

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Name: The name of the library shall be NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Directors: The directors of the Northampton Area Public Library are legally constituted trustees, not fewer than five (5) and not more than nine (9) in number, representing the service areas within the Northampton Area School District. Members are approved by the Northampton Area School Board in staggered three-year terms, January through December. Unfinished terms begin immediately upon Board approval for all vacant positions and conclude at the end of the unfinished term. They serve without compensation. These Trustees are authorized to make and adopt such policies and bylaws for the programs and welfare of the library as they deem necessary. Board members shall not be relatives of current library employees. The key areas of board responsibility shall be:

1. Fiduciary Responsibility
2. Strategic Planning
3. Oversight of the Library Director
4. Library Advocacy

The vision of the Board of Trustees is to guide the creation of the Library for tomorrow.

Our mission is to create an integrated environment for the community where **we are the first point of access for information, self-enrichment, leisure, and social connections within the community.**

The Board's practical duties and responsibilities include the following:

1. Employ a competent and qualified library director.
2. Determine the purposes of the library and secure adequate funds to carry on the library's programs and services.
3. Provide a strategy that guides the overall operations and direction of the library and library services.
 - 3.1 In the strategic plan, the Board shall provide both short and long-term objectives, with specific descriptions and time frames, and, if possible, responsibilities for execution.
4. Understand the needs of the library in relation to the community and keep abreast of current standards and library trends.
5. Establish, support, and participate in a planned public relations program.
6. Review and approve the annual budget.
7. Know local and state laws; actively support library legislation in the state and nation.
8. The Board shall be responsible for key donor relations and management, as well as oversight of current fundraising efforts that are executed by the Library Director, staff, Friends of the Library, and other affiliates of the library.
9. Engagement of the community: individual and corporate donors, businesses, and partners from whom the library would benefit to implement the strategic plan.

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

10. Attend all board meetings and see that accurate records are kept on file at the library.
11. Attend regional, state, and national trustee meetings and workshops, and affiliate with the appropriate professional organizations.
12. Be aware of the services of the state library.
13. Report regularly to the governing officials and the public
14. Approve the annual audit.

Officers: The officers of the board for the upcoming year shall be chosen at the last regular meeting of the Board in each calendar year (coinciding with the reorganization meeting) and shall be as follows:

President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer

Their terms of office shall be for one year, coinciding with the calendar year. The duties of all officers shall be such as by custom and law, and the rules of this Board usually revolve upon such officers in accordance with their personal titles. The President shall be, ex officio, a member of all standing committees. The outgoing President is to serve as Vice President for one term following the elections. In the absence of the Secretary or in the event of their illness, the librarian shall serve as assistant Secretary of the Board. In the absence of the Treasurer or in the event of their illness, their functions shall be performed by the President. The Secretary shall act as presiding officer at Board meetings in the absence of the President and Vice President.

Meetings: Regular meetings of the Library Board shall be held monthly, excepting July and December, at the library at a time determined by the current board members and made public knowledge as the law dictates. The rescheduling of meetings shall follow the same public notification standards. The current meetings are on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at the library. These meetings are open to the public.

Special meetings may be held at any time at the call of the President or Vice President or at the call of any two members of the Board, provided notice thereof is given to all Trustees at least twenty-four hours in advance of the special meeting.

The annual reorganization meeting of the Library Board shall be held in November at the regular time.

A quorum at any meeting shall consist of a majority of the currently filled Board member positions (allowing quorums when vacancies exist).

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the parliamentary procedure of the Board.

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Order of Business: The order of business at all regular meetings of the Board shall follow the general areas below:

- Call to order motion
- Roll call
- Approval of minutes (either as read or previously received)
- Report of the Library Director
- Report of the Operations Director
- Reports of Standing Committees
- Reports of Special Committees
- Unfinished/old business
- New and miscellaneous business

Committees: Committees shall be formed as needed.

Attendance: The public library trustee should have time to attend meetings to become familiar with library operations and philosophy. Membership of any library board trustee who is absent from three regular monthly meetings of the Board in one calendar year shall automatically terminate unless excused by the Board for good and sufficient reasons. The secretary shall notify, in writing, any Board Member who has missed two meetings of this situation.

