

HADLEY-LUZERNE  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY-LAWS  
OF  
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOVEMBER 2017

# Preface

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The trustees of the Hadley-Luzerne Public Library have never carried a greater responsibility or had a greater opportunity for public service than they have today. Technology, our economy, and domestic and international developments are changing every sector of American life, which includes Library services.

The Trustees decisions affect the lives of the people and the future of the communities of Hadley and Lake Luzerne. A good public library benefits the entire community by extending opportunity for people of all ages. It enables people to learn throughout their lives, obtain information they need to advance in today's society, and achieve understanding that helps them take responsibility for themselves and others. The Hadley-Luzerne Library serves toddlers long before they enter school and many adults into the very last days of their lives.

The Hadley-Luzerne Public Library's Board of Trustees has a distinguished history of serving the people of the towns of Hadley and Lake Luzerne for over 40 years and has helped generations of people in these changing communities. However, all public libraries and their Boards of Trustees, regardless of the age of the library, are at the threshold of major change.

Today voters, elected officials, and other members of the public are asking for a re-examination of all government and education functions—they seek change where change is needed. Public libraries are changing because forward looking Trustees and Librarians are prepared to guide their libraries through the revolution of information technology and people's expectations for greater efficiency and responsiveness in government. Perhaps the most difficult job for today's Hadley-Luzerne Public Library Trustee is making sure that the enduring principles of Public Library service are not compromised in the midst of change.

# Hadley-Luzerne Public Library Board of Trustee By-Laws

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## **Preamble**

The Board of Trustees for the Hadley-Luzerne Public Library, a public library district, hereafter designated as “The Board”, a corporation created by the charter granted by the University of the State of New York, May 24, 1974, hereby enacts the following By-Laws.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Hadley-Luzerne Public Library is to assemble, preserve, and provide printed and other materials that will meet the day-to-day educational, informational, cultural, and recreational interests and needs of the community in compliance with local, state, and federal laws.

## **Article I: Membership**

The Board shall consist of seven voting members from the Hadley and Lake Luzerne communities. When a member resigns or leaves The Board for any reason, names of replacements will be submitted to The Board for review.

The term of Trustee shall be for five years with renewal every five years.

Trustees, in the capacity of trust upon them, shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity, and honor.

Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the situation.

Trustees must sign a conflict of interest agreement upon assignment to The Board. It is incumbent upon any Trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance or a conflict of interest exists.

A Trustee or family member may not receive any gain, tangible or intangible, in dealing with the library, nor may a Trustee or their families enter into a business relationship with the library, even if they are providing a service below cost.

Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of The Board even if they personally disagree.

A Trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with all applicable laws governing the freedom of information.

Trustees are expected to exercise fiduciary responsibility for the use of public and private funds in regards to the library.

Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

Trustees who accept library board responsibilities are expected to perform all of the functions of library trustee.

If a Trustee shall fail to attend three consecutive meetings without an excuse accepted as satisfactory by The Board, the Trustee shall be deemed to have resigned and the vacancy shall be filled.

Potential Board members shall be invited to observe one or more meetings of the Board. Potential members shall introduce themselves during a regularly scheduled Board meeting. Membership on the Board shall be determined by an affirmative vote from a majority of Board members, this vote may take place in executive session.

Newly elected Trustees shall be provided with appropriate orientation by the Board President and the Library Director and shall be given a copy of the Hadley-Luzerne Public Library By-Laws and a review of the handbook for Library Trustees in New York State which outline the basic information about Trustee responsibilities.

Newly elected Trustees must inform their town of residence in writing of their appointment to The Board, and inform the Director of the Library in writing of the date of informing their town of their appointment to The Board. The President of the Board shall swear in or affirm all newly elected Board members once they have informed the Director of the Library of their appointment to the Board.

## **Article II: Officers**

The officers of The Board shall be the President, Secretary, Treasurer, and any other officer(s) The Board may deem necessary for the proper functioning of the library.

All officers or other members of The Board having authority to so-sign checks shall be bonded.

