

DOBBS FERRY PUBLIC LIBRARY

BYLAWS

1. Chartered and Registered Public Library

1.1 The Dobbs Ferry Public Library (the "Library") was chartered by the New York State Education Department in 1957. A copy of the current Charter is affixed to these Bylaws as "A".

1.2 The Library is registered as a public library with the New York State Education Department and, as such, abides by the requirements of 8 NYCRR 90.2, which outlines the minimal requirements for registered public libraries.

1.3 As a public library, the Library is an independent education corporation, governed by a board of trustees (the "Library Board") who operate per Education Law and the Not-for-Profit Corporations Law.

1.4 As a municipal public library started by an act of the Village of Dobbs Ferry, all trustees are appointed by the Village Board;

1.5 The Library trustees are the fiduciaries responsible for the compliant and mission-focused operation of the Library.

1.6 Library trustees are not paid for their service, but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses related to service.

2. Library Board Responsibilities and Authority

2.1 The Library Board is governed by these Bylaws, which define the structure and governing functions of the Library Board of Trustees.

2.2 The Library Board is responsible for adopting a community-based, written strategic plan developed by the Library Board and appropriate staff.

2.3 The Library Board is responsible for providing a board-approved written annual report to the community on the Library's progress in meeting its mission, goals and objectives, as outlined in the Library's strategic plan.

2.4 The Library Board is responsible for adopting written policies for the operation of the Library, which shall be reviewed and updated at least once every five years or earlier if required by law.

Adopted by Library Board 2.11.2026

2.5 The Board is responsible for annually preparing a budget, which enables the Library to address the community's needs, as outlined in the Library's strategic plan.

2.6 The Board is responsible for periodically evaluating the effectiveness of the Library's programs, services and collections to address community needs, as outlined in the library's strategic plan.

2.7 The Board is responsible for ensuring the Library is open, minimally, for 35 scheduled hours per week (based on population).

2.8 The Library Board is responsible for ensuring the Library maintains a facility that addresses community needs.

2.9 The Library Board is responsible for ensuring the Library provides programming to address community needs, as outlined in the Library's strategic plan.

2.10 The Library Board is responsible for ensuring the Library provides a circulation system that facilitates access to the local library collection and to other library catalogs, and provides equipment, technology, and internet connectivity to address community needs and facilitate access to information.

2.11 The Library Board is responsible for ensuring the Library provides access to current Library information in print and online, facilitating the understanding of library services, operations and governance.

2.12 The Library Board is responsible for ensuring the Library employs a paid director in accordance with the provisions of 8 NYRCC 90.8.

2.13 The Library Board is responsible for ensuring the Library establishes and maintains partnerships with other educational, cultural or community organizations which enable the Library to address the community's needs.

3. Composition of the Board

3.1 Under New York State Education Law, the Dobbs Ferry Public Library may be managed by no fewer than five (5) and no more than eleven (11) Trustees, all of whom must be over 18 and residents of the Village of Dobbs Ferry. By vote of the Dobbs Ferry Library Board of Trustees, and as set by the Village of Dobbs Ferry code, the Library Board is composed of between seven (7) and nine (9) members.

3.2 As set by the amended Charter, the term of office for Trustees is three (3) years.

3.3. Trustee tenure shall be limited to three (3) successive terms, or nine years of service. A term shall begin on January 1st and end on December 31st. After serving a first term, if a Trustee wishes to serve an additional term, the Board must vote to accept the additional term. Terms are staggered with the goal of having no more than two terms expire per year.

3.4 As set by Section 260 of the Education Law, new Trustees are appointed by the Village Board.

3.5 Qualified and willing candidates to fill vacancies shall be identified by the Library Trustee Search Committee in the Fall of each year, or when needed because of a mid-term vacancy. The full Board will vote on the final candidate(s) to be recommended to the Village Nominating Committee.

3.6 The Library Trustee Search Committee shall:

- Conduct interviews of trustee applicants;
- Make a recommendation to the full Board of recommended candidate(s);
- Arrange for the full Board to interview candidates if current trustees desire.

3.7 The Village Board will vote on Library trustee applicants put forth by the Village Nominating Committee.

3.8 A mid-term vacancy may be due to resignation, attrition, or removal.

3.8.1 If any Trustee chooses to resign their office, the Trustee must notify the Board President and the Dobbs Ferry Village Board of Trustees in writing, and the resignation is not effective until noted in approved minutes.

3.8.2 If any Trustee shall fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the Board, without an excused absence noted in the minutes, that Trustee shall be removed per Education law 226, with the effective date of such removal noted in the minutes.

3.8.3 Trustees may be removed for misconduct per Education law 226.

"Misconduct" shall include but not be limited to:

- Disruptive conduct at Library Board meetings;
- Violation of the Library's Code of Conduct;
- Endorsing actions by the Library that are contrary to the Library's legal and ethical obligations.

