

Governance of the Somerset County Library System

The Somerset County Library System is a separate legal entity from Somerset County. The Library is governed by the Somerset County Library Board of Trustees consisting of seven trustees whose appointment must be approved by the Somerset County Commission. The rules governing the Board are set forth in their By-Laws.

The Somerset County Commission determines the level of funding provided to the Library from the County. Other funds are provided by the State of Maryland and funds generated by the Library.

The Board is responsible for the approval of general policy, long range planning, and overseeing expenditures. The Director is appointed by the Board and is responsible for management of the Library System in all its aspects. This includes library personnel, strategic planning, materials selection, public relations, budget preparation and allocation, and operational details.

Somerset County Library System Board of Trustees By-laws

Preface

A Trustee or Associate Trustee shall:

Act as a liaison between the public and the Board of Trustees.

Be knowledgeable regarding operations of the library.

Consider confidential all matters pertaining to personnel and other situations of discretionary nature.

Be involved in the continuing effort to improve library service.

Make all comments on library operations to the Director.

Maintain an unbiased attitude and remain flexible when considering policy changes.

Receive copies of:

1. Maryland Manual for Public Library Trustees
2. Laws of Maryland Relating to Public Libraries
3. Somerset County Library Board By-Laws

Somerset County Library System

By-laws

General

1. The Board of Trustees for the Somerset County Library System shall be composed of seven (7) members appointed by the County Commissioners of Somerset County from nominees submitted, after approval of vote, by the Board of Library Trustees, in accordance with the provisions of Section 23-403 of the Annotated Code of Public General Laws of the State of Maryland.
2. Associate Trustees, not to exceed two (2), who are approved by the County Commissioners of Somerset County, will serve on the Board as non-voting members. These Associate Trustees will be chosen to establish representation in most areas of the County and to lend perpetuity to the Board. A trustee, whose term has expired, will be replaced by an Associate Trustee who has an acceptable attendance history. Associate Trustees will serve on committees as directed by the President. The terms for Associate Members will be 5 years with no limit on the number of terms. Attendance requirements will be the same as requirements for full trustees. Associate Trustees do not attend Executive Sessions unless invited.
3. The Board of Library Trustees shall approve all appointments and dismissals of staff, budget and establish policies for the use of the library and its programs, all in accordance with the provisions of Section 23-406 of the Annotated Code of Public General Laws of Maryland.
4. The Board of Library Trustees shall be responsible for approval of the budget, for all monies of the public library fund and any other monies under the control and supervision of the Board. The Board shall authorize an audit of the library accounts at the close of each fiscal year in accordance with the provisions of Section 23-405 of the Annotated Code of Public General Laws of Maryland.

Meetings

5. The Board shall meet bi-monthly on the second Wednesday of even numbered months.
6. The annual meeting of the Board shall be held at the time and place of the regular meeting for the month of February of each year.
7. Special meetings may be called by the President. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in emergencies, one day advance notice shall be given to all Trustees.
8. Notice of all regular meetings shall be mailed by the Secretary to all Board members at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting date. An agenda will be included.
9. All business meetings of this Board shall be conducted according to the latest revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

Officers

10. The nominating committee shall be appointed by the President in October for the purpose of presenting a slate of officers to the Board of Trustees at the regular December meeting. Election of Officers for the coming year will take place at this time. The newly elected officers' terms will commence January 1.
11. The officers of the Board shall be as follows: President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. A term of office is for one year. Officers may be elected for more than one term but the President shall be limited to two terms.
12. The President shall preside at all meetings, appoint all committees, authorize calls for any special meetings, and generally perform all the duties of a presiding officer.
13. The Vice-President shall be the presiding officer of the Board and shall perform all of the duties and functions of the President in the event of the absence of the President.
14. The Treasurer shall provide the Board with a financial report at each meeting. A staff member shall keep the accounts for the Treasurer, and the Treasurer shall report to the Board the status of the accounts. All checks will require 2 signatures by members of the Board or the Director.
15. The Treasurer of the Board shall be adequately bonded as outlined in sub-section 7, 23-404 of the Annotated Code of the General Laws of the State of Maryland.
16. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of four (4) members of the Board.
17. An Executive Committee, composed of the President, Vice-President and Treasurer, is empowered to meet as a body to plan agendas and make recommendations to the Board. The President will determine the necessity and time for such an Executive meeting. Minutes shall be kept.

Library Director

18. The Library Director shall be appointed by the Board in accordance with the provisions of 23-406 of the Annotated Code of the Public General Laws of the State of Maryland. The Director shall perform such duties as said laws require, those outlined in these by-laws, and those outlined in any applicable employment agreement.
19. The Director of the library shall serve as the secretary to the Board at all regular and special meetings. The secretary shall keep a true and accurate account of all proceedings of the regular Board meetings, shall issue notices of all regular Board meetings and, on authorization from the President, of all special meetings, shall have custody of the minutes and other records of the Board which shall be kept in the Somerset County Library office; shall notify the appointing body of any vacancies on the Board, and shall perform such other duties as shall be required by the Board.

Attendance

20. Attendance at Board meetings is in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland, Education article 23-404, section D.
- a) Any member of a Board of Library Trustees who fails to attend at least half of the scheduled meetings of the Board during any calendar year shall be considered to have resigned from the Board.
 - b) The chairman of the Board of Library Trustees shall report the member's name and nonattendance to the county governing body by January 15 of the following year.
 - c) The county governing body may reject the resignation if the member explains his nonattendance satisfactorily.
 - d) The resignation is effective from the date of the final review by the county governing body, which shall be within 10 days after it receives the report from the chairman of the Board of Library Trustees. The county governing body shall fill any resulting vacancy as provided in 23-403 of this subtitle. (Annotated Code 1957, art. 77, 172, 173; 1978, ch. 22 2; 1996, ch. 10, 16.)
 - e) The President shall remind trustees of the law if they miss a meeting.

Minutes

21. A copy of all regular meeting minutes shall be sent to the Commissioners of Somerset County following approval by the Board.

Amendments

22. These By-Laws and any additions, thereto, may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with at least a quorum present, by a vote of a quorum of the Board members, provided, however, that such amendment shall be stated in the call for such a meeting.
23. These By-Laws should be revised every two years.

Revision History

Revised 7/1/92; Revised 5/14/97; Revised 7/9/97; Revised 11/7/97; Revised 12/9/97; Revised 9/12/07; Revised 12/12/07; Revised 3/12/08; Reviewed 2/12/14; Revised 4/12/17