

PELHAM FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES BYLAWS

Article 1—Name and Authorization

The name of this organization is the Trustees of the Pelham Free Public Library (herein referred to as “the Library”) established in the Town of Pelham according to the Chapter 78, Section 10 of the Massachusetts General Laws, and exercising the powers and the authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under said statute.

Article 2—Purpose and Objective

The purpose of the Board of Trustees (herein referred to as “the Board”) is to govern the Library with the objective of ensuring that the Library connects every member of the Pelham community to information and ideas that foster life-long learning, literacy, and community. The Board supports strong and effective library services and focuses on overall funding, planning, and goals.

Article 3—Constituency Served

The Library primarily serves the residents of the Town of Pelham, Massachusetts, and others who seek to avail themselves of its resources.

Article 4—Method of Board and Officer Selection

1. The Board will consist of a minimum of six Trustees, one-third of whom shall be elected annually for a term of three years.
2. The Trustees will be elected by the voters of the Town of Pelham at the annual Town elections.
3. New Trustees will assume their term in July following their election.
4. The Board shall, from its own number, annually choose a chair, vice or co-chair, and secretary at the July meeting. These officers shall not serve more than three consecutive terms without a specific vote to override this provision. The Town treasurer shall act as treasurer for the Board of Trustees.
5. Any member may resign by written notice filed with the Town Clerk and copied to the Board Chair. In the event of a mid-term vacancy, the Board may appoint an interim Trustee who may serve until the next Town election. Such vacancies will be filled at the next Town election in accordance with Town nominating procedures.

6. Regular attendance of Board Meeting is a responsibility of all Trustees. When possible, the Chair should be notified of a Trustee's absence. Any member who misses more than three consecutive meetings will receive a letter from the Chair asking them to reconsider their commitment to the Board. In the event of illness or other extenuating circumstances, exceptions to this provision may be made by a formal vote of the Board.

Article 5—Time and Responsibility for Regular Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the Board are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm
2. A notice of meetings shall be filed with the Town Clerk at least 3 business days beforehand and a copy of the notice will be posted in Town Hall and on the Town Calendar. The Town Clerk will be notified of any changes in accordance with posting procedures.
3. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chair, or upon written request of three members, for the transaction of business as stated in the meeting request. Notice of such special meeting shall be given to each member of the Board at least seven days in advance of the meeting.
4. A quorum for transaction of business shall consist of four members of the Board.
5. All meeting of the Board shall be subject to the State's Open Meeting Laws, as contained in Chapter 39, unless held in executive session under the terms of the law.
6. All records of minutes and meetings shall be available for public inspection.
7. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Board in all cases to which they are applicable and consistent with these Bylaws.

Article 6—Board Responsibilities

1. The Board shall have those responsibilities as provided by MGL., Chapter 78, Section 11 and the Bylaws of the Town of Pelham as regards the custody and management of the Library.
2. All decisions of the Board are made by the Board as a collective body. No one member may make decisions or, with the exception of the Chair, act or speak on behalf of the Board unless specifically authorized to do so by a vote of the Board.
3. The Board shall be responsible for all monies appropriated by the Town and all monies received by gift or bequest to the Library.

4. The Board shall appoint a qualified Library Director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the Library on behalf of the Board and under its review and direction.
5. The Board shall appoint a qualified Library Director with an Appointment Letter and conduct a yearly evaluation of the Library Director.
6. The Board shall determine, in consultation with the Library Director, policies and maintain a written record of them.
7. In conjunction with the Library Director, the Board shall adopt the final budget document, participate in its presentation to Town Boards and officials and work for its adoption by the Town.
8. The Board shall represent the community's needs in an on-going planning process which assesses the needs of the Library and the role of the Library in the community. The Board shall speak and act as an advocate of the Library in the community, and support legislation which will benefit the Library and the larger community.

Article 7—Officer Responsibilities

1. The Chair shall provide the Town Clerk with the upcoming meeting agenda at least two business days before the meeting to be posted on the Town Calendar.
2. The Chair shall conduct all meetings, appoint all committees, serve as the official representative of the Board, and fulfill all legal functions on behalf of the Board.
3. The Chair shall provide the Town Clerk with an Annual Report to be posted in the Spring Town Warrant.
4. Vice or Co-Chair: The Vice-Chair, in the absence of the Chair, shall perform the duties of the Chair. The Co-chair will share the duties of the Chair.
5. The Secretary shall keep a true record of all meetings of the Board, and be responsible for all correspondence as directed by the Board.
6. The Secretary shall provide the Town Clerk with the minutes of each meeting after they are approved.

Article 8—Library Director and Staff

1. The Director shall select and appoint other employees and shall be responsible for the proper direction and supervision of staff.
2. The Director shall be responsible for the Library's service to the public, including the selection of books and other materials, and the maintenance of the Library's collection.

3. The Director shall be responsible for filing required reports to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in a timely manner.
4. The Director shall attend all Board meetings and advise the Board in Library matters.
5. The Director shall render and submit to the Board at each monthly meeting reports and recommendations of such policies and procedures, which, in the opinion of the Director, will improve the efficiency of library service.

Article 9—Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with a quorum present, by a majority vote of the members present, provided that a motion presenting the amendment was duly made and seconded at the previous regular meeting.

Approved: September 11, 2024

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