Amendments: Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed at any regular meeting but can take effect only after a favorable vote at a subsequent meeting.

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

References:

A Handbook for Public Library Trustees. 4th ed. Harrisburg: State Library of Pennsylvania, 1993.

Bolt, Nancy M. Evaluating the Library Director. Published under auspices of The American Library Trustee Associations, The American Library Association, 1983.

Staff Development Committee Personnel Administration, Library Administration and Management, Association of the American Library Association. Personnel Performance Appraisal—A guide for Libraries.

Getting on Board: Tools for Board Development and Assessment. Institute of Museum and Library Services. 2011. Commonwealth of PA Department of Education, Office of Commonwealth Libraries.

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Amendments to the bylaws: June 12, 2002

Inurement of Income: No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered.

Dissolution Clause: Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Trustees shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

February 12, 2026

Trustee Responsibilities Clarified: There are seven core responsibilities of non-profit boards, including:

1. Ensuring effective organizational planning
2. Providing sufficient resources
3. Making sure the organization fulfills legal obligations
4. Providing proper financial oversight
5. Selecting and evaluating the library director
6. Improving the library's public standing
7. Recruiting and orienting new board members

Officer Responsibilities Clarified: The **president** presides at meetings of the board, and:

- with the librarian, prepares and mails an agenda to members of the board in advance of the meeting.
- The president serves as discussion leader during the board meeting and encourages all members to participate.
- The president signs official documents requiring signature and
- represents the board in public and in an official capacity, as instructed by the board.
- The president has one vote as a member of the board.

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- The president reviews and signs the Library's Annual Report to the Commonwealth and
- Reviews and signs any necessary Waivers of Standards, as needed.

The **vice-president** presides in the absence of the president, and:

- Performs any other duties assigned by the board.
- This position is not required by law.

The **secretary** of the board takes minutes of board meetings, and:

- Sees that they are mailed with the next agenda
- After minutes are approved, the secretary makes a permanent and correct copy part of the board archives.
- The board determines how minutes are distributed to those other than board members.
- Minutes are made available for public inspection as soon as they are given to the board.
- The secretary may also perform other duties assigned by the board.
- The secretary reviews and signs any necessary Waivers of Standards, as needed.

The **treasurer** of the board's main job is to provide approval and oversight of financial activities.

