the Board at least ten (10) days before, or presented at the regular meeting prior to the meeting at which the proposed change(s) will be considered by the Board. The notice shall include the language of the proposed change(s) and a brief statement of the purpose(s) thereof.

ARTICLE 11. SEVERANCE.

If any by-law is determined to be in conflict with the laws of the State of New York, only those portions of the by-law specifically affected shall be superseded by said laws.