3.9 New Trustees appointed to fill a mid-term vacancy first serve out the balance of the unexpired term. Thereafter, the newly appointed Trustee may serve additional terms in accordance with section 3.3 of these Bylaws. Multiple Trustee vacancies are filled in chronological order based on when the vacancy occurred and regardless of the length of the unexpired term.

4. Library Board Officers

4.1 The Officers of the Board shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary and Chair of the Finance Committee.

4.2 The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board, shall appoint all standing committees and be a member ex-officio of all committees of the Board. The President shall be authorized to sign checks in payment of expenses of the Library, all as in the approved budget or approved specifically by the Board.

4.3 Tenure of office of the President shall be limited to not more than three (3) consecutive terms of one (1) year each.

4.4 The Vice President shall act in the absence of the President. The Vice President shall be authorized to sign checks in payment of library expenses including programming, equipment, library facility maintenance, and operational needs of the library, all as in the approved budget or approved specifically by the Board.

4.5 The Secretary is responsible for the transcription of the minutes of all meetings of the Board, and ensuring notice of meetings and access to meetings as required by the Open Meetings Law and Education law 260-a.

4.6 The Chair of the Finance Committee, in conjunction with Finance Committee members, shall work with the Director to develop an annual budget, periodically review Library funds, discuss and approve extraordinary expenditures, and review expenditure and budget reports provided by the Village, reporting any concerns or anomalies to the Board.

4.7 The Village Treasurer, who is also the Treasurer for the Library, shall be authorized by the Board to establish bank and investment accounts in which monies shall be deposited per the General Municipal Law.

4.8 The Village Treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks in payment of expenses relating to the maintenance, upkeep, repair and function of the library facility, and for the programming, equipment and operational needs of the library as included in the annual budget or approved by the Board.

4.9 The Village Treasurer shall keep accurate books of accounts, showing receipts and disbursements, and shall make reports to the Director and Finance Committee monthly .

4.10 At the request of the Board, the Village Treasurer may attend meetings of the Board, at which the Village Treasurer shall have no vote.

5. Library Board Meetings

5.1 Regular meetings shall be held at dates and times to be established by the Board at the first meeting of the library year (January) and shall be open to the public.

5.2 There shall be no fewer than six (6) regular meetings per year.

5.3 Special meetings shall be held at the call of the president or any three (3) Trustees.

5.4 A majority of the current number of Trustees shall constitute a quorum.

5.5 In general, the order of business shall be as follows, unless there is reason to add, delete or move items:

- Confirm quorum and call meeting to order
- Review minutes of the previous meeting and action thereon
- Community comments
- Report of the Board President
- Old Business
- Report of the Library Director
- Report of the Librarians (as needed)
- Budget Report
- Committee Reports
- Report of the Friends of the Library
- New business
- Items up for a vote.
- Adjournment

5.6 Executive Session, in which the public is excluded, and only the Board and invited guests remain, shall be only used upon a majority vote of its total membership, taken in an open meeting, for the following reasons only:

- a. matters which will imperil the public safety if disclosed;
- b. matters which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;

- c. information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;
- d. discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;
- e. collective negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law;
- f. the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;
- h. the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.

6. Committees

- 6.1 The President of the Board shall appoint committee members as required.
- 6.2 Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the President, with the approval of the Board.
- 6.3 Non-Board members with special capacities may be appointed to such committees.
- 6.4 All committees are advisory only, and all substantive committee actions are subject to approval by a majority of the Board.

7. Fiscal

- 7.1 The fiscal year ends on the last day of May.
- 7.2 The annual budget is prepared by the Director for consideration of the Finance Committee and then to the Library Board in April.
- 7.3 The Library Board is solely responsible for the Library's budget.

8. Library Director

- 8.1 The Board shall appoint a qualified Library Director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the library.
- 8.2 The Director shall be held responsible for the proper performance of duties per governing law, regulations, and duly adopted policies and plans of the Library Board.

Adopted by Library Board 2.11.2026

8.3 It shall be the duty of the Director to attend meetings of the Board, including budget meetings, or public meetings where action may be taken affecting the interests of the Library.

8.4 The Director is responsible for conducting a search for, interviewing and hiring all other Library employees.

8.5 The Director shall develop a plan for all Library positions and their salaries, which shall be approved by the Library Board.

9. **Bylaws Review and Amendments**

9.1 As required by governing regulations, these Bylaws shall be reviewed and re-approved by the Board of Trustees at least once every five years or earlier if required by law.

9.2 These Bylaws may be repealed, amended, or added to by a majority of the whole Board at a regular meeting, provided that the proposed revision was discussed at the preceding regular or special meeting of the board.

Bylaws accepted by the Board 1/27/00

Amended at Board meetings on October 23, 2008 & January 21, 2010 & June 21, 2023, and _____, 2026