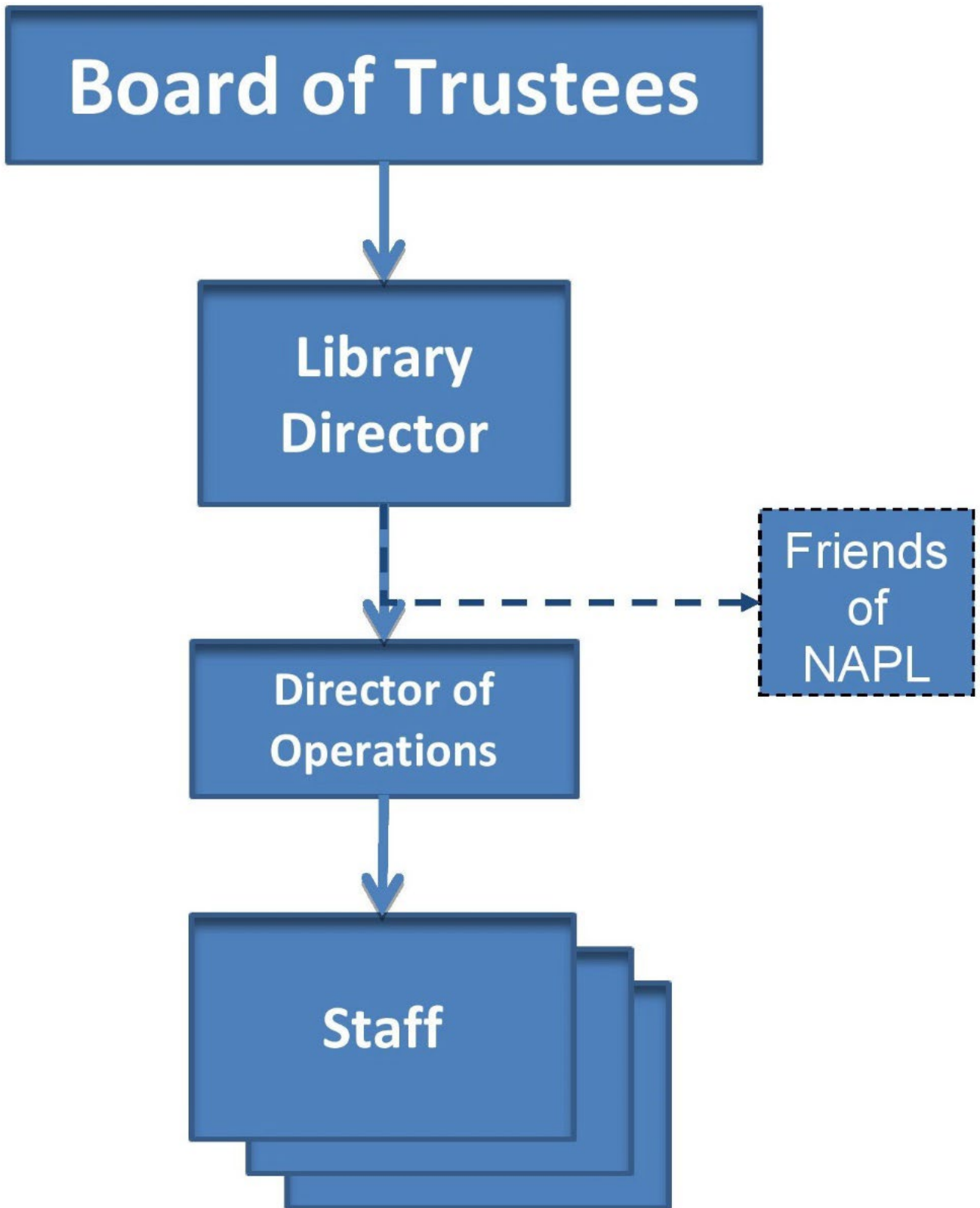
- The treasurer may sometimes be directly involved in planning and executing various financial activities.
- S/He should have a good understanding of the sources of revenue and expenses.
- The treasurer reviews and signs the Library's Annual Report to the Commonwealth.
- The treasurer reviews and signs any necessary Waivers of Standards, as needed.

March 12, 2026

Vacancies: If the office of any Trustee, one or more, becomes vacant for any reason, the Board of Trustees may choose a successor, who shall hold office for the unexpired term respective of which such vacancy occurred. Trustee vacancies shall be advertised to the public as required by law. Potential Trustees shall read, fill out, and sign the official Northampton Area Public Library Board of Trustees Application and attend two (2) regular meetings of the Board of Trustees before they will be considered for any vacancy. Once the current Board has voted in favor of a new Trustee at any regular or special meeting duly called for that purpose, the Trustee will be presented to the Northampton Area School District Board of Education for approval at the School Board's next regularly scheduled meeting. Upon approval, the new Trustee will then begin their term at the appointed time.

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Appendices: A. Organizational Structure of the Library



B. Board of Trustees Application

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Purpose/Principle:

To provide quality library services to the Northampton Area School District, the Northampton Area Public Library requires a working team of a Library Director and a Board of Trustees who are informed to make necessary decisions. It is critical that each person appointed to the Board of Trustees be willing to perform the duties of a trustee. Trustees serve without compensation.

The Library Board is composed of no less than five (5) and no more than nine (9) members who are appointed by the Northampton Area School District Board of Education on recommendation of the current Library Board of Trustees. The term of office is three (3) years, and a Trustee may fill an unexpired term and/or serve consecutive terms. Should the Board of Trustees have fewer than five (5) members, the Board will actively seek applicants to fill any vacancy.