### **Duties of the Officers**

**The President** shall preside at meetings of The Board, appoint committees, authorize calls for special meeting, and generally perform the duties of a presiding officer. In the absence of the president, The Board shall appoint another board member to preside. In the periods between board meetings the president may, as necessary, decide on matters normally reserved for The

Board, provided that these decisions do not involve the expenditure of library funds for items in excess of \$200 or the commitment of the library to contracts. In the case of an emergency The President of The Board shall make a diligent effort to contact the members of The Board before exceeding the \$200 limit. All such interim decisions shall be reviewed by The Board at the next regular meeting.

**The Secretary** shall have charge of the records of The Board and shall keep the minutes of the meetings. A copy of the minutes shall be kept in the library and shall be available for public inspection.

**The Treasurer** shall attend to the fiscal affairs of the library, working in conjunction with The Board, library staff, and the finance committee. (S)he shall pay out funds with the approval of The Board and keep accurate records of receipts and expenditures and shall report on the financial status of the library to The Board at all monthly meetings and at other times as required. The treasurer shall prepare an annual budget for review by The Board, submit the financial section of the annual report to the New York State Education Department and shall work with an outside accountant to prepare all necessary IRS and State filings. The treasurer shall, with The Board's approval, invest any surplus finds for the library and, as required by law shall limit such investments to financial institutions of commercial banks and trust companies located and authorized to do business n New York State and insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. As a check and balance, the treasurer shall work with the president to ensure that at least one other member of The Board has access the online banking information.

### **Article III: Committees**

The Board may consider and act on any matter before it with or without the recommendations from a committee. The President may appoint standing committees, to serve one year, and may appoint ad hoc committees, as described herein. Each committee chairperson shall be responsible for periodic meetings of the committee and shall have an opportunity to report at each regular meeting of The Board. A chairperson and committee members shall be assigned annually by the President. The President shall be a member, ex-officio, of all committees except nomination committees. Committees shall comprise of at least two members of The Board as can include members of the community with interests in the library. The Board has the authority to mediate any conflicts of interest that may arise concerning committee membership. If any of the following committees are not formed their respective responsibilities default to The Board.

**Fundraising Committee:** Shall seek and receive public and private funds on an on-going basis. In addition, the committee shall plan and execute programs, projects, and events to generate funds for the library throughout the fiscal year.

**Public Relation Committee:** Shall inform the community of library sponsored events, services, and workshops, and other items deemed pertinent for the edification of the community. In

addition, the committee shall recruit, recommend, and present to The Board possible programs to be presented in or by the library during the fiscal year.

**Policy Committee:** Shall be responsible for reviewing pertinent Federal and State laws and regulations which apply to the operation of The Board, and to annually update and present to The Board modifications to the by-laws under which The Board operates.

**Finance Committee:** Shall have the general supervision of the policies and plans for the fiscal resources of the library. It will be responsible for but not confined to:

- a) Assisting the treasurer in preparing an annual budget for The Board's approval,
- b) Evaluating and advising The Board on endowment, memorial, and other gifts, savings, and financial plans in a manner advantageous the annual and future needs of the library, and
- c) Reporting to funding authorities on how public funds were sent and what services the library offers the community.

#### **Article IV: Meetings**

Meetings shall be held on a monthly basis on the third Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm. Meetings shall be conducted using Robert's Rules of Order as a guide and questions and procedures will be referred to Robert's Rules of Order for clarification. All meetings shall comply with the New York State Open Meetings Law. Executive sessions shall be authorized for reasons enumerated in the Law. Requests to speak from the floor shall be permitted at the discretion of The Board.

A majority of the termed trustees shall constitute a quorum. In the absence of a quorum no official business may be conducted.

As required by New York State Law, a majority of the termed board shall be required to approve any motion.

**Freedom of Information:** All records of the library, except those exempted under New York State Freedom of Information Law, shall be available for public inspection and review. The Board shall issue a set of procedures outlining how the library records may be obtained and shall insure that these procedures are posted in the library.

#### **Article V: Dissolution Provision**

In the event of the dissolution of the remaining assets and property of the Hadley-Luzerne Public Library shall, after necessary expenses thereof, be distributed to the Towns of Lake Luzerne and Hadley, NY to be used for a public purpose, or as otherwise directed by law.