Prospective Trustees should be aware of the following criteria that will be used by the other Board members of the Northampton Area Public Library to evaluate candidates for the vacant position. A Trustee must:

1. Live in the seven (7) municipalities that create the Northampton Area School District: Allen Township, Bath Borough, Chapman Borough, East Allen Township, Lehigh Township, Moore Township, and Northampton Borough.
2. Be a legal adult of 18 years or older.
3. Commit the time that is necessary to carry out the duties of a Trustee. This includes time to become and stay knowledgeable about public library issues, to attend Board meetings, and to carry out Board assignments.
4. Be genuinely interested in public libraries and understand the importance of public libraries in meeting the educational, recreational, and informational needs of the community.
5. Understand the local community, its social and cultural needs, and be willing to communicate those needs to the Board.
6. Be able to work with others to reach a common goal.
7. Be open-minded, intellectually curious, and respectful of the opinions of others.
8. Have the courage to plan creatively and direct the effective implementation of those plans.
9. Be able to withstand pressures and prejudice that would restrict or prevent equal library service to all.

What Trustees Do:

- set library policy,
- approve library budgets,
- employ and evaluate the director,
- plan for the future,
- be an advocate for the library,
- do anything else necessary for the proper management of the library.

If a candidate has questions or requires additional information, please contact a Trustee (napllibraryboard@gmail.com) or attend a Board meeting. **Potential candidates are required to attend at least two (2) meetings before the Trustees will consider recommending them for appointment by the School Board.** Board meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, except in July and December, at 6:30 PM in the Northampton Area Public Library.

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Procedure:

1. Potential Trustees may submit their applications via mail, at the Help Desk in the Northampton Area Public Library, via e-mail, or at any Board of Trustees meeting.
2. For each vacancy, the Northampton Area Public Library Board of Trustees selects an individual who is committed to the provision of library service.
3. The name(s) of the selected individual(s) is/are recommended to the Northampton Area School District Board of School Directors.
4. The Board of School Directors appoints the recommended individual(s) to the Northampton Area Public Library Board of Trustees for the proposed three-year term.
5. The newly appointed Trustee(s) begin(s) their term and receive(s) all voting rights at the next scheduled Board of Trustees meeting.

Board Terms:

Except for the initial establishment or filling unexpired terms, Trustees shall serve in staggered three-year terms. A Trustee's three-year term begins immediately upon School Board approval for all vacant positions.

Board Compensation:

Members of the Northampton Area Public Library Board of Trustees shall not receive compensation for their services but shall be reimbursed for their actual expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties.

Board Meetings and Attendance:

1. The Board shall meet on a regularly scheduled basis once each month, except in July and December.
2. The absence of a Trustee from three regular monthly meetings of the board during one year of the Trustee's term shall constitute automatic resignation unless excused by the Board for good and sufficient reasons.

Conflict of Interest:

1. No person is eligible to this office who is directly or indirectly interested in the sale to the library of books, magazines, supplies, equipment, materials, insurance, or services for which library funds are expended.
2. Trustees shall not be relatives of current library employees.

Please submit completed applications to:

Board Member Application
Northampton Area Public Library
1615 Laubach Avenue
Northampton, PA 18067

OR

vlaroche@northamptonapl.org

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board of Trustees Application for Appointment

Name:

Address:

Municipality:

Occupation/Profession:

Phone:

Email:

I have been a resident of the Northampton Area School District since: _____

I am able and willing to attend a 6:30 p.m. monthly meeting, typically the 2nd Thursday of the month:

Yes No

Please describe any prior qualifications (work experience, education, attributes, skills/training, employee of or member of the local school district board, local government board, or council) that you feel would provide positive input to the work of the library board. *Please use another sheet of paper if necessary.*

Please explain why you are interested in becoming a library trustee.

Please share your opinion on the importance of libraries.

BYLAWS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

What segment(s) of the Northampton Area School District do you feel you represent? (Possible examples: retirees, parents of young children, small business owners, etc.)

Please briefly discuss the goals and directions that should be important to this Board.

What do you see as the library's role in the future?

What is one thing you think the library currently does very well?

What is one thing that could be done to make library services even better?

Other comments:

Signature:

